



2009  
Annual Report

Annual Meeting  
Tuesday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2010  
The Jewel

# The Lake City Chamber of Commerce

## Mission Statement

The members of the Lake City Area Chamber of Commerce are dedicated to working together, fostering a prosperous trade environment, and providing a unified voice for business in our community.

## Goals:

- To provide members with resources, services, and information to further their business success.
- To entice local & tourist customers into our member businesses.
- To serve as a voice to city government and establish a meaningful communication link to county regional and state government.

“Working Together. Building Business.  
Strengthening Community.”



## A Message from 2009 President, Kurt Schreck

As my year as Chamber President draws to a close, I recognize subtle, yet important advancements in the organization this past year. Admittedly, I have enjoyed tremendously the special challenges 2009 brought to Chamber leadership. I leave with confidence in our future, and commitment to continue, support and complete important initiatives only begun over these past twelve short months.

The year 2009 will be remembered largely for the economic uncertainties put before us, nationally, regionally, and locally. In retrospect, in the context of these extraordinary challenges, our mission of working together, building business, and strengthening community, might have been appropriately updated for 2009 to *working together, retaining business, and preserving community*. I am impressed and humbled by the uncommon resiliency shown by our local business community as they navigated through the economic storm that was 2009.

I would like to acknowledge the membership for their continued confidence in the chamber. In a year marked by austere budgets, maintaining your membership was strong ratification of the value and performance of our Executive Director, staff, and the board of directors. Thank you.

Special thanks to those who gave time and energy in 2009 to serve on the Board of Directors, the Retail Action Team, the Ambassadors, event committees and event team volunteers. Your performance, dedication and commitment aptly demonstrated the essence of our mission statement.

Much effort in 2009 centered on sharpening our focus, reinforcing our operating platform and building additional capacity for member services, as we carefully negotiated the establishment of the Tourism Bureau as an independent entity. Ultimately, the goal of producing a more representative group, to support and enhance tourism activities, was achieved. Both organizations have since subscribed to a truly new way of working together, a valuable outcome for the community.

Despite unimaginable economic challenges to the status quo in 2009, I step back as president with great optimism. Our new President, Gordy Anderson will embrace his role in planning for the demands of 2010. We are fortunate for his willingness to serve and his capacity for leadership.

I have seen sparks, a new era of community leadership in organizations, institutions, and government throughout Lake City. The Chamber can be an integral element to a new collaborative community operating system. I believe it can provide leadership to move toward a more regional, sustainable economy, to redefine quality of life for our membership and the community of Lake City.

Let us make the most of our opportunities in 2010.

Respectfully,

J. Kurt Schreck

## A Message from the Incoming President Gordy Anderson

As I reflect on the past year, I would like to express my appreciation and thanks to Kurt Schreck for his leadership and dedication in thoughtfully guiding the board through the decision making process required to help the Chamber achieve a very successful year. A big thanks, also, to the retiring board members Tracy Brunkow, Nancy Denzer, Carol Hoops & Wendell Noble for sharing their individual talents and abilities during their terms of service, and of course, Mary and Robyn for their continued hard work and dedication to their positions. It has been a privilege to serve and work along side all of them.

2009 was a year of great challenge for many of us in the Lake City area. Businesses, large and small, city government, schools, medical facilities, service organizations were all forced to adapt to the “new” economy by trying to conserve resources and gain new efficiencies to either maintain or do more with less. Out of this, came a new spirit of cooperation within the community.

- Individual organizations have joined forces to assist the food shelf.
- City, EDA, School Superintendent, Chamber have met jointly.
- Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions, Better Futures have met to find ways to cooperate.

I have sensed a feeling that “we are all in this together” and we need to support and encourage each other.

Capitalizing on this spirit of cooperation, and the enthusiasm that it breeds, will be a key asset as we face the opportunities and challenges that 2010 will bring. My focus this coming year will include:

- Making the Chamber a community leader in nurturing cooperation between city, EDA, tourism, school, retail, manufacturing, medical, service organizations, churches and other interest groups to foster understanding and facilitate positive outcomes for the Lake City area.
- Continuing with re-vitalization of the downtown business district by working with Chart the Course and retail businesses and property owners.
- Promoting, supporting and encouraging, Retail Action Team, Lake City Ambassadors and SPARK.
- Capitalizing on the excellent marketing potential of Tour de Pepin.
- Continuing to add additional enhancements and value to your membership investment.

I have truly enjoyed the time spent working with the Chamber board and I look forward to this new opportunity to serve with so many great people who care deeply about making the Lake City area an even better place to live, shop, eat, play and thrive. Thank you in advance for your support and all the things you do make your Lake City Chamber of Commerce such a great organization.

Sincerely,

Gordon Anderson

## 2009 Festivals

### Water Ski Days

Water Ski Days was a most successful event in 2009! With the weather being at ideal conditions, along with the highly popular bands in the entertainment tent, people were aplenty! It seemed that everyone genuinely enjoyed the festival this year, with few complaints. Many of the events had great improvements this year. An addition of a 10K Run to go along with the 5K was added, the Bean Bag Tournament was moved to the entertainment tent to allow for more room, the Waffle Breakfast was moved to the Bingo Tent, and the Christian Music Concert was changed to a Family Concert and featured a highly popular group, with great attendance! We sold out of buttons early this year and are planning on more in 2010! What great community support!

### Johnny Appleseed Days

2009 was a trying year for Johnny Appleseed Days! The weather was less than ideal for the first time in a number of years and Wild Wings didn't have their event to go along with Johnny Appleseed Days. All of the volunteers & committee members still did a great job and should be commended for their resilience. There were a lot of Farmer's Market & Arts & Crafts Vendors this year, which provided for great buying/selling opportunities. Two big changes were that the Friends of the Library Book Sale moved locations and the Chili Cook-Off was more centrally located under a big tent by Patton Park. Consider having your business coordinate a Chili Team for 2010—It's a great way to promote your business & support the community! Look for 2010 to bring about more changes, additions, & improvements!

**Robyn Dankers, Event Coordinator**



Tour de Pepin: June 6, 2009

630 cyclists registered for Tour de Pepin in 2009, a 50% increase from last year's inaugural tour. The Lake City Chamber of Commerce spearheads this event, partnering with volunteers from Wabasha, Pepin, Stockholm, Bay City, Red Wing, and Frontenac, in an effort to draw recreational tourists to the Lake Pepin region. TDP offered three tours: 12-miles (to Wabasha), 32-miles (to Stockholm) and 72-miles (full Lake Pepin loop).

In addition to complimentary passes for the Pearl of the Lake and the National Eagle Center, all registered riders received a dinner ticket for the new "Friday Night Welcoming Reception" at Hok-Si-La Park. The catering team from Bronk's Bar & Grill served up a spaghetti dinner, as riders checked in early to pick up packets and t-shirts.

Tour weather 09 was unseasonably cold; it rained the entire day! Volunteers made last minute arrangements for towels, warm beverages, and extra shuttle services. Despite the challenges, most riders seem to enjoy the adventure and promised they'd return in 2010. Post-event surveys rated volunteers as "exceptional".

The TDP Committee selected a beneficiary for a portion of 2009 proceeds. Tour de Pepin presented \$ 1,000 to support The Lake Pepin Legacy Alliance. LPLA is a non-profit organization determined to preserve and restore Lake Pepin as an integral part of the upper Mississippi River system.

**2009 TDP Gold Sponsors:** Nat'l Eagle Center, Pearl of the Lake, & Horizon Milling

**2009 TDP Silver Sponsors:** Lake City Federal Bank, Pepin Heights, Hearth & Home Technologies, PostNet, Voila Media Group, Lake Hits 95, and Penn Cycle.

## Chamber Ambassadors

In 2009, the Lake City Chamber Ambassadors refined their mission and developed a new action plan. Meetings are now held on a quarterly basis. Ambassadors look ahead to the next quarter's events, and schedule their participation at upcoming Chamber functions.

*Ambassador Mission: To actively promote the chamber's mission, through participation in the following:*

- Recruitment and retention projects
- Recognition activities
- Event support

Ambassadors recognized special anniversaries this year at Lake City Federal (75), Pepin Heights (60), Hok-Si-La Park (35), Portside Liquor (10), and Voila Media Group (10). Ribbon cutting ceremonies were held at Anytime Fitness, Hopes Harvest, and Lake City Candle Company. Mississippi Mercantile, Lake City Lumber, and Local Elements received First Dollars.

Chamber packets were delivered to a number of prospective members.

Sponsorship packets were delivered during Water Ski Days, and ambassadors also volunteered with Tour de Pepin and Johnny Appleseed Days events. A special e-newsletter was created for Manufacturer's Week, and ambassadors checked in with Lake City manufacturers to gather "good news" items to share with the membership. Finally, the orange shirts were abandoned this year, in favor of names badges with special ribbons!

2009 Ambassadors: Tracy Brunkow, Mandy Beltz, Liz Carlstrom, Paul Luhmann, Asia Christenson, Nancy Rigelman, and Kathy Beck. We are currently recruiting for 2010, so please contact an ambassador to learn more!

## Executive Director Report

Mary Huselid

In addition to the committee reports included in this packet, your Chamber of Commerce sponsored, partnered, and/or participated in these activities in 2009:

### Manufacturer's & Large Employer meetings:

Quarterly M & LE meetings are co-sponsored with the Lake City Economic Development Authority. In March, a special presentation from MNEnergy Smart was held, highlighting efficiency opportunities in motors, process heating, and lighting. Attendees also received an explanation of local utility conservation programs. Round table discussion topics for this group have included: leadership potential among the local labor force, opportunities to collaborate with the school district, business ethics and finance, shipping and export issues, and strategies for lowering expenses to sustain profitability in today's market. Manufacturer's Week was held in October of 2009, with recognition activities and presentations by Mayor Dunbar and Kevin Kaufman of Enterprise Minnesota.

### Spark:

Initiated by member Liz Carlstrom of Hearth & Home Technologies, this NEW women's networking group held its first meeting in October at Nosh Restaurant. Nest hosted the January meeting, and other locations are planned for 2010. Showcase your business by hosting a meeting, or join the group to spark new ideas and friendships. Gatherings are held the first Monday of the month from October to May.

### Golf Outing:

The fourth annual Chamber golf outing was held in September at Lake City Golf. Thirty-six golfers participated in the "9 & Dine", a four-person best-shot scramble. Various levels of sponsorships offered business exposure; some sponsors even designed their own hole contests. Several non-golfers attended to socialize and network. The Chamber will explore new opportunities for golfing events in 2010 at member courses, including: Lake City Golf, The Jewel, Mount Frontenac and Lake Pepin Golf.

### Joint Committee:

This group held quarterly meetings in 2009 that were attended by representatives from the Chamber of Commerce (Executive Director & President), the EDA, the City of Lake City, and ISD 813. The Joint Committee discusses organizational initiatives and opportunities to collaborate with one another on various projects.

### Tourism/Visitor-Related:

The Chamber withdrew oversight of lodging tax dollars in June of 2009. A new organization, Lake City Tourism Bureau, Inc. is now assuming responsibilities for administration of this marketing fund. We thank the 2009 appointees for their efforts before and during the transition: Larry Nielson, Cathy Nichols, Joanne Klees, Loreen Waalkens, and Kurt Schreck.

The Chamber encouraged tourism through implementation of three major festivals plus:

- Sail for Leukemia (Lake City Yacht Club sponsored event): Provided registration support.
- 100 Mile Garage Sale (Mississippi Valley Partners sponsored event): Produced a Lake City sales map for residents and visitors.
- 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks (Account management and fundraising with the VFW)
- Group Tour & Special Event packets: Created new Lake City folders for visitor and special event participants (Ex. Pearl of the Lake tours, Highland Games, HHT's annual golf tournament).
- Attraction Guide (RAT project): A listing of specialty shops, restaurants, attractions, etc. was produced for campers at Hok-Si-La Park.
- Visitor Center: Maintained Saturday office hours from April – October for visitor support.

### Website & Chamber Marketing

- Upgraded to the ChamberMaster program for our website's business directory, allowing members to update their listings, post jobs, hot deals, and events. Web stats were made available to members.
- Home page changes to highlight festivals. Event posters and registration forms became available on-line.
- "Join Our Mailing List": Collected addresses and e-mailed quarterly newsletters to promote festivals and other Chamber-sponsored activities.
- Member list: Publicized in Lake City Shopper (full listing appeared twice in 2009)
- Chamber Bucks: Heavily promoted through classified ads in October - December.
- Strengthen Our Local Economy group: Local Shopping promotions in Graphic, Shopper, and Holiday Coupon Book.
- Chamber Chat: Weekly radio address on Lake Hits 95.

### Community Development/PR

- Volunteer support: Holiday Train 09 visit
- Winterfest 09: Chamber Smoosh Team

### Memberships:

The Lake City Chamber of Commerce is a member of

- Mississippi Valley Partners
- Minnesota Chamber of Commerce & MN Chamber of Commerce Executives
- Rochester Chamber of Commerce
- Lake City Tourism Bureau, Inc

Sincere Appreciation To All  
The Chamber Bucks Patrons  
\$36,760 SOLD!

Over \$5,000 Purchased

Federal Mogul  
Hearth & Home Technologies

Over \$1,000 Purchased

Engineering Laboratory Design, Inc.  
JMC Computer Service  
Lake City Medical Center  
Lakeshore Agency  
Public at Large

Over \$500 Purchased

AE Credit Union	Lake City Dairy Queen
Huettl's Meats	Lake City Federal Bank
Lake City Chamber	Lakeshore Dental

Over \$100 Purchased

A & W Consulting Services	Lake City Lions Club
Acrotech/Di-Acro	Lake City Music Boosters
Almost on the Corner Closet	Lake City Rotary Club
Boilermakers Local 650	Ripley Dental
First Congregational Church	State Farm Insurance
Frontenac Sportsmans Club	The Bronk's & The Galley
Hammer Financial Services	The Jewel Golf Club
Lake City Education Association	Treats & Treasures
Lake City Fire Department	Triple-R-Sales
Lake City Graphic & Shopper	

## 2009 Board of Directors

Kurt Schreck, President: Pepin Heights Orchard

Wendell Noble, Past President: A & W Consulting Services

Gordy Anderson, President-Elect: Engineering Laboratory Design

Nancy Denzer, Vice-President: Lake City Dairy Queen

Tracy Brunkow, Director: The Galley

Bridget Hoffman, Director: Bronk's Bar & Grill

Carol Hoops, Director: Lake City Federal Bank

Mike Ryan, Director: Ryan Repair

Jeff Brand, Director: Lake City Marina

Kathy Jo Rodester, Director: Dragonfly Dreams & Lakeshore Agency

## 2010 Board of Directors

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Bridget Hoffman, Director: Bronk's Bar & Grill

Jeff Brand, Director: Lake City Marina

Susan Draves, Director: Hope's Harvest

Alan Hansen, Director: Hansen's Harbor

Krystal Ohlhaber, Director: Lake City Medical Center

Terry Schumacher, Director: Lake City Graphic & Shopper