



CHAMBER Connection

Serving the communities of Columbus, Forest Lake, Lent, Linwood, Scandia, Stacy, and Wyoming

Home Show Saturday, March 6, 9:30-4:00

Forest Lake High School will be the scene of the 8th Annual Home Show sponsored by your Chamber, the Forest Lake Area School District's Community Education, Forest Lake Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep and Forest Lake Mitsubishi.

This one day show will feature over 90 booths that range from home improvement to self improvement. Food will be available from Big Apple Bagel.

2004 Home and Business Show Seminars

TIME	COMPANY	SEMINAR TITLE
10:30 a.m.	Five Star Financial	21st Century Business Strategies
11:00 a.m.	North Lakes Charter Academy	Choosing a School for your Child
11:00 a.m.	Mattson Funeral Home	Planning in Advance
11:30 a.m.	Lindal Cedar Homes	Sunrooms, Porches and Additions
11:30 a.m.	Sun Yi's Academy of Tae Kwon Do	Tae Kwon Do — Changing Lives Forever
12:30 p.m.	Bracht Chiropractic	1/2 Hour to Health
1:00 p.m.	Forest Lake Health Club	Women's Self-Defense Class
2:00 p.m.	Trinity Mortgage	Home Financing and Credit Repair
2:30 p.m.	Senator Michelle Bachmann/ Representative Ray Vandever	Q&A with Michelle and Ray
3:00 p.m.	U.S. Restoration & Remodeling	Children & Adults with Special Needs & Accessibility Issues in the Home
Ongoing	McCarron's Building Center	Deck Building and Product, Booths #42-44

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.



F.Y.I.▶ Chamber Members to Review Forest Lake Sign Ordinance, Friday, March 12 8-10 a.m., V.F.W. See President's Column for further details.

Patronize your fellow chamber members

Need dirt, rock, mulch or help with your landscape design? Visit a chamber member for all your landscaping needs.

Bracht Bros., Inc.

8303 216th St. N.
Forest Lake, MN 55025
651-464-2246

Forestland Nurseries & Landscaping

20001 N. Forest Blvd.
Forest Lake, MN 55025
651-464-7038

JNT Landscaping

23560 Neches St. N.E.
Stacy, MN 55079
651-462-5505

Sanders Wacker Bergly, Inc.

Landscape Architects

365 E. Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55101
651-221-0401



BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

RAPHEAL CONSULTING



Rob Rapheal

Rapheal Consulting

If you need some heavy-duty programming done, you'll want to call Rapheal Consulting, owned by Kim and Rob Rapheal of Scandia. Kim and Rob both

have degrees in computer science and have worked for Honeywell as well as other companies for over a decade. Rapheal Consulting specializes in Access97, Access XP, Visual C++, COM, ActiveX, and Visual Basic development.

Six years ago, Kim was the first one to make the leap from the security of a steady paycheck to the freedom of contracting when she opened Rapheal Consulting. Kim was thrilled with the transition and urged Rob to join her in the business, which he did in late 2003.

According to Rob, he was apprehensive at first, but has found that contracting works out much better for both the Rapheals and their two children. It not only gives them more control over their time and which projects they work on, it has also eliminated the daily commute Rob once faced from Scandia to Eden Prairie.

Most of their clients are Twin City based mid and large size businesses, and Rob says they get a lot of repeat business from individual departments in larger corporations. He says the last couple of years, the economy has forced many companies to delay projects. That has created a pent up demand that Rob thinks will result in larger, and more comprehensive projects in the near future.

Rapheal Consulting has been a Forest Lake Area Chamber member since December of 2003. Rob says they became Chamber members when he joined Kim in the business because it was a good way for him to meet with other business owners and because he wanted to become more involved in the community. Rob is also a member of the Forest Lake area district school board.

Rapheal Consulting can be reached at 651-433-5847. Their website is: www.raphealconsulting.com.

We accept Visa or
MasterCard for all
Chamber events.



Chamber board takes position on harness racing track

Your Chamber's Board of Directors heard a presentation from the North Metro Harness Racing Initiative (a new Chamber Member) and passed a resolution of support to the Racing Commission.

The resolution is as follows:

Whereas the North Metro Harness Initiative has identified a site for a future harness racing track in Columbus Township;

And whereas they are proceeding through all of the legal steps at all governmental levels;

And whereas this will be a private enterprise paying its fair share of taxes;

And whereas this project has the potential to be a valuable tourism and economic development tool for the northern metropolitan area;

Be it resolved that on February 12, 2004 the Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors voted to support the efforts of North Metro Harness Initiative in their bid for a harness racing track in Columbus Township.

FROM
THE
CHAIR



Sometimes we all need a new look

How do you like our new look? Our new logo and revised newsletter format combined with our new location signals that the Forest Lake Area Chamber is coming of age. And soon our new building signage will be up! We thank the Marketing Committee and Joni McPherson of McPherson Graphics for the wonderful job.

A huge thank-you to all who helped make the casino night a big success and a sold out event this year. Gaming fun, a silent auction and great food all led to a very exciting evening. And a big thank-you for those participating in the home show, also a great event.

Now to my favorite part—recognizing Chamber members who make an impact on me personally. I'll start with the great women at LaGrande Salon and Day Spa. From the minute you enter the door you are made to feel special. I am lucky to have a wonderful hair stylist, Deanna, who has been taking care of my hair and beauty needs for a few years now. She does a wonderful job translating my moods, and on days when I need a new look, or I feel the need for a special "sass" to my hair, she understands. She knows just what to do to make a women feel good about her looks. To work in this type of situation you need to be like a therapist. Deanna is super, as are all the others I see when I'm there. They have a way of relaxing you even if you don't have time for a massage.

Another fun place our family had the chance to meet at for my father's birthday dinner, was Norman Quacks. What a fun restaurant and a great menu. It was hard to choose from all the great selections, but the entire family was delighted. The service and food was terrific. It's also a fun place to be with all the memorabilia to look at around the room.

The next time you're in need of a service in the area, don't forget to call on a Chamber member first. That's what I do.

Deb Oaks

Forest Lake Travel

Phone Systems for Sale

- **Forest Lake Area Chamber** has a system with 3 speaker phones, capable of up to 4 lines. \$200. 651-464-3200.
- **Gaughan Properties** has a phone system for sale. Call 651-464-5700 for more information.
- **Neujahr Remodeling** has a phone system for sale. Call 651-464-7155 for more information.

Customer Contacts By Staff in January

Apartment Lists Requested	0
Calls Answered for Chamber President (not counted elsewhere)	133
Demographic Info Request	35
Emails	690
Event, Chamber or Member Queries.	211
General Business Referrals & Maps	148
Government, Social Agency or Org Referrals	18
Moving Packs Requested.	4
New Member Inquiries	14
Specific Member Referrals	48
Total Contacts	1457
Walk-in Visitors Included Above.	156

FROM THE PRESIDENT



One of the reasons chambers of commerce exist is to help members deal with issues that apply to many of them but are difficult to handle individually. Many of you have had difficulty with the City of Forest Lake's year old Sign Ordinance.

The City is in the process of merging the Zoning Ordinances of the City and the Former Township. They are currently reviewing all zoning ordinances and now is the time for them to receive our input on the Sign Ordinance that was enacted a little over a year ago.

Our goal is to present a list of suggestions for changes that we can begin negotiating with the City. We will be meeting March 12 at 8:00 a.m. at V.F.W. Post 4210, 556 SW 12th Street, Forest Lake. Please allow at least two hours. It will be helpful if you have reviewed the ordinance, which you can get from their web site at www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us. If you do not have access to the internet call my office and we will fax you a copy or stop in to either the City offices or your Chambers office for a copy. Bring your suggested changes ready to discuss.

Keep in mind they will not rescind the ordinance entirely, but if we do not take this opportunity to negotiate changes we may have to live with it for a long time.

Debby

debby@flacc.org
651-464-3200

Better Business Bureau E-lert

This E-lert is courtesy of the Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota

The Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota is experiencing a high volume of calls from the public regarding E-mails they have received. The E-mails are from an individual or individuals claiming to be contacting them on behalf of companies like Visa International Inc., US Bank, and PayPal.

The Visa E-mail tells the recipient that Visa has implemented a new security system and asks cardholders to click to a link to reactivate their account. Although the link looks like it should go directly to Visa (www.visa.com), it is attached to the scammer's own Web site. The user is asked to give personal information about themselves, including their credit card number. The US Bank E-mail works much the same way: the recipient is pulled to a phony Web site to give personal information. The PayPal E-mail tells the recipient that their account is about to expire and they will need to download the attached software to update their account.

These E-mail messages are schemes to defraud the public of money and should be reported to the authorities immediately. For more information on this story and security tips to help keep your personal information safe, please go to www.bbbmnd.org.

Welcome new members

Stove & Fireplace Showroom

255 Hwy 97 Ste 3A
Forest Lake, MN 55025
651-464-9761

Anoka County

2100 3rd Ave.
Anoka, MN 55303
763-323-5710

Toddler Town

5377 266th St.
Wyoming, MN 55092
651-462-1407

North Metro Harness Initiative

2001 Killebrew Drive #306
Minneapolis, MN 55425
952-853-9990

The Linwood Group

6751 NE 229th Ave.
Stacy, MN 55079
651-462-4645

Climate Works, Inc.

7140 340th St.
Stacy, MN 55079
651-257-2400

Forest Lake Health Club

1650 11th Ave. SW
Forest Lake, MN 55025
651-464-0888

Avon Products/Heidi Jensen

23421 Sunset Rd.
Linwood, MN 55005
651-462-6822



Thank you renewing members

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

Courage Forest Lake

AmericInn Motel – Forest Lake
Applebee's

ERA Muske – Karen Wong

Pretty Bird International

Independent Security Solutions, Inc.

Lobster Shop

Edward Jones & Co – Patrick Growe

Ace Solid Waste

All In One Vending

Avalon Homes Inc.

Lakes Transmission Service

Direct by Owner – Mike Guindon

Crystal Pierz Marine

OSI Physical Therapy

All Season Builders

Sun Yi's Academy of Tae Kwon Do

Lake 5 Theatre

Arthur's Furniture

Spartan Security

Rapheal Consulting

Target of Forest Lake

Marketplace Foods

Schwan Consulting

March Refreshment Host

Thank you!

All In One Vending – Brent Schlieff

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.

Calendar of Events

MARCH

- 2 The A tour Ambassadors
- 3 Program/Activities Committee
- 4 Membership Committee
- 6 Forest Lake Home and Business Show
- 11 Board of Directors Meeting
- 12 Sign Ordinance Meeting
- 16 Golf Day Task Force
- 18 Minnesota Business Day at the Capital
- 19 Member Orientation

Community Calendar of Events

MARCH

- 4 Forest Lake Area Youth Service Bureau Annual Meeting

Grow Minnesota!

Building our economy by building business

By David Olson, president, Minnesota Chamber of Commerce

Minnesota's future depends on a strong, diverse business environment. The Minnesota Chamber believes the private sector needs to lead the effort to grow our economy, and last fall, launched Grow Minnesota! Grow Minnesota! is a private sector-led, business retention and expansion effort. It is a hands-on initiative of CEO's visiting with CEO's across the state to thank them for doing business in Minnesota and to identify possible obstacles to their growth and expansion here. It is also a perfect compliment to our public policy agenda at the State Capitol.

Grow Minnesota! is a statewide initiative that will unite Minnesota communities behind the premise that our state as a whole is greater than its parts. Working together to build the state's economy, we will benefit our great small towns, vibrant regional centers and growing metropolitan area more than each can benefit on its own.

Twenty-seven local chambers, including the Forest Lake Area Chamber, have partnered with the Minnesota Chamber in the first year of the program with the goal of visiting 500 companies this year. To date, we have made nearly 100 company visits and already, through our local chamber partners, are making an impact on the expansion decisions of businesses. For example, in Willmar, highway access was identified as an issue and the Willmar Lakes Chamber provided assistance to resolve that problem. A commonly heard refrain throughout the state is that company executives have never been visited by anyone, much less a private sector peer, who simply wanted to say "thank you."

An advisory board of statewide leaders, chaired by Wells Fargo President Jon Campbell is guiding this effort. Fifty eight private sector companies as well as the McKnight Foundation and the Blandin Foundation, have made a three year commitment to fund this effort. While 27 local chambers signed on the first year, we have at least a dozen additional local chambers across the state that plan to apply to be a Grow Minnesota! partner next year.

The time is right for the private sector to set the course for job growth in Minnesota. The Minnesota Chamber has a long tradition of making our state's business environment more competitive through its leadership in shaping public policy. Our emphasis has now expanded to include building the statewide economy. Grow Minnesota! dedicates itself to producing job growth and greater economic prosperity for all Minnesota communities.

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.

Casino Night was a great success!

Thank you to our Casino Night Corporate Sponsors and to all the business who donated items to the silent auction and raffle. Your generosity helped to make this event a SUCCESS!

CORPORATE SPONSORS

Connexus Energy
 ERA Community Support
 First State Bank of Wyoming
 Forest Lake Times/St. Croix Valley Peach, ECM
 Grand Casino Hinckley
 Mainstreet Bank
 US Cable of Minnesota
 Excel Energy



Guests perusing the Silent Auction table

BUSINESS DONORS

ABBA Trophy
 ABBRA Carpet Cleaning
 AFLAC-Wendy Renard
 ALLSTATE -Bob Wheaton Agency
 AmericInn Motel—North Branch
 Applebee's
 The Balloon Shop
 Beadiful World
 Big Apple Bagel
 Bill's Auto Body
 Birchwood Arbors
 Blockbuster Video—Forest Lake
 Bracht Bros., Inc
 Law Offices of Buckley & Jensen
 Carousel Beauty Salon
 Carter's Jewelry & Gifts
 Centennial Mortgage
 Century Fence Company
 Chips Computer Services
 Coates RV Center
 Country Home Bakery & Deli
 Country Inn & Suites of Forest Lake
 Crystal Pierz Marine
 Cub Foods
 Curves For Women-Forest Lake
 David Engelking LTD
 Dazy Maze Incense & More
 Doc Savage Productions
 Domino's Pizza
 Fairview Lakes Regional Health Care
 Falcon Ridge Golf Course
 Famous Dave's

Fifth Avenue Collection
 Fireplace Design and Spa Center Inc
 First Service Insurance Agency
 Forest Lake Area Athletic Association
 Forest Lake Cycle & Skate
 Forest Lake Ford
 Forest Lake Motor Sports
 Forest Lake Tobacco
 Forest Lake Travel
 The Forest Laker
 The Forum for Health and Fitness
 Frankincense & Myrrh
 Gaughan Properties
 Golden Tones Tanning Inc.
 Great Clips for Hair
 Ramona Hall
 Houle's Farm Garden & Pet
 Imperial Impressions
 Independent Security Solutions, Inc
 Jelly Jar Cafe
 Kelly's Apparel
 Congressman Mark Kennedy
 Kyoshin Ryu Karate Academy
 Lakes Snyder Drug
 Lakeside Groceries
 Landmark Insurance Services
 Lobster Shop
 Marketplace Foods
 Mattson & Wiens LTD



Patrick Smith enjoying a game of Black Jack

Mattson Funeral Home & Cremation Service
 McDonald's - Wyoming
 Micro Consulting
 The Music Connection
 Norman Quack's
 Nyman, Dr. Richard DDS PA
 Old Log Cabin Restaurant
 Papa Murphy's
 Peppermint Parlor & Eatery
 Perkins Restaurant
 Pizza Hut of MN Inc
 Play It Again Sports
 Pretty Bird International Inc
 Quizno's Classic Subs
 Rainbow Foods
 Rapid Press Printing & Copy
 Center
 Rolseth Drug
 Ron's TV & Appliance
 Roxy's Total Image
 Royal Concrete Pipe Inc
 Spirit FM WLKX-FM
 Thomco Carpet
 Town Square Optics
 UptoDate Bookkeeping, Inc
 Vast Innovations, Inc
 Village Inn Restaurant
 Wal-Mart
 Wells Fargo Bank
 Wine & Roses Liquors
 Woodsedge Gallery
 Za Pizzeria

February Ambassadors

THREE'S A CHARM AMBASSADORS

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 February:



Gander Mountain: Stacy Jensen, Julie Meis

Pictured (L to R): Stacy Jensen, Denny Varns, Candy Girtz, Kristy Nelson, Julie Meis



Lakewoods Chiropractic

Pictured (L to R): Candy Girtz, Jason & Josee Gerard, Kristy Nelson & Beth Ahlgren



a.m. Connection

A convenient, fun way to uncover new business leads by networking and meeting other Chamber members at a member's place of business.

sponsored by the



FOREST LAKE AREA
Chamber of Commerce

- No Fee ■ No Program
- Coffee, Juice and Rolls

Bring business cards (staple a business card to a dollar bill and drop in the fishbowl for the opportunity to have lunch with another member)

Company _____

Number Attending _____

____ We would love to host a future a.m. Connection



Thursday,
March 25, 2004

8:00 am to 9:00 am

Gavia, Inc.

At the Chamber Office
56 East Broadway
651-464-3200

Please R.S.V.P. by
Wednesday, March 24 @
651-464-3200 or fax
form to 651-464-3201
or e-mail to
chamber@flacc.org



Do you have questions about exporting goods?

The Department of Commerce Trade Information Center is a great resource to help businesses learn more about exporting goods to foreign markets. The center can be contacted at: 1-800-USA-TRADE or on their website www.tradeinfo.doc.gov. The website provides information about General Export, Country Information, Export Program Guides, Tariff Tax Info, Exporting Resources, Trade Offices Nationwide, Trade Events and more. Check it out!