



CHAMBER Connection

Now you can get a job reference that is worth something

After years of grass roots lobbying by businesses and Chambers of Commerce across the state, the Legislature finally passed job reference protection legislation. The bill has been signed into law by Governor Pawlenty and takes effect August 1, 2004. This legislation provides protection to employers who disclose certain information about current and past employees to potential new employers. Your Chamber of Commerce has been lobbying for this legislation for a number of years. It has been our number one priority because small employers need tools to help them make wise decisions when hiring. In a small business, each employee is such a high percentage of the overall employee count that it is critical that we all hire the right person the first time. Next month we will be enclosing a brochure in the newsletter that describes the provisions of the law; what information can be given and in what format—oral or written. Look for this in your July Newsletter.

Mark your calendars

GOLF TOURNAMENT **Monday, August 9, 2004**

Team registration information will be in the July Newsletter, at the Chamber Office or online @ www.flacc.org after June 15

BUSINESS EDUCATION DAY

Tuesday, August 24, 2004
Registration forms will be in the July Newsletter or online @ www.flacc.org

Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce
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OUR MISSION

The Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce is an organization representing business and industry, working together to advance the economic well being of its members and the community.



Calendar of Events

June

- 4 A Tour Ambassadors
- 9 Program/Activities Committee Meeting
- 10 Board of Directors Meeting
- 16 Marketing Committee
- 17 Annual Board Planning Session
- 22 a.m. Connection-- Fairview Lakes Regional Health Care

Community

- 4 Rockin Hollywoods Community Concert-- Lakeside Park
- 8 Arts in the Park
- 9 Last Day of School
- 10 Graduation
- 15 Arts in the Park
- 22 Arts in the Park
- 29 Arts in the Park



* BUSINESS OF THE MONTH



JNT Landscaping

JNT Landscaping is owned and operated by Jamie Taylor, who was born and raised in Forest Lake. Jamie became interested in landscaping while taking Agriculture classes at Forest Lake High School, and began his business in his senior year. Following graduation, he continued his education in landscape construction at Anoka-Hennepin Tech.

Now entering its sixth year in business, JNT Landscaping is a full service company that prides itself on treating each job as its only job. "No job is too small and all jobs are equally important," is not just a slogan to Jamie. Each customer receives a detailed, written estimate so they know the scope of the job and the materials to be used. That makes it easier for them to compare estimates and choose the one that works best for them. Customers are given an estimated start date for their project and kept informed of its status on an ongoing basis.

JNT Landscaping specializes in retaining walls, paver/concrete patios, lakeshore, decorative rock and mulch, raised gardens and planters, shrubs, sod, grading and commercial snowplowing.

Jamie believes in supporting the local community and uses local providers for most of his materials, as well as area sub-contractors whenever possible. He joined your Chamber in mid-2001 and encourages members to support each other in their personal and business transactions.

Call Jamie at JNT Landscaping for your free landscaping estimate. He can be reached at 651-462-5505.

We accept Visa or MasterCard for all Chamber events.



FROM
THE
CHAIR



Let's Work Together Toward Our Common Goal

Our mission says that "The Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce is an organization representing business and industry, working together to advance the economic well being of its members and the community."

That is what we all should be doing by patronizing other member businesses. Your Chamber tries to make it easy by publishing the member roster in Many Faces and on our website, as well as the list of renewing and new businesses in Chamber Connections. We hope you'll take a moment to call new members when they're announced, just to say Hello, and welcome them to your Chamber.

By taking just a moment to read the member lists, you'll get some great ideas of how you can utilize their services. Tim's Marina is a good example. If you don't have a boat or pontoon, did you know he has rentals available? Maybe you can do like we do and rent one for Fathers Day to take grandpa out for a spin and picnic on Forest Lake. If he's from the area, I'm sure he'll see a big change in the shore since he was young.

With wedding and graduation season, Carters has something for all occasions. They've been here for many years so you know they're reputable. Maybe it's time to check out the new cafe for breakfast or lunch. The Jelly Jar is locally owned, and they have a pleasant surprise in store for you with their homemade creations. Now that the weather is getting nicer, try Peppermint Parlor for a great lunch or supper, and especially the ice cream and other treats they serve.

This is my last column as chair of the Forest Lake Area Chamber and I want to thank Debby and Candi for helping me through. It's been a year of change for the Chamber, with a new location, a new logo, and a new sign. Membership has never been this high, and all things combined, it was a very successful year.

We have a lot of new things planned for the coming fiscal year, which begins July 1. Good luck to Rob Griffin of Gaughan Properties who will take over as your new chair, also on July 1.

Thank-you,

Deb Oaks
Forest Lake Travel

Welcome, Janet!



We would like to welcome Janet Hesselgrave who started in May as our new Administrative Assistant and is catching on to everything very quickly. You will be seeing her name on your emails. Be patient with her until she learns all of your names and faces. I always say it takes a full year to really be trained in at the Chamber because we do so many different events all through the year. Janet will be here Monday through Friday from 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

We recently had to say goodbye to Janel Moeller who left us to take a part-time position with her Church. We will miss her smiling face around here, although she pops in once in a while to say hello.

Customer Contacts By Staff in April

Apartment Lists Requested	2
Calls Answered for Chamber President (not counted elsewhere)	150
Demographic Info Request	38
Emails	587
Event, Chamber or Member Queries.	186
General Business Referrals & Maps	100
Government, Social Agency or Organization Referrals	17
Moving Packs Requested	5
New Member Inquiries	8
Specific Member Referrals	51
Total Contacts	1325
Walk-in Visitors Included Above.	181
Unique Visitors to Website	1377
Total Number of Visits to Website	1883

OUTGOING MAIL COUNT IN APRIL

(excluding Newsletter & Bulk Rate Mailings)	
Apartment List	0
Bills	19
Tourist Info.	2
Invoices	28
Miscellaneous	12
Member Communications	101
New Member Info	7
Demog/Moving/New Res Packs	7

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Traffic congestion solutions in the works

Twenty-one years ago when I moved here I never thought about getting in a traffic jam in Forest Lake. Now it can be commonplace — especially since I live west of the freeway. We are now engaged in a planning process that we hope will result in a thirty-year fix for Broadway and Highway 8. The City of Forest Lake, Washington County, the Minnesota Department of Transportation and your Chamber are at the beginning stages of the planning process that will probably take a year.

One of the most important pieces of this process is the participation of the businesses that are and will be affected by any changes before, during and after the construction. A Business Task Force is being formed. If you have not received an invitation to participate and are interested, please give me a call. We are just beginning this process and probably won't see construction begin for at least two or three years. But it is exciting and all of the players are at the table. If you think you have something to contribute give me a call.

Debby
debby@flacc.org
651-464-3200

Patronize Your Fellow Chamber Members

Looking for solid ideas to get the most from your money? Contact a Chamber business from the list below.

Financial Planning

American Express Financial

Adviser Dave Drolson
8 North Lake Street
Forest Lake, MN 55025
651-464-6713

American Express Financial

Adviser Gary Kerkow
8 North Lake Street
Forest Lake, MN 55025
651-464-1764

Edward Jones & Co.

255 Hwy 97, Suite 7A
Forest Lake, MN 55025
651-464-0309

Five Star Financial Resources

14155 Lake Drive
Forest Lake, MN 55025
651-464-1198

Prudential Financial

20665 Fenston Avenue N
Forest Lake, MN 55025
651-982-6342

Wealth Management Midwest

20 N Lake Street, Suite 310
Forest Lake, MN 55025
651-464-2664

Thank You Renewing Members

The following members have renewed their investment in their Chamber of Commerce. Please utilize their services whenever possible:

Carlson Wagonlit Travel

Community Helping Hand

Edina Realty

Golden Tones Tanning Inc.

Imperial Impressions

Miller Law Office, P.A.

NAPA Auto Parts

Premier Marine Inc.

Ron's TV & Appliance

William Stackpole, DDS

**Subway Sandwiches & Salads,
Forest Lake**

Thomco Carpet

**United Way - Greater Twin
Cities**

**Zemke Bookkeeping and
Consulting Services**

Welcome New Members

Anoka Hennepin Credit Union

3505 Northdale Blvd. NW
Coon Rapids, MN 55448
Jeff Claussen
763-422-0290

Andrew Hegstad, DDS

20 N Lake St
Suite 311
Forest Lake, MN 55025
651-464-5550

St. Francis of Assisi Animal Rescue

P.O. Box 256
Forest Lake, MN 55025
Joyce Winnick
612-387-4869
www.stfrananimal.org

Stuart Hypnosis Center

1068 S. Lake Street
Suite 9
Forest Lake, MN 55025
Mark Stuart
651-466-0291

a.m. Connection June 22



The next a.m. Connection will take place on Tuesday, June 22 at 7:30 am at Fairview

Lakes Regional Health Care, 5200 Fairview Blvd, Wyoming. Take an hour to mix and mingle with other Chamber members while enjoying a light breakfast. If you don't have an entire hour, don't worry—stay as long as you want. Please register by calling the Chamber office, 651-464-3200, or online at www.flacc.org.



June Refreshment Host

Thank you!

Xcel Energy

The Refreshment Host supplies the Chamber with coffee, pop, and snacks for meetings held at the office. The cost is \$30 in cash or supplies.

Four traits of good leaders

Increase your effectiveness as a team leader with these suggestions:

Don't push too much.

Encourage your team members to do more, but know when it's too much. The signs: flaring tempers, moodiness, sarcasm.

Exhibit good values. As a leader, your example will be followed — whether or not you're trustworthy and committed.

Roll up your sleeves. Never be afraid to do what it takes to get the job done. Team members will respect you more when you show willingness to work along side them.

Serve others. "How may I help you?" is a good phrase for co-workers as well as for customers. And by helping your team succeed you'll succeed as well.

Bolingbrook, Illinois, Chamber Newsletter

Don't forget to register for a link from our website to your email, your website, or both. See the registration form online at www.flacc.org.

Seven service sins

Is your service-oriented business meeting customer expectations? In a survey on customer dissatisfaction, author Karl Abrecht found that service complaints fall into predictable categories, which he calls the seven sins of service.

Apathy. Frontline, customer-contact personnel conveying the impression that comedian George Carlin describes as "DILLIGAD" (Do I look like I give a damn?).

Brush-off. Trying to get rid of a customer by brushing off their need or problem; using phrases like "It's not my job." Or "It's not my department."

Coldness. Expressing impatience, hostility, curtness or simply being unfriendly; the message to the customer "You are a nuisance, please go away."

Condescension. Treating the customer with a patronizing attitude or being overly familiar — referring to customers as "hun" (as in honey).

Robotism. The fully mechanized worker that treats every customer the same without a trace of warmth or individuality.

Rule Book. Putting rules and regulations above customer service; an excuse not to provide service, use personal judgment or exercise common sense.

Runaround. Avoiding or delaying service by continually referring customers to someone else in the service cycle.

Abrecht recommends discussing the seven sins with your frontline, customer-contact staff, and soliciting their ideas to make sure that your business isn't guilty of them.

Kodiak, Alaska, Chamber Newsletter

Business tips for keeping computer systems secure

The Better Business Bureau, the National Cyber Security Alliance, and the Federal Trade Commission are urging small businesses to keep their computer systems secure by evaluating their computer security practices regularly and by performing a substantive security audit at least twice a year — when they're focused on changing their clocks. The BBB and the National Cyber Security Alliance have developed a checklist to help businesses guard their computer systems against attacks. For more information, visit their Web site at www.mnd.bbb.org.

Minnesota Chamber delivered real progress on health care reform in the '04 session

By David Olson, president, Minnesota Chamber of Commerce

The Minnesota Legislature's regular session ended without a state budget or bonding bill, but the headline that no one wrote was that we made significant progress on health care reform — our member's number one priority. The Minnesota Chamber worked with key legislators to not only pass key health care issues but to defeat several attempts to pass a bill that established a separate statewide school health care plan. This health care plan would have been exempted from the Minnesota Comprehensive Health Care Assessment (MCHA) and premium taxes, shifting substantial costs to small business.

In the end, the Minnesota Chamber achieved:

Consumer information on quality and cost. For the first time, consumers will have access to information that will allow them to compare providers based on quality and cost. Health care providers must give consumers an estimated cost of the services they cover so consumers can better understand the cost of doctors and hospitals to encourage them to shop for best prices. Pharmacies must disclose to a purchaser the amount of co-payment and the overall cost of a prescription so consumers can better understand costs of prescription drug and to shop for best price. The state will

collaborate with a non-profit organization to develop best practices guidelines for several disease areas. Guidelines will be made public to help with purchasing decisions.

Health Savings Accounts (HSAs). The Chamber succeeded at changing state laws that technically prohibited HSAs. However, because no budget agreement was reached and no tax bill passed, state tax laws still do not conform to federal law and HSAs are not yet tax deductible from state taxes.

MCHA (Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association). The Chamber was successful in changing the make-up of the MCHA board to include two small business members to represent the businesses that largely pay for the program. MCHA now will also offer incentives to enrollees to participate in disease management programs that should improve quality and produce savings.

Mandates. The bone marrow transplant mandate was repealed but a new mandate passed requiring coverage for ovarian cancer screening despite our concerns that the test has not delivered reliable results.

Disease management. Public health care programs will be required to implement disease

management programs for recipients to improve the quality of care and lower costs.

Multiple Employer Welfare Arrangements (MEWAs). The Chamber helped pass changes that refine state law to make MEWA health care purchasing pools economically feasible.

Employer purchasing alliances. Purchasing alliances between employers and health care providers are now allowed to cover seasonal employees.

Electronic records work group and electronic transmission. A new group will recommend how to improve electronic health records among providers. Health plans will be able to transmit information electronically to enrollees reducing administrative costs.

Accreditation. Health plan companies that meet certain areas of national accreditation standards no longer need to duplicate a state process.

Health care reporting. A working group will look at ways to streamline health care reporting requirements to achieve administrative savings.

These measures are important components of our goal to increase quality and drive down the cost of health care. For more information about these measures, contact Carolyn Jones at 651-292-4670.

May Ambassadors

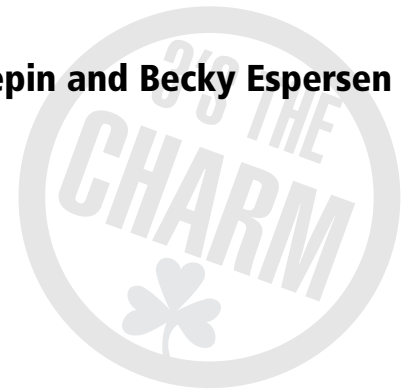
3'S THE CHARM

Members of the Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce volunteer their time to make "Ambassador Visits" to local businesses each month. If you would like a visit from the Ambassadors, please call the Chamber office at 651-464-3200. The Ambassadors visited the following businesses in May:

Ambassador: Charles Killingbeck



Chamber Member
THE NESTING GROUNDS
Cara Applequist, Nikki Pepin and Becky Espersen



Chamber Member
PEPPERMINT PARLOR & EATERY
Wendy Chelberg and Mildred



Chamber Member
SISBRO PRINTING, INC.
Zach Koepp and Tony Hoglund