



Monthly Newsletter

www.ChisagoLakesChamber.com

April 2016

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

Upcoming Meetings & Events

- April 7: **Board Meeting 9:00am**
Chamber Office & Information Center
30525 Linden Street, Lindstrom
- April 14: **Chamber Member Luncheon**
Time: 11:30am
Topics: **ABC Presentation**
Speaker: **Tangi Schaapveld**
Location: **Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation**
15251 Pleasant Valley Road, Center City
- \$9/members at the door \$10/non-members at the door

The greatest lesson in life is to know
that even fools are right sometimes.
~ Sir Winston Churchill ~

Happy April Fools' Day!



CHISAGO LAKES LIONS

'Cadillac Dinner'



Where: Winehaven
10020 Deer Garden Lane, Chisago City

When: Saturday, April 23, 2016

Time: Social Hour 5:30 pm-6:30 pm

Dinner: 7:00 pm

Ticket Price: \$160 per couple

Entrée Choice: Roast Beef or Chicken

For Reservations call:

Steve Levey651-257-2966
Gary Gerke651-257-5679
Joel Jordet612-747-2770
Jeff Vitali651-257-6600 or
651-253-8416

Over \$3000 Value in Raffle Prizes and \$4450
in Cash Prizes! Winners need not be present to win.

April

What's Happening This Month

- April 1 County Sales Tax Increase effective
- April 2-3 New Vintage Days – Winehaven Winery
- April 3 Shafer Franconia Pancake Breakfast
- April 4-9 Recycled Wardrobe Sale
- April 6 Tech Training – Website Content
- April 6-10 Picket Fence Gals Sale
- April 7 Women's Health Conference
- April 7 Get Hired Event - LAYSB
- April 7 Women's Health Conference
- April 8 Alumni Show – Franconia Sculpture Park
- April 9-24 Grapes of Wrath – Festival Theatre
- April 12 Spring Shape Up - doTERRA Oils
- April 14 Chamber Monthly Luncheon
- April 15 Tech Training – Email Security
- April 16 Shredding Event - LAYSB
- April 18 Swedish Language Class - Gammelgarden
- April 22 Swedish Institute/IKEA Day Trip
- April 23 Lion's Cadillac Dinner
- April 23 KOD Button Voting Ends
- April 22-23 Library Used Book Sale
- April 24 International Sculpture Day - Franconia
- April 25 A Healthy Trio Open House
- April 26 Library Gala
- April 26 East Central MN Job Fair
- April 27 **ABC Presentation in North Carolina**

2016 Board of Directors

Officers:

President: John Renaker, Northwoods Roasterie
President Elect: Josh Soderlund, Soderlund's Wood Mill
Treasurer: Cory Lindgren, Lindgren & Associates
Secretary: Erin Thorvaldson, Generations Real Estate Group

Directors:

Bob Gustafson, Farmers Insurance Group
Matt Silver, Chisago County Press
Laura Haseltine, Elevate Builders/Victory Lane Quick Oil Change
Greg Paine, Edward Jones
Marlys Dunne, MultiSource Manufacturing
Susan Clayton, Alan Honn Glass & Al's Saloon

Executive Director: Wendy Redland
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:

Josh Soderlund
Soderlund's Wood Mill

Spring is officially here and with that we anticipate the return of green trees, mosquitoes, deer ticks and tax deadlines. That is in a descending order of which I will let the reader decide. But with the change of seasons comes the rejuvenation and excitement of summer as we leave the hibernation of winter and head out into the new world of sunlight and fresh air. I encourage us all to not miss the opportunity this summer to take advantage of our area's natural resources and become familiar with our parks and trail systems. Maybe, this is the year Netflix and Facebook will take a back seat to face-to-face conversation and a bike ride.

If you spent the winter hibernating under a rock there is a possibility you have not heard about the ABC grant. I would urge you to head onto the chamber website and become informed. This month the ABC teams are sending some representatives to the ABC Summit April 25th-28th to compete for the next round in the grant selection process. Let's be cheering our ABC teams on as they take on the challenge of pitching why our community is the best candidate to win.

Lastly, be looking out for the numerous festivals and activities that happen throughout the spring and summer. They are great opportunities to meet your neighbors and get to know what is happening in the Chisago Lakes Area. Also, Spring is often a time of year where some of our elderly folks could use a hand with cleanup and yard chores. I bet Family Pathways would love to have you and a few people you know sign up this Spring to help out! Keep up the good work and let's have a great summer!

Welcome New Members!

Family Fun Ice Cream

facebook.com/FamilyFunIceCream2/
612- 859-9870

Merchant Media Marketing

MerchantMarketing.com 651-343-4747

NORTHWOODS ROASTERIE



12710 N. First Ave, Lindstrom

Coffee and Pie Night

Every Friday Night! 5-9pm

Come enjoy coffee and fresh baked pies!

www.NorthwoodsRoasterie.com 651-257-5240



We can help get your information out to the community! Please share your events/happenings with us so we can include in the monthly newsletter or weekly newsflash. Please allow us time to receive the information to include. Email the Chamber at clacc@frontiernet.net. Deadline for inclusion is:

Newsflash – Week Prior of Event/Special

Newsletter – 20th of the Month Prior

AMERICAN SWEDISH INSTITUTE &

IKEA SHOPPING DAY TRIP

Friday, April 22 8am-4pm

Enjoy a day trip visiting IKEA and the American Swedish Institute. Tour Guide is Sally Barott with transportation by Mary Ann's Tours. \$39.00/person includes round trip transportation, ASI Lars Lerin Watercolor Exhibit Ticket, IKEA and ASI brochures. Space limited to 35 persons. [Day Trip Flyer](#).

Valkommen! Make your reservation today!

Contact Sally Barott at sallybarott@aol.com, 651-257-4473

www.ChisagoLakesChamber.com 651-257-1177

March 3rd Board Meeting Highlights

Secretary's Report:

February minutes reviewed and accepted.

Treasurer's Report:

Treasurer's report reviewed and accepted.

Committee Reports:

• **Home & Garden Expo**

Vendor and booth numbers are up from last year. Entertainment is set. Posters, banners and digital boards are promoting the event. Volunteers are in place.

• **Triathlon**

DuTriRun met with the Chamber and local law enforcement about road construction affecting the run route. Options were suggested and will be finalized soon. DuTriRun shared that the Ironman brand contacted them about managing the MN Ironman race in Chisago Lakes. We will be discussing further what this would look like for the community and the chamber.

New Business:

• **Vision Retreat**

A vision retreat will be held in May for the Chamber board to determine core values and share the Chamber's mission statement in a unified way.

Old Business:

• **2016 Budget**

Will be reviewed in conjunction with the Vision Retreat.

• **ABC Update**

Tangi Schaapveld, Amy Frischmon and Bill Coleman will be attending the ABC Summit as presenters. Three more team members are able to attend. The Chamber will be hosting a live-streaming of the Summit presentations. At present, it will be hosted at the Lindstrom Community Center using their incoming teleconferencing equipment.

• **New Member Visits**

A list of new Chamber members will be created and we will decide what those visits will consist of.

Executive Director's Report:

- Membership in February we had 9 new members with some of these having attended the Open House.
- Membership Statements have been sent out and follow up calls are being made.
- Regional Speed Networking Event took place with North Branch and Forest Lake Chambers. Some great contacts were made and we are following up with them.
- Congressman Nolan toured the area and we shared the ABC competition with him along with information on area trails, the St. Croix Heritage Area and manufacturing facilities.

- ABC Competition has so much happening-trails are being worked on, energy audits, tourism website is being created, lodging tax is being evaluated, OJT program is being created, water trail will be open in the Spring., Tech training is being offered and the presentation is being created for North Carolina next month.

LAYSB News!

244 N. Lake Street, Forest Lake
www.YSBLakesArea.org 651-464-3685

'GET HIRED'

April 7 5:30-8pm

Teens (9th-12th Grade) will learn how to find a job and get tips on how to successfully fill out an application, create a cover letter and resume, and nail an interview! Teens will also get a chance to meet up to 10 local businesses that hire teens. Pre-registration is required. [Click Here](#) Central Learning Center, Forest Lakes.



'SHREDDING EVENT'

April 16 9-11:30am

This is a great opportunity to get rid of old tax records & empty file cabinets of sensitive documents, while supporting LAYSB programs and services. Bring your documents to Security-Victor Agency 5357 Wyoming Trail, Wyoming. 'Shred Right' will shred your materials right in front of you as you enjoy a free cup of coffee and roll. \$10 will be donated by Security Victor to LAYSB for each bag/box shredded up to \$500. Your contributions to Lakes Area Service Bureau will also be gladly accepted.

Shafer/Franconia Fire & Rescue Pancake Breakfast

Sunday, April 3 7am until gone

ALL YOU CAN EAT BREAKFAST

Pancakes, Scrambled Eggs, Sausage, Bacon
Coffee, Orange Juice, Milk

Adults.....\$6.00
Children Ages 6-12\$4.00
Children Ages 5 & UnderFREE

30325 Redwing Ave, Shafer 651-257-4753

www.ChisagoLakesChamber.com 651-257-1177

March Membership Meeting



David Ford-ActionCOACH

March Chamber luncheon was catered by **Al's Saloon** serving his famous Reuben Sandwiches. Thank you **Northwoods Roasterie** for delicious coffee and **Clark Cupcakes** for the specialty dessert. Prize drawings were donated by **Recycled Wardrobes**, **Grand Casino Hinckley** and **ActionCOACH**.

Chamber announcements: **Tangi Schaapveld, America's Best Communities**, will be the speaker at the April 14 Chamber luncheon. She will present our strategic plan as it will be presented in North Carolina at the end of April. The **Home & Business Expo** was successful-thank you to all businesses that had booths. **Technology Training** continues with the next one on March 18th.

New Chamber members were introduced: **Sarah Clark-Clark Cupcakes** is currently operating out of her home but is looking for a building downtown. **Susan Sandberg-Almelund Mercantile** has been in business for 9 years and invites locals to come visit. **Deanna Muha-Norwex**, **Pam Anderson-The Lindstrom Sweet Shoppe & Tea Company**, **Adam Wallis-Bloom Lake Barn**

Member announcements: **Laurie Doughty** announced the Easter Carnival at **First United Methodist Church**. **Loretta Anderson** promoted the **Women's Health Conference** on March 31 and April 7 at **Hazelden**. This is sponsored by **Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation**, **Fairview Lakes Medical Center**, **St. Croix Regional Medical Center**, **Chisago County Health** and **Polk County Health**. **Chisago County Press'** **Terri Hedrik** announced advertising opportunities in the upcoming Community Guide. **Greg Paine** with **Edward Jones** is a Chartered Retirement Planning Counselor (CRPC) and would like to help you with your retirement planning.

Our guest speaker was **David Ford-ActionCOACH** who talked about Habits of Highly Effective Communicators. To be a good communicator takes practice and involves Active Listening. Paraphrase what they are saying. Understand their communication style, then you can communicate on their level. Hire for what you need-what's right for the job. If a person is working out of their personality, it can zap

their energy. Modes of communication include Visual, Auditory and Kinesthetic. Remember if you don't give enough information, they will create their own.



210 Washington St, St. Croix Falls, WI
715-483-3387 www.FestivalTheatre.org

'The Grapes of Wrath'

April 9-24

The Joad family feels they must escape from further financial devastation that will follow a year without crops. Their farm has been decimated by the Oklahoma dust bowl and bright future awaits them in the promised land of California if they can get there. Upon arrival, they are met by the harsh reality of the Great Depression and must dig deep to find the hope to continue. Tickets: \$26.00/adults, \$13.50/youth Franklin Square Black Box, 125 North Washington St, St Croix Falls

Festival Theatre on the Road - with the city of St Croix Falls renovating the Civic Auditorium in 2016, Festival has moved to the Franklin Square Black Box, 125 North Washington St, St Croix Falls and other venues throughout the St. Croix Valley.

Ojiketa Regional Park

27500 Kirby Ave, Chisago City

Ojiketa Regional Park has boat slips available for rent on Green Lake. Dock your boat during the boating season and have it available to you from mid May- mid October (weather permitting). Forms available at www.ci.chisago.mn.us or for more information or to reserve your boat slip contact Linda at lsinger@ci.chisago.mn.us or 651-257-4162.



10020 Deer Garden Lane, Chisago City
www.Winehaven.com 651-257-1017

NEW VINTAGE DAYS!

SATURDAY, APRIL 2 - 10AM-5PM

SUNDAY, APRIL 3 - 11AM-5PM

Be the first to try our new wines from the recent harvest! See how the previous vintage has aged and get a first taste of the newest wines that were just bottled. What a wonderful weekend to come out and see what is new at Winehaven.

www.ChisagoLakesChamber.com 651-257-1177

Featured Business – April 2016



BLOOM LAKE BARN

Introducing a new business to our Lakes Area: Bloom Lake Barn! Owners Adam and Monique Wallis have spent the last year restoring a massive dairy barn in Shafer, MN to be used for weddings and other events.



Adam & Monique are originally from Michigan's Upper Peninsula near Sault Ste. Marie. Adam has a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management from Northern Michigan University and Monique earned a Graduate Degree in Speech Language Pathology from Purdue University. Adam & Monique then spent 6 years in Phoenix, Arizona. After having two girls, Ivy (4) and Cora (2), and a desire to move back to the Midwest to live and raise their family, they have settled in Shafer. With interests in historic architecture and vintage style, they were excited to find the 1920s farmhouse and 10,000 square foot dairy barn. In need of a complete restoration, they have been able to combine their talents of Monique's creativity and Adam's carpentry skills. They were welcomed in and supported by the neighbors and community at large. So began the largest undertaking of their lives.

When you visit Bloom Lake barn you will immediately appreciate their attention to detail and efforts to preserve as much original character as



possible; from the repair of the foundation and barn siding, to the original lightning rods on the new roof. The hayloft, which is now used for dinner and dancing, includes chandelier and café lighting, salvaged church windows, and a bar faced with repurposed antique ceiling tin. In the lower level, where the cows were once milked, high top tables were built from original milking stanchions. There is a rustic hand-built bar, industrial lighting and a pool table, making a great spot for a cocktail hour prior to dinner. On the grounds, an original

foundation to the granary remains and is a unique gathering and photo location.

The barn is being rented for pig roasts, black tie events and everything in between. Engaged couples are flocking to Bloom Lake Barn to plan their weddings because of its size (300 guests can be seated for dinner!) endless décor possibilities and flexibility to personalize their event. The season currently runs from May through October. If you are interested in what is included or would like a tour, contact: BloomLakeBarn@gmail.com / www.bloomlakebarn.com. Keep an eye on their Facebook page (www.facebook.com/bloomlakebarn) for details on a spring open house!

BLOOM LAKE BARN

Adam & Monique Wallis
17147 Bloom Lake Rd, Shafer
651-703-1555



Chisago County Technology Training Opportunities for Businesses

Through a grant provided by the Blandin Foundation and the energy of a team of advocates for Chisago County businesses, these monthly technology trainings are FREE for businesses & residents in the county.

WEBSITE CONTENT: Learn specifics of what should be included on your site. Presented by Rebecca Chambers, WebDuck Design.

Wednesday, April 6

- 8-9am Rush City Public Library 240 W. Fourth St
- 12-1pm Chisago Lakes Library 11754 302 St

EMAIL SECURITY: Email exposes your business to a variety of threats; learn how to protect your business and yourself. Presented by Chris Morgan, Pine Technical & Community College.

Friday, April 15

- 8-9am North Branch Public Library 6355 376th Street
- 12-1pm Wyoming Area Giese Memorial Library 26855 Forest Blvd, Wyoming

Where Feeling Glamorous is just a few eyelashes away!



GLAMOR LASHES

Glamor Lashes is now offering any cancer patient going through chemo, Lashes FREE of charge! You All Deserve It! Call Cassy at 763-732-3044. [Facebook.com/Glamorlashz](https://www.facebook.com/Glamorlashz)

Recycled Wardrobes



Anniversary Sale April 4th-9th

Get 25% of ALL
CLOTHING & SHOES!

Plus enjoy .25 cent
clearance, books & toys!
Thank You for shopping and
recycling with us!

Serving in clothing recycling since 1990

Mon. - Fri. 9 to 7 & Sat. 9-4



doTERRA Essential Oils

'SPRING SHAPE UP'
Tuesday, April 12 6:30pm

Everyone needs a little "Slim & Sassy" in their life. doTERRA essential oil Slim & Sassy blend provides many healthy natural additions to any lifestyle. Helps manage appetite and hunger, elevates moods & breaks down fat cells when applied topically. Join us and learn more about the benefits of doTerra oils with the focus on the "Slim & Sassy" blend.

The Zyto Scanner will be available (\$10) for anyone that would like to find out what oils/supplements your body needs. Questions, call Trudy at 651-491-0962.

CHISAGO LAKES LIBRARY

11754 302nd St, Chisago City
651-257-2817 www.ecrl.lib.mn.us

PUBLIC LIBRARY GALA!
TUESDAY, APRIL 26 6:30-8PM

Join us as we celebrate the *First Decade of the Chisago Lakes Library*! Free and open to the public. Food, music, history video and fun! Sponsored by the Friends of Chisago Lakes Area Library, a non-profit charitable organization.



PICKET FENCE GALS SALE

APRIL 6-10

Wednesday 3-7pm

Thursday-Saturday 9am-6pm

Sunday 11am-5pm

A large Victorian 2-story house filled with affordable, ever-changing items. You are sure to find antiques & vintage items, painted furniture, garden items, home & cabin décor, re-purposed items, textiles and more! Downtown Lindstrom.

www.PicketFenceGals.net

651-334-1444



NAVIGATING THE SWEDISH BARN QUILT TRAIL IN CHISAGO COUNTY

Chisago Lakes was recently featured in the Star Tribune. The article highlights the Swedish Barn Quilt Trail. [Read the article here.](#)

CHISAGO COUNTY

0.5 PERCENT TRANSIT SALES AND USE TAX

Starting April 1, 2016, Chisago County will have a 0.5 percent transit sales and use tax. Here is the [General Notice](#) and [7.375% Tax Chart](#)

WILD MOUNTAIN / TF RECREATION

37200 Wild Mountain Rd, Taylors Falls
651-465-6315 www.wildmountain.com



2016-2017 SEASON PASSES

Don't forget to order your Season Passes for next year at the lowest rates offered. Find some friends and do a 'Fill A Quad' for only \$839.99. Families, each additional family member decreases in price - after the 4th member the cost is only 24.99/person.

SUMMER SEASON PASSES

Spring has sprung! It won't be long until summer time is here. Now is the time to purchase your Summer Season Pass for Unlimited Superday passes. Only \$65.99 if you purchase your pass by June 1st.



For complete details call 651-465-6365
or visit www.WildMountain.com



Karl Oskar Days July 6-10

Karl Oskar Days Button Contest voting has begun and continues until April 23. Several local businesses have ballot forms, one being the Chamber office. Winners will be announced May 5 in the Chisago County Press.

Letters to area businesses wishing to sell or run a promotion during KOD have been sent out. Return the form or contact Scotti at kodbuttons@gmail.com by the end of April. Buttons will be on sale May 27-July 11.

'A HEALTHY TRIO'



MONDAY, APRIL 25 5-8PM
COME & GO AS YOU PLEASE!

Chamber Office 30525 Linden St, Lindstrom

Come and learn about healthy options for yourself, home and family! Experience & enjoy products, a chance to shop, refreshments, brief product presentations, & door prizes!

LAURIE DOUGHTY

doTERRA Wellness Advocate

mydoterra.com/lauriedoughty 651-257-9083

doTERRA's pure essential oils are revolutionizing the way families manage their health.

DEANNAH MUHA

Norwex Independent Sales Consultant

DeannahMuha.Norwex.biz 651-274-9298

Norwex is the world's leader in microfiber technology. We have products that reduce chemicals in the home.

LAURA HASELTINE

Younique Green Status Presenter

YouniqueProducts.com/LauraHaseltine/ 651-245-5762

Younique's goal is to provide healthy, clean and pure cosmetics. Feel beautiful. Look beautiful. Be beautiful inside and out.

CHISAGO LAKES WATER TRAIL SUMMIT

Saturday, May 7 9am

Chisago Lakes Library 11754 302nd St, Chisago City

We want your help to bring life to the Chisago Lakes Water Trail! [Summit Poster](#)

- Learn about the Water Trails in Minnesota.
- Find out about the Chisago Lakes Water Trail!
- Hear about plans for Chisago County Water Trails.

ALL IS WELLNESS STUDIO

12760 Lake Blvd, Lindstrom 651-257-9713

www.AllisWellnessCenter.com



SAME SERVICES – NEW LOCATION

As of April 1st, All Is Wellness is in their new downtown Lindstrom location. We have all the same wonderful services in a new amazing central location. Acupuncture, Massage Therapy, Reiki Healing, Psychic Medium, Readings, Life and Health Coaching. For more information visit our website or call us at 651-257-9713.

Women's Health Conference

Thursday, April 7

Hazelden CORK Center, Center City

(Hwy 8 to 15245 Pleasant Valley Road, follow signs)

April 7th	Eating Simple to Live Better
5:30-6:30 pm	Free Interactive Health Fair
6:30-7:30 pm	Prevent or Reverse Chronic Disease Panel Discussion
7:45-8:45 pm	Healthy Cooking Demonstration
	Manny Krug, of Chefs of Crocus Hill

Sponsored by: Chisago County Public Health
Fairview Lakes Medical Center
Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation
St. Croix Regional Medical Center
Polk County Public Health



29610 Gateway Ave, Chisago City
651-257-2111 VictoryLaneMN.com

APRIL SHOWERS BRING FREE WIPER BLADES!! APRIL 14-30, 2016

Come get your FREE set of wiper blades with every regular priced oil change!!

Great Team. Great Service. Great Price. Experience the Victory Lane difference.



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FRANCONIA

sculpture park

29836 St. Croix Trail, Shafer
651-257-6668 www.Franconia.org



GALA OPENING APRIL 8, 6 - 9 PM
Gallery open 12-4 pm Fridays and Saturdays,
or by appointment by calling 612.743.6664.

Celebrate International Sculpture Day Sunday, April 24 6-8pm



The world will join in celebration of sculpture during the 2nd Annual International Sculpture Day, or IS Day. 300+ artists, organizations and institutions through 20 countries are expected to celebrate the day with open studios, unveiling public sculptures, sculpture scavenger hunts, pop up exhibitions, demonstrations, iron pours, plus much more. Franconia will be hosting a celebration that day, from 6 to 8 pm, at Franconia in the City@Casket, during our 20th Anniversary Alumni Exhibition.



The **ABC Competition** continues and we draw close to the time when representatives will travel to North Carolina to present in front of a panel of judges 'Why Chisago Lakes is America's Best Community'. We plan to Live-Stream the presentation on Wednesday, April 27. Time and place forthcoming. Soon we will find out if we advance to the top 8 at which point would receive \$100,000 to bring our plans to life! We already are seeing many positive things coming out of this process. One is the new Chisago Lakes Logo with the tagline.

— Annual —



EAST CENTRAL MINNESOTA
Job Fair



Tuesday, April 26, 2016 12:30-4:30pm

AFRC – Cambridge Community Center

CHISAGO LAKES LIBRARY

11754 302nd St, Chisago City
651-257-2817 www.ecrl.lib.mn.us

USED BOOK SALE!

FRIDAY, APRIL 22 & SATURDAY, APRIL 23



Come early for best selection. Library opens at noon on Friday. There will be books available for all ages. Proceeds go to library programs and furnishings. The event is organized by the Friends of the Library. The group does not accept textbooks, Reader's Digest condensed books, National Geographic magazines or non-fiction books over five years old for resale.



20880 Olinda Trail, Scandia
www.GammelGardenMuseum.org 651-433-5053

SWEDISH LANGUAGE CLASSES

Spring Classes: Mondays April 18-May 23

- Beginning Class 5-6pm
- Intermediate Class 6-7pm
- Advanced Class 7-8pm

Cost: Spring Session \$60. Prices include materials. Reservations are required and can be made by calling 651-433-5053.

MN Chamber Update

Business Benchmarks: Making Minnesota ready By Doug Loon

The Minnesota Chamber works every day to help Minnesota businesses – large and small, all types and sizes – change, compete and grow. Our job is to make sure that Minnesota is ready for our next opportunities.

Policymakers and business leaders are challenged to chart a path to maintain a vibrant economy. Minnesota must be ready for the future - ready for change and to grow. To do so, everyone must be on the same page with an objective measurement of where Minnesota businesses stand among the pressures of an interconnected global marketplace.

To that end, the Minnesota Chamber and our local Chamber Federation network is pleased to present our inaugural Minnesota Business Benchmarks - <http://mnbiz.cc/1R2iiYW>. These key economic indicators size up our business climate from a business perspective – providing comprehensive and impartial data on Minnesota's economic competitiveness. The benchmarks are collected from sources such as state and federal government data. We will update these measures annually and use them to advocate for both private-sector and public-sector solutions.

Among the key takeaways in our report:

- Minnesota's quality of life and talented workforce is the envy of many.
- There are mixed results for Minnesota's overall business and economic climate.
- Too many indicators show Minnesota's cost of doing business as not competitive.
- Minnesota is improving in key infrastructure areas of transportation/educational attainment, with more work to do.

We must work collectively to build on the state's strengths and minimize its weaknesses. We must identify those statewide actions that make Minnesota ready for economic change, opportunity and growth.

A great deal of our attention will be on state government. What occurs inside the Capitol hallways in St. Paul matters greatly to our economic prosperity, because Gov. Mark Dayton and the Legislature can – and do – make strategic decisions that affect the ability of individuals to start, run and grow a business.

It's noteworthy that our first Business Benchmarks provides an excellent springboard for the Minnesota Chamber's top priorities at this year's Legislature.

By cautiously using the surplus, we can invest in our economic and physical infrastructure by passing both strategic business tax relief and sustained investment in roads, bridges and transit.

We must pursue initiatives in the public and private sectors to better synchronize workforce skills with the needs of the changing economy. Access to a strong broadband network and providing investment tools for workforce housing development will help all regions of the state to grow.

We will engage on important topics like workplace regulations. We urge policymakers not to enact one-size-fits-all mandates that

can reduce flexibility for employers and employees alike. To instead look to a private-sector solution that illuminates best practices and set clear goals for putting them to use in workplaces. In addition, we'll work with the State Council on Disability and Human Rights Commission to make sure small and mid-sized businesses have the time needed to comply with accessibility laws and avoid expensive lawsuits that can end up shutting these employers down.

The Minnesota Chamber welcomes a robust discussion on identifying the public policies and delivering solutions to ensure that Minnesota is ready for change and ready to grow. That benefits all Minnesotans.

Doug Loon is president of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce: www.mnchamber.com.



Minnesota Chamber of Commerce
The Voice of Business

NORTHWOODS ROASTERIE

An adventure in every cup!



12710 First Ave N
Lindstrom, MN
651-257-5240

NorthwoodsRoasterie.com



Hazelden

Part of the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation

800-257-7800

Center City | Chaska | Maple Grove | Plymouth | St. Paul



BILL WADDELL
President

24408 Greenway Ave
Forest Lake, MN 55025
Phone: (651) 464-6477
Fax: (651) 464-7241
bill@BillsAutoBodyMN.com

www.BillsAutoBodyMN.com



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FAX: 651-257-9774

Need directions to your financial destination?



James M Green
Financial Advisor

11492 Brink Ave
Chisago City, MN 55013
651-257-7407

Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

Member SIPC



TOM KIEFFER AGENCY
Insurance & Financial Services
Hwy. 8 - Chisago City
651-257-6600
tkieffer@farmersagent.com



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www.CentralBnk.com



St. Croix Regional Medical Center

M-F 8 AM-5 PM

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