



Monthly Newsletter

www.ChisagoLakesChamber.com

March 2011

Serving the communities of Chisago City, Lindstrom, Center City and Shafer

Upcoming Meetings & Events

- March 9: Board Meeting 4:00 p.m.**
 Chamber Office & Information Center
 30525 Linden Street, Lindstrom
- March 10: Chamber Member Luncheon**
 Time: 11:30 a.m.
 Speaker: Sam Griffith, City of Sandstone
 Topic: 'Find Your Niche' Marketing
 Catered By: Lindstrom Foods Deli
 Location: Chamber Office & Information Center

Welcome New Members!

Generations Hardwood Flooring

St. Croix Falls, WI 651.653.9900

St. Croix Valley Landscaping

Osceola, WI 715.294.4471

Flapper Jane's

Lindstrom, MN 651.257.4939

Gramma's Barn

Center City, MN 612.719.9045

Media to Remember

Chisago City, MN 651.206.4659

Michael Pach Design

Center City, MN 651.257.4300

Jockey Person to Person

Lindstrom, MN 218.252.2600

Thank You!

March Refreshment Host

Bugmeisters 612.770.5268

February Refreshment Host

Lindgren & Associates 651.257.2152

What's Happening This Month

SPRING

- | | | |
|-------|---------|---|
| March | 7 | Triathlon 101 Class |
| March | 8 & 10 | Library Basic Computer Classes |
| March | 11-12 | AmericInn – Women Only Weekend |
| March | 12 | WineHaven – 'Cabin Fever Day' |
| March | 15 | Photographer, Doug Ohman |
| March | 16-20 | Picket Fence Gals Sale |
| March | 19-20 | Lindstrom Antique Mall-20/20 Sale |
| March | 20 | First Day of Spring |
| March | 21 | Kid's Triathlon 101 Class |
| March | 24 & 31 | Women's Conference at Hazelden |
| March | 24 | Frontier – Social Media Webinar |
| March | 25 | Point Pleasant Heights – 'Spring Fling' |

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2011 Board of Directors

Officers:

President: John Renaker, Northwoods Roasterie
Past President: Jim Green, Edward Jones Investments
President-Elect: Craig Stockel, Thrivent Financial
Treasurer: Cory Lindgren, Lindgren & Associates
Secretary: Loretta Anderson, Hazelden

Directors:

Bob Jennissen
Bob Gustafson, Farmers Insurance Group
Dan Brown, Chisago Lakes Achievement Center
Matt Silver, Chisago County Press
Miriam Aaland, Parmly LifePointes
Renee Dabill, Renee Lynn Photography

Executive Director: Tangi Schaapveld
Office Manager: Laurie Doughty

How to contact us:

Chisago Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 283 – 30525 Linden St.
Lindstrom, MN 55045

Phone: 651.257.1177

Email: clacc@frontiernet.net

Web: www.ChisagoLakesChamber.com



A Note from the Chamber Board:

Craig Stockel

Just when it felt like there was “movement” in the economy, I happened to stop by a local restaurant and talking with the owner we got into a discussion about the recent changes in the cost of goods. She gave me an eye-opener example of how much the cost of produce had risen within the week – a case of tomatoes jumped from about \$14 to \$44, PLUS a “transportation charge” to get those cases to her. A grocer talked about how the price of grains and butterfat have risen, and thus a loaf of bread may well reach \$5 and ice cream, well, it’s creeping up as well.

As this is appearing in the Chamber’s newsletter, I am likely “preaching to the choir.” I suspect each of you as a local retailer or restaurant owner can echo similar situations as to what you’ve recently experienced. In some respects, it’s a “deja vu” to what we experienced several years ago when gas prices skyrocketed and every aspect of our lives that involved fuels or relied on fuels to deliver the goods.

We are fairly powerless to fix the root causes of such things. However, there are at least three areas in which each of us can have an impact to encourage more local buying. For those of you who heard Greg Shaleen’s message about customer service at the last Chamber membership meeting, you already know that great customer service (and personally focused) is imperative to keeping business coming to your store. I talked with a former retailer from the Cities who moved to the area. It was an interesting conversation about her perception of a lack of customer service – as if the customer posed an imposition – from some area retailers. Another person commented on store hours – by the time she’s done with work, certain places she would have gone to have already closed or perhaps closed early because the owner had an errand to run. Have you done a “customer service” assessment on your staff and your service model?

A strategy to assist in keeping business local is to know what other businesses in town offer. That way, when a customer seeks something you don’t have, you might have the ability to direct them **LOCALLY** to a fellow retailer who just might. Remember the novel idea that was developed in the movie “It’s a Wonderful Life” when Santa started directing Macy’s shoppers to other stores when Macy’s didn’t have the right toy? Perhaps the biggest issue becomes knowing what is available in the Chisago Lakes area. In fact, you could make it a personal challenge to find out what is available at every store or restaurant in our Chisago Lakes area.

Lastly, model what we “preach.” Admittedly, we don’t have everything in town that our taste buds crave, nor do we have everything in town to meet some of our household needs. But if we broaden our horizons to consider local alternatives for dining out or other purchasing needs, we may be pleasantly surprised to see what we find. If you eat out often and it’s not in town, consider including a local eatery in your plans. If you frequent out-of-area merchants, the cost of fuel to get you there and back might make buying local look even more attractive.

There’s a reason we choose to live in a smaller community, and often inherent in small-town living are items that might be higher priced than the “big-box” or discount stores. Independent restaurants are challenged to compete with the prices of national chains. But if we want our merchants to be able to survive in this area of smaller communities, we need to retool our own thinking and make a focused effort to “buy local” as often as we can. Without that mentality of great customer service and local patronage, our retail base will erode more than it already has and it will ultimately cost a person considerably more than it does today.

February 9th Board Meeting Highlights

Secretary's Report:

December minutes reviewed and accepted as written.

Treasurer's Report:

Treasurer's report reviewed and accepted.

Committee Reports:

• **Home, Garden & Business Show**

Registration is on track for same period last year. Entertainment and volunteers needed.

• **Celebration of the Lakes – Renee**

Looking at possible changes with Pilots Breakfast, Pilots Reception and Chili Contest for next year.

New Business:

• **2011 Membership** – Chamber has a healthy membership of 211 members.

• **Chamber Ad Page** – Miriam and Tangi will work on developing a broad marketing plan that reaches beyond the Lakes Area.

• **Membership Renewal Date** – To help with receiving/preparing member info in time for the Community Guide, it was suggested to consider moving the renewal date to December 1st, with a letter sent in November regarding new date.

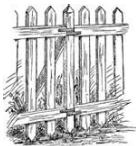
Old Business:

• **No old business**

Executive Director's Report: Tangi

Among items reported to the board were:

- Membership remains consistent
- The Chamber and Eichten's will help sponsor a National Heritage Area informational luncheon in February



PICKET FENCE GALS SALE

March 16-20

Wednesday 3-7

Thursday-Saturday 9-6

Sunday 11-5

Enjoy walking through rooms packed with unique treasures. Downtown Lindstrom.

www.PicketFenceGals.com

651.257.3370



The Sweet Swede Candy Shoppe **Premium Chocolates**

Gourmet chocolates, premium sweets and imported Scandinavian treats, featuring our signature Lingonberry Chocolate Fudge.

Wedding Buffets, Event Favors and Custom Orders available year-round. Retail store now open every 2nd weekend. Thurs.-Fri. 11:30-5:30, Sat. 11:30-3:00.

www.TheSweetSwede.com

651.387.1214



Free Computer Basics Classes

Chisago Lakes Area Library

11754 302nd Street

Chisago City, MN 651-257-2817

Tuesday, March 8 & Thursday, March 10

12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

Computer Basics Class: This hands-on class is designed for the person with little to no computer experience. Participants will learn the basic parts of a computer, will get practice using the mouse/keyboard and will learn how to open files and launch programs. This class is designed as a two part class so participants should try to attend both sessions. Space is limited so please pre-register.

Tuesday, March 8 & Thursday, March 10

4:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Microsoft Word Basics: Participants in this hands-on class will be introduced to the basics of Microsoft Word. Topics will include cutting and pasting, formatting a document, changing page layouts, printing and saving. Additional topics may be covered based on available time and participant interest. Participants **MUST** have prior computer experience. This class is designed as a two part class so participants should try to attend both sessions. Space is limited so please pre-register.

Special Event!

Tuesday, March 15

7:00 p.m.

East Central Regional Library presents photographer Doug Ohman. Doug Ohman specializes in historic structures and community landmarks. He will be talking about his book *Barns of Minnesota* which includes a story written by Chisago Lakes author Will Weaver! This is a free event and open for all to enjoy.



Inter-County Cooperative

Publishing Association

St Croix Falls, WI 715.483.9008

Frederic, WI 715.327.4236

Printing Specials!

Business Cards! \$29.95!

500 Full Color Business Cards, White Linen 80# Stock

Logo, Layout & Typesetting – No Charge

8.5 x 11 Color Copies - 39¢ each!

(Good at the Frederic Office Only)

Electronic File or Scan your copy

Minimum of 10 • 2-Sided 59¢ each

*All Prices Good through 3/31/11

www.ChisagoLakesChamber.com

February Luncheon Meeting



Greg Shaleen, ERA Muske

February's luncheon was held at the Chamber office with 52 members/guest in attendance. Chamber board served a delicious lunch of soups, chilies, salad and desserts. Chamber president, **John Renaker**, introduced new Chamber members. **MEDIA to Remember**, **Nan Toskey** is located in Chisago City and has over 20 years of digital media storytelling experience as a Producer, Director, Videographer, Editor and Digital Artist. She focuses on digital media storytelling for marketing, education and storytelling. **Michael Pach** of **Michael Pach Design** has 30 years experience in residential remodeling, design, draft and render services. He is located in Chisago City. **Rick Axtell**, **Northern Terror** is a nonprofit semi-pro football team operating out of the Chisago Lakes area. Home games are played at the Chisago Lakes Middle School. **Verizon Wireless**, a full service retail store located in Chisago City, opened in September 2010. **Jim Burkholz & Judy Erickson** owners of **Pleasant Valley Orchard** are located 3 miles down on Hwy 8 and are a family owned business. **Pet Extras** owner **Jon Kildow** has had his retail store open since October 20, 2010 in Chisago City. Before this his business was all online orders at petextras.com. Other new members not present at this meeting include **St. Croix Valley Landscaping**, Osceola, WI, **Flapper Jane's**, Lindstrom, **Generations Hardwood Flooring**, St. Croix Falls, WI, and **Gramma's Barn**, Center City. Members were encouraged to attend the upcoming Home and Garden Show, February 27-28 and the Business and Educational Survival 101 presentation on February 18 at the High School. Member announcements were made by **Loretta Anderson**, **Hazelden** for the upcoming Annual Women's Health Conference on March 24 & 31. **Linda Sandmann** announced **Inter-County Cooperative Publishing Association's** sale running through March 31. **Brenda Carlson**, **Eichten's**, promoted their Valentine Lunch Special. **Landscape Direction's** **Pete Lawrence** noted the problems with ice dams on buildings and houses and can help take care of that. **Julie Erickson**, the new PR person at **Gammelgarden** announced upcoming events and their opening will feature Swedish Woodworking. **Steve Carr-Wilson Marketing** handed out marketing kits. **Robert Trombley**, **Frontier** announced their 1st Quarter Special

that is running through March 31. **Elaine Sommer**, **Summit B&B**, said that the Chocolate March is already sold out. Guest speaker was **Greg Shaleen**, **ERA Muske**. He gave a great presentation on Customer Service & Sales. Through visuals, card tricks, illusions and stories, Greg addressed the point that Good Service is the life blood of survival-both in your business and personal life. Customer service is defined as "Anyone that receives output of your actions. Some of the ideas/questions are: How is your product/service different? Accessibility, environment, knowing your competition, Where are my customer opportunities, reaching new customers while keeping the old, under-promise and over-deliver.



NORTHWOODS ROASTERIE

Coffee and Pie Night

Every Friday Night! 5-9pm

Come enjoy coffee and fresh baked pies!

12710 Lake Blvd, Lindstrom

www.NorthwoodsRoasterie.com

651.257.5240

Women's Health Conference

Two FREE Programs

Thursday, March 24 & Thursday March 31

Hazelden CORK Center, Center City

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| March 24th | "Creating a New You" |
| 5:30-7:00 p.m. | Free Health Fair |
| 7:00-8:00 p.m. | 'Baby Steps to Fitness' |
| | Michelle Lee, Duluth News Anchor |
| March 31st | "Say 'Yes' to Yourself" |
| 5:30-6:30 p.m. | Free Health Fair |
| 6:30-7:30 p.m. | 'It's 3 a.m. and I can't sleep' |
| | Snigdha Sagar, M.D. ~ |
| | Sleep Medicine Clinic at Uof M |
| 7:45-8:45 p.m. | 'How to Make This Your Best Year Ever!' |

Sponsored by: Chisago County Public Health
Fairview Lakes Health Services, Hazelden Foundation,
St. Croix Regional Medical Center

St. Bridget of Sweden

All-You-Can-Eat Fish Fry



Fridays during Lent – except Good Friday

Beginning March 11, 5-7 p.m. enjoy a meal of fish, coleslaw, french fries, dessert and beverage (meatless spaghetti also available)

Adults/\$10, Seniors/\$7, Children/\$5, under 6/free.

www.StBridgetofSweden.org

651.257.2474

Featured Business – March 2011



Festival Theatre

Festival Theatre: A Place for Everyone

St. Croix Festival Theatre, with support from the surrounding region, has been operating as a non-profit performing arts venue for over twenty years in the small town of St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin. Festival Theatre's mission is to make the arts welcoming to all people as an essential part of their well being and for the vitality of the community. Bringing professional entertainment to the river valley is accomplished by believing in this mission and sharing our story. Since 45% of our audience comes from Chisago and Washington Counties, we are delighted to share our story with you!

What began as a seasonal theatre company is now a multi-dimensional entity with four programming strands: the Theatre Series, Music Series, Festival Arts and New Doors. The Theatre Series reigns as the solid foundation of our company, cemented in the highest standard of quality and professionalism. Festival staff members and production teams fully produce five shows in the Theatre Series each year.

Program development has expanded dramatically under the watchful eye of Executive Director Danette Olsen. With a passion for arts education, Danette and her attentive Board of Directors have developed Festival Arts, a program strand using a variety of means for promoting and supporting the child as an artist. School groups attend our theatre productions, where students are exposed to live professional theatre, many for the first time. Our summer Creativity Camps offer hands-on arts-making in week-long day camp settings, one of which is Chisago City's Camp Ojiketa.

But the highlight of Festival Arts programming is the Youth & Family Theatre Series, where area youth and community adults are mentored by professional actors and designers in full scale productions. For 2011, this program is expanding from two shows to four, with *Cinderella* scheduled for April, *Seussical* during the summer, *The Hobbit* in September and *A Caddie Woodlawn Christmas* in December.

Finally, music can be heard all year long on our stage, and also in our new street-level performance space affectionately called The Elbow Room. Professional artists in a variety of genres are enlisted to fill our Music Series with concerts for every taste, and newer or local artists are brought in under the New Doors banner.

Yes, Festival Theatre is a place for everyone.

LAYSB News!

Parent Support Meetings

Parents of teenagers, are you having frustrations and challenges as the long winter carries on and everyone in your family is beginning to suffer from cabin fever? Teens like to be out and able to spend time with their friends. That's harder to do in the winter. Lakes Area Youth Service Bureau is offering parents an opportunity to come in to the office from 6:30-7:30 pm on Thursday evenings and use the time to get away from the kids and check-in about your parenting challenges. It can be a way for getting out of the house and taking a little time to reflect and get some feedback and support. This is FREE and registration is not required. Call Jackie Hays, Parent Education and Support Coordinator, at 651-464-3685 for more information.

Save the Dates! 2011 LAYSB Events...

TASTE!

Showcasing the "Must Try It"
Lakes Area Dining Thursday, July 21
Stars & Strikes Entertainment Center, Wyoming



Black Tie to Blue Jeans Night

Friday, September 30
Vannelli's by the Lake in Forest Lake

Cabin Fever Day

March 12th, 2011 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



Got Cabin Fever? The cure is at WineHaven! Come and taste some of their vintage selections that they will bring out of hibernation for this special event. This is the only event of the year where visitors can taste, and purchase, WineHaven's classics that have been aging in the cellar for years.

www.WineHaven.com

651.257.1017

Quote for the Month

*"The golden rule for every business man is this:
'Put yourself in your customer's place.'*

~Orison Swett Marden~



CHISAGO LAKES TRIATHLON Tri 101 Classes

Midwest Sports and Fairview Lakes Health Services are offering training classes that will help prepare you for this year's triathlon. By attending the Tri 101 class you will receive a discount on your triathlon registration.

- ▶ **Tri 101 Class** March 7, 6-8:30 p.m.
- ▶ **Kid's Tri 101 Class** March 21, 7-8 p.m.
Bike Helmet Sale 6:30 p.m.



5200 Fairview Blvd Wyoming, MN 55092
651.982.7000

AmericInn Hotel and Suites presents...

Women Only Weekend! March 11-12

\$60 per person includes: Overnight Guest Room with 2 Queen Beds, access to all Friday and Saturday events. Stay over Saturday night for an additional \$25/person.

- Friday: Complimentary Wine & Snacks
- Saturday: 9am-4pm Seminars with topics on Women's Health Topics and Gardening, massages, pedicures manicures, reflexology, vendors!

www.Americinn-NorthBranch.com 651.674.8627

Fill 300 food shelves.
Mission impossible?
Not if you help.



Focus on the statewide fight against hunger.

Every dollar and pound of food stretches further in March. Make it Count! **Lindstrom Food Pantry**
12882 1st Ave N, Lindstrom 651.257.1308



THE NORTHERN TERROR

The Northern Terror is a nonprofit Semi-Professional football team. They are a league consisting of four teams and is actively recruiting more teams. They are a 2000 championship team and are now operating out of the Chisago Lakes area. Home games are played at the Chisago Lakes Middle School. Take time to consider a sponsorship to keep this semi-professional team in our area.

www.TerrorFootball.webs.com 651.213.6140



Social Media

It Impacts Your Business, Like it or Not

Did you know that Google now includes customer comments in its search results? And that within the next year, more than half the web connections will be made from a mobile device? Groupon and other network marketing and buying sites are driving customers into businesses by the millions.

Whether your business is active in social media or just an observer, social media is impacting industries across the country and in your neighborhood. Join Frontier Communications as we discuss ways to determine whether and how to participate in social media and to judge whether your current activity can be improved.

Attend the live, one-hour Webinar to learn:

- ▶ How to build your business for positive comments
- ▶ Monitor and determine the cost of negative comments to your business
- ▶ Will group buying programs like Groupon drive new revenue to you?
- ▶ Best practices on Facebook and Twitter

Who should attend:

- ▶ Business Owners
- ▶ Marketers and Public Relations Managers
- ▶ Customer Service Managers
- ▶ Sales and Business Development Managers

Presenters:

- ▶ Shama Kabini, President of Zen Marketing Group
- ▶ Albert Maruggi, Founder/President of Provident Partners

This complimentary Webinar takes place on
Thursday, March 24 at 11a.m.

Space is limited. The first 100 registrants will also receive a complimentary copy of Shama's *The Zen of Social Media Marketing*. Register at www.Frontier.com/social

20/20 Sale!
March 19-20



Lindstrom Antique Mall

Storewide Sale – 20% off all items over \$5.00
unless marked ‘firm’ or already on sale.

Downtown Lindstrom

651.257.3340

Point Pleasant Heights

28600 Fairway Lane, Chisago City

Spring Fling!



Friday, March 25 12:30-3:30 p.m.

Join Point Pleasant Heights for a great day of Wine Tasting, Edible Gardening Speaker, Scarf Tying Fashion Tips, Tours of their apartments and town homes & Prize Drawings.

www.Parmly.org

651.257.4035

MN Chamber Update

Spotlight on government redesign

By David C. Olson

Minnesotans face mutual challenges as we climb out of a recession that has taken a toll on both the private and public sectors. Conducting business as usual just doesn't cut it. Business and government alike must explore all measures and take bold action to deliver quality products and services to our customers at lower cost.

In that pursuit, the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce and its local partners are engaging business leaders and citizens to redesign government services. We're grateful to the Bush Foundation that contributed money to this effort. The findings, to date, of these five studies were reported at the annual meeting of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Executives (MCCE). There is reason for optimism.

Chambers of Commerce at Brainerd Lakes, Staples Motley Area and Long Prairie Area are working with Crow Wing and Todd counties to study the case management for individuals who access a variety of county departments; the goal is to streamline the process and make these people less reliant on public services. The Owatonna Area Chamber is working with its city to use the LEAN process to evaluate operations; the first department being reviewed is parks and recreation.

Rochester Area Chamber is working with its city to develop a more customer-focused approach for review and approval of

various development requirements. The Austin Area Chamber studied public safety dispatch with the city of Austin and Mower County. And a group of Twin Cities chambers is working with the Metropolitan Council to identify efficiencies in transit operations.

Some of these projects are still in progress, and others have issued final recommendations. Among the common themes that have emerged:

- Improving service to customers should be at the forefront of any effort to consolidate and/or streamline operations.
- Don't expect an immediate return on the bottom line; real savings are long term.
- Enacting change requires engaging ideas that focus on the outcomes. Do not pander to the vested interests of stakeholders; there can be no sacred cows.
- The private sector must demand change and be ready to jump in with its resources.

Hardly a week passes that headlines don't announce another initiative on government collaboration. Otter Tail County's director of solid waste also oversees programs in Wadena and Todd counties. Austin and Albert Lea are exploring sharing the services of a finance director. Rice County officials are charting a course to change the way the county does business. And Rep. Paul Marquart, DFL-Dilworth, said he would first consider redesign to ease the state's expected budget deficit. He suggested that some agencies, like law enforcement, don't need to be restricted by county boundaries.

Changing demographics are driving the delivery of government services. An aging population is demanding more public services, especially in health care. At the same time, a shrinking workforce is contributing fewer tax dollars to support these services. And the reality of a world economy means services must be delivered at the same or lower per-unit price.

We also recognize that many local governments – no matter how well intentioned – are hamstrung in efforts to change operations. Myriad state mandates hinder their flexibility and ability to carve new paths. That's why chambers of commerce are working with local governments and legislators to review and eliminate the costliest and most cumbersome of mandates.

The Minnesota Chamber believes the state budget can be balanced by using the revenues we know will be available for the next biennium. Budget reform and service redesign must be part of the final puzzle. We stand ready to assist policy-makers at all levels of government to identify the most pressing problems and then fund those programs that deliver the greatest value and best outcomes.

David Olson is president of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce. For more information visit www.mnChamber.com.



Minnesota Chamber of Commerce
The Voice of Business