

# The VOICE OF BUSINESS

GRAND RAPIDS AREA



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## June 2009 Chamber Events

**\*RESERVATIONS ARE NOW REQUIRED!\***

June 1st 2009 luncheon speaker:

**Lake Country Power**  
**Rick Lemonds**

Today's Energy Environment:

The link between energy availability, affordability and environmental responsibility.



A Touchstone Energy<sup>®</sup> Cooperative



**Rick Lemonds**

Rick Lemonds has been the general manager at Lake Country Power since April 2002.

Prior to coming to Lake Country Power, he spent four years as general manager of Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative (Tyler, Minnesota) and, before that, worked ten years with the Federal government's Rural Utilities Service as a field representative and loan finance specialist for public utilities.

He grew up in Big Lake, Minnesota, and holds a bachelor's degree in finance from Bemidji State University.

Rick and his wife Wendy have three boys - Ian (EE-an) is twelve years old, and twins Max and Jake are 11.

In his spare time, Rick enjoys golfing and hunting.

Please join us at 11:45 a.m. at the Sawmill Inn. The cost is \$11.00 at the door and RESERVATIONS are required. Please call Renee at 218-326-6619 or [renee@grandmn.com](mailto:renee@grandmn.com) no later than May 29th at 12:00 noon.

June 24th 2009 Breakfast

Connection sponsor:

**Rapid Fuel**

816 S. Pokegama Ave., Suite A  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

8:00 - 9:00 a.m.



The mission of Rapid Fuel nutrition club is to bring good nutrition to the community of Grand Rapids. Rapid Fuel is a combination of 4 different industries: 1) a nutritional counseling center that identifies and supports clients with their personal nutritional goals 2) a supplementation store in which clients can purchase personalized nutritional programs 3) educational facility that pro-

vides group nutrition classes, weight loss challenges, and guest speakers 4) a smoothie shop that serves meal replacement smoothies and energy boosting green tea. Want to know more? Go to [www.rapidfuelmn.com](http://www.rapidfuelmn.com). Looking forward to seeing you at the Breakfast Connection.

BRING TWO DOLLARS AND A BUSINESS CARD if you want to participate in "Split the pot".  
If not just bring yourself and your business cards!

**In 2004, Itasca County area employers told us...**

*"Entry level employees are lacking basic skills"*

**5 years later, we invite you to tell us what has changed.**

Go to

[www.surveymonkey.com/jobskillssurvey2009](http://www.surveymonkey.com/jobskillssurvey2009)

to complete the survey by June 15.

**This is your opportunity to have a say in how we prepare our workers of the future.**



### Upcoming Chamber Luncheons

**RESERVATIONS ARE NOW REQUIRED**

**Reservations must be given to Renee Thompson**

**by the Friday before the luncheons by 12:00**

**noon either by email [renee@grandmn.com](mailto:renee@grandmn.com) or**

**218-326-6619 - NO later!**

**Held at the Sawmill 11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**

Luncheon date: NO JULY LUNCHEON

Speaker: N/A

Sponsor: N/A

Luncheon date: August 3rd 2009

Speaker: Better Business Bureau

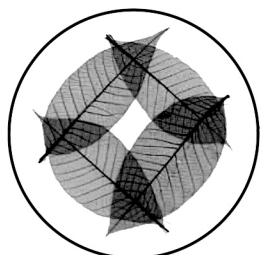
Sponsor: United Way

Reservations needed by July 31st 2009 - 12:00 noon

June 1st 2009 luncheon sponsor:

**Diamond Willow**

Diamond Willow is proud to serve the seniors of the Grand Rapids community! Please join us as we host the Grand Rapids Chamber Luncheon to learn about our fabulous alternative to the nursing home. We offer a place that captures the essence of home with peace, privacy and dignity. Our private suites feature a private bath and all the amenities of home. Diamond Willow Advanced Care Assisted Living is here when a Smaller Setting is Best!



**Diamond Willow**

ADVANCED CARE ASSISTED LIVING

**May 2009  
Customer Service  
Award Winner -  
Kris Kral  
Dr. Perrott's office  
Congratulations for your  
excellent customer service!**



**Bobbie Kleffman - Chamber Workforce Committee and Kris Kral**

**New members**

**Woodland Resort**  
19811 Dart Road  
Grand Rapids MN 55744  
218-326-0612

**Jill Castilla**  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

**Wheelchairs Plus, Inc.**  
1001 South  
Pokegama Ave., Suite B  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744  
218-326-1833

**Shady Shore Resort**  
40012 County Road 19  
Deer River, MN 55744  
218-246-8665

**MN Clay Target  
Sports Edu &  
Training Ctr**  
GRAND RAPIDS  
GUN CLUB  
723 Peterson Road  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744  
218-326-3348

**Irene Koski**  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744



**What is a  
Community Bank?**

Let me take you back to 1908 - Henry Ford introduced his Model T, an airplane took its first passenger flight, and Northview Bank opened its doors in Finlayson, Minnesota. Since then this small-town bank has grown apace with our northeastern communities, and we now have branches in Barnum, Willow River, Cromwell, Floodwood, Grand Rapids and Deer River.

To be a community banker means you know your customers - they're your friends and neighbors! Northview understands the needs of families with kids in school, of business owners whether large or small, of the local non-profit and community service organizations. We live in these rural Minnesota towns near our parents and grandparents, and we're proud to reflect their values of integrity and honest work in our local bank.

We also take pride in offering financial services and products as fine as those you might get in a big city, but you don't have to leave home to find them.

Our personal checking account offer advantages second to none. Try free personal checking, or consider our Premium Checking Account with LifeLock identity theft prevention, safety deposit box coupons, and even a one-time bump up on a Certificate of Deposit rate.

We can help you invest in your future with IRA's and CD's. Our savings accounts have competitive options, and the Kids Club accounts are great fun.

We offer lending services to people in our community to help buy that car, truck, RV or boat. We're a leader in financing vacation property, and we can help you purchase your new home or re-finance your mortgage.

Northview understands business, and we offer No-Fee Business Checking\*. We also have a variety of business financing options and can offer working capital to help you purchase the new commercial property or expand your business.

About that question: What is a Community Bank? WE ARE! We are Northview Bank, and we are proud to be part of this community with you.

**TWO LOCATIONS:**

Northview Bank Grand Rapids  
411 Pokegama Ave S  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744  
218-326-5145  
or 1-800-821-6889

Northview Bank Deer River  
216 S.E. 4th St, P.O. Box 518  
Deer River, MN 56636  
218-246-8221

**June 2009 Business Spotlight Recipient:**



**Northview Bank Grand Rapids - Shawn, Patricia, Maureen, Cassie.**



**Northview Bank Deer River - Ms. Casey, Jeff, Ella, next row, Clair, Shirley, and Barb.**

**MEMBER  
FDIC**



**Ribbon  
Cutting**



**Kindred House Company opened a second location at the Old Central School in Downtown Grand Rapids. Both locations offer similar products from furniture, braided rugs, and seasonal decor to candles, pottery and antiques. The new location, however, is the area's source for homespun fabrics, hand-dyed wool and wool roving. You'll also find hand-dyed embroidery threads, punch needle and rug hooking projects, and stitchery patterns and supplies. Kindred House ~ Downtown will be offering classes, too. Both locations are open Monday through Saturday 10 to 5. Kindred House is located in the Central School. Call 218-999-7088 Grand Rapids, MN Pictured: Chamber Ambassador Shane Skelly, Owner Wendy Johnson, Chamber Ambassadors - Clair Skelly & Laurie Gomez**

**June 2009**

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1 Chamber Luncheon 11:45 a.m. Sawmill Inn Sponsored by: Diamond Willow Speaker: Lake Country Power - Rick Lemonds (see front page)	2	3	4 Program Committee Meeting 8:30 a.m. Chamber Conference Room	5
8	9	10 Ambassador Committee Meeting 8:00 a.m. Bixby's	11 Young Professionals Meeting 12:00 noon Chamber Conference Room	12
15	16	17 7:30 a.m. Past Leaders Forest Lake Restaurant  12:00 p.m. Workforce Development Committee Meeting Chamber Conference Room	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
22  29 Board of Directors Meeting 11:30 a.m. Rivers Italian	23  30	24 Breakfast Connection 8:00 a.m. Hosted by: Rapid Fuel (see front page)	25 Area Business Committee Meeting 8:00 a.m. Chamber Conference Room	26 7:30 a.m. Government Affairs 9:00 a.m. Forestry Affairs Both meetings held in the Chamber Conference Room



*"The Right Place To Do Business!"*

# Attention: All Greater Itasca County Businesses

In 2004, the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce asked business owners and managers in the area what issues and concerns they had with prospective and newly hired employees. The business community told us that "all was not well" with recently hired employees. Issues such as the lack of basic educational skills, technical skills, attitude and work ethic were affecting every aspect of our local economy.

The 2004 Job Skills Survey was a spring board for discussion within the larger business and educational community on how to best prepare our students for life and work. Strategic partnerships were formed throughout the education, business and economic development community with the common goal of building a talented workforce. The workforce was divided into four segments; Future workforce (ages 0 to eighth grade), the Emerging workforce (ninth grade to 14th grade), current workforce training, and achievement gap.

Those discussions produced change throughout education systems and community service providers. The Chamber has been directly involved with building strategic partnerships that continue to meet the needs of a high performing workforce. The following are just some of the efforts initiated in the past five years:

- *Project Read* expanded from District #316 into the Itasca County area in partnership with KOOTASCA Community Action. This program encourages reading, speaking, and singing to children in their earliest years to build social skills required in the workforce in later years.
- *CEO's in the Schools* is a program which brings business owners and managers into the classroom to meet with eighth grade students.

These future workers learn about the importance of soft skills and preparing for the future through education.

- *Future Workers* is a program designed to bring 9th grade students into direct contact with three local businesses for a two hour "tour" of the expectations and educational requirements of being employed, what it takes to be a good employee, and what jobs are housed within local businesses.

- A one-stop scholarship program was created by the Grand Rapids Area Community Foundation to encourage continued education and training beyond high school.

- For business owners and their employees, there is now a one-stop-shop for continued education and professional development through the *Workforce Exchange for Learning and Development (WELD)*. This extensive line-up is offered through ICC Customized Training and Community Education utilizing the skills and talent of local trainers.

- *GRANDWorks* is a job training program that targets adults in the achievement gap. This groundbreaking program is run by a partnership with Itasca County Health and Human Services, Northeast MN Office of Job Training, Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency Adult Basic Education, Itasca Community College and Northway Group, Inc.

- *Applied Learning Engineering Careers and Summer Building Institutes* give high school students hands-on experience in careers that are in demand in our local community.

Many other projects and programs focus on a building a talented workforce. These are only a few.

Others across the country are excited about

what we have been able to do in our region. Bud Stone, President of the Grand Rapids Area Chamber and Paula Frings, Cleveland Management and Consulting Group, have presented across the region, state and country on how the building of strategic partnerships has linked efforts in education, employment and economic development. This has allowed a "rural voice" for business to be heard throughout the United States. Thanks must go to our partners who have done so much of the work, and the Blandin Foundation that has financially supported many of the Chamber's workforce development initiatives and other partners.

It has been five years since that first survey, and a lot of things have changed in our community and our world. It's time to see if the changes directed toward the workforce have had an impact on the business community and the employability of workers. The Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce Workforce Development Committee will be contacting all area businesses, both chamber and non-chamber members, via email and postcards to ask that they respond to the Job Skills Survey 2009. The survey will be done via the internet with a tool called SurveyMonkey. It will be conducted between June 1st and June 15th of 2009. In October, the results of the survey will be revealed to the business community at the Chamber monthly luncheon. We encourage ALL businesses located in the greater Itasca County area to take the time to complete the survey. It is your opportunity to influence local education, employment, and training programs which prepare your workforce.

Tell Us what YOUR Workforce Needs Are.....

By completing "Job Skills Survey 2009"

June 1 - June 15, 2009

www.SurveyMonkey.com/  
jobskillssurvey2009



Margie Ritter

# Chamber Invests in Future Workforce

I decided to:

- "Work harder in everything I do."
- "Try my best." "Get good grades."
- "Set goals for myself."
- "Make choices wisely."
- "Take more math and science in high school."
- "Go to college."

These were comments written by several area 8th graders who participated in the CEO's in the Schools Program during the 2008-2009 school year. Approximately 600 students from seven area schools including R.J. Elkington Middle School in Grand Rapids; Greenway's Connor-Jasper Middle School; Northland High School in Remer; Bigfork, Deer River and Hill City Schools; and new to the program this year, Naskwauk-Keewatin School, took part in the program.

A diverse compilation of area business leaders volunteered to give an hour presentation to between 25-30 students at one of the participating schools. "What hit me most was the look on the kids' faces when I talked about the reality of the cost to live on your own" stated Troy Anderson of White Ivy Design who presented to Naskwauk-Keewatin students in January. "And if they don't get a good education the possibility of them having to work two full-time, minimum wage jobs to bare-



**Pictured: Dale Fuhrman - RJEMS Substitute Teacher, Joe Mahar - UPM Blandin Paper Co.,**

ly make ends meet is significant.

Amy Beier of Northland Portables, who presented at RJEMS in April, explained, "I feel the most important message for the students is to stress that they have control of their education, career and future simply by working for it. They need to consider this (school) their first job."

The program, started in 2006, is designed to help students begin thinking about their future in the work world and how the decisions they make now affect work life later. Through an interactive presentation, students learn from local business leaders the value of education to their future, the sig-

nificance of post secondary education, the importance of learning soft skills, and what it will take to realize their own dreams. CEO's in the Schools is the first in a series of strategic partnerships between employers and students that provide an opportunity for them to learn more about each other in order to nurture a healthy work environment.

It is with gratitude for their contribution to the CEO's in the School Program that the Chamber's Workforce Development Committee would like to recognize the following 18 Chamber member CEO's who helped to shape our future workforce.



**Pictured: Brenda Gibeau - RJEMS 8th Grade Teacher, Rick Lemonds - Lake Country Power, Nikki Frick - RJEMS 8th Grade Student**

- Troy Anderson - White Ivy Design
- Amy Beier - Northland Portables
- JoAnn (Tink) Bircherm - Valley Forest Products
- Gary Dietrich - Northway Group
- Cindy Feyder - Edward Jones
- Mark Glasnapp - Terex-ASV
- Doug Hanson - Hawk Construction
- Ron Herbig - Bergquist Company
- Pat Kane - Lefty's Tent & Party Rental
- John Kutch - Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital
- Rick Lemonds - Lake Country Power
- Joe Maher - UPM Blandin Paper Company

- Brian Nicklason - Woodland Bank
- Glenn Patrick - AMEC
- Drew Prochaska - Rapids Rental & Supply
- John Rajala - Rajala Companies
- Madelen Schuemann - Boswell Energy Center
- Jeff Stampohar - Deer River Health Care Center

CEO's in the Schools is sponsored by the GRACC Workforce Development Committee and funded in part by the Blandin Foundation.

# The GreenWorld Project



Bill and Cathy Sayward

The GreenWorld Project, a dba of Itasca Greenhouse, Inc. provides live evergreen tree seedling favors and gifts for any special event. Established in 1991, Bill and Cathy Sayward bought the assets of The GreenWorld Project from its original owner in New York and moved it to Minnesota in 1998. From its humble beginnings, the GreenWorld Project has grown into a nationally recognized leader in specially packaged tree seedlings for any special event or promotion. We are dedicated to providing you with high quality evergreen seedling trees for all of your special occasions or corporate needs. Our specially packaged live tree seedlings are environmentally friendly, unique and natural gifts which will provide everlasting memories for your friends and loved ones of the many occasions in our lives such as weddings, birthdays, new baby, remembrance and funerals.

They are also popular for business promotions such as increasing leads at trade shows, larger responses from mailings, growth in sales, not to mention the long lasting attention they receive. Giving a tree seedling as a gift or favor is an opportunity to put trees in the hands of people who may not have considered planting a tree otherwise. Society at large is taking a more personal interest in their environment, and the gift of just a single seedling can open the door for individuals to become more active as stewards to the world around them. Big or small, young or old, everyone can join the effort to plant more trees and better our environment. While the best time to plant a tree was 20 to 30 years ago, the next best time is now. Regardless of the occasion, a tree seedling provides a living, lasting remembrance that can bring years of enjoyment. For more information contact The Green-

World Project at 1 800 538 8733 or visit their web site at [www.greenworldproject.net](http://www.greenworldproject.net). If you are interested in sending a tree seedling to a friend or for a special occasion, you can go to [www.mailatree.com](http://www.mailatree.com), select a saying or poem or make your own and on the following business day The GreenWorld Project will mail out a seedling for you.

Itasca Greenhouse, Inc. was established in 1983 and Bill and Cathy Sayward took over ownership and management. In 1988. Since that time we have "grown" the business, increasing the growing, production and storage areas, so that we are better able to meet the increasing popularity of containerized tree seedlings. Presently we can produce 6 million plus containerized seedlings per year and have a wide selection of conifer, hardwoods and shrubs available. Itasca Greenhouse, Inc. offers conservation grade seedlings for reforestation, wildlife plantings, soil stabiliza-

tion, wind breaks and other tree planting needs. Since the roots of the seedlings remain protected in a soil plug, containerized tree seedlings offers flexibility for the landowner to plant over a longer planting season, from spring frost out until early fall. Survival rates are also high as the containerized seedlings handle rough sites, poor planting techniques and dry weather conditions better. Seedlings are available for general sales through our sales catalogue or through our internet site, [www.itasca-greenhouse.com](http://www.itasca-greenhouse.com). Order early, as we often sell out of the more popular species and seed sources. We also custom and contract grow for customers to meet their planting needs. Celebrating over 25 years of business, we strive to be big enough to meet your tree planting needs, yet small enough to give you the personal attention that you deserve.



## Golf Outing & Fun Day At Wendigo Golf Course Thursday, July 23, 2009

### INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION

#### Individual - \$96.00 (Includes tax)

##### Individual package includes:

- 18 holes of Golf (4-person "Scramble" format) 1:00 p.m. shotgun start
  - 2-motorized carts per foursome (carts available to first 120 registered golfers)
  - On-Course games
  - Lunch and registration beginning at 11:30 a.m.
  - Social hour with cash bar beginning at 6:00 p.m.
  - Steak dinner and Awards Program beginning at 7:00 p.m.
  - Door prizes
  - Great Networking and FUN! FUN! FUN!
- \*Optional Money Game\* - \$40.00 additional cost per 4 person team (Cash payment the day of the Golf Outing).

### SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

#### Hole Sponsor - \$315.00 (Includes Tax) Call for availability.

##### Sponsorship package includes:

- Your business name in all event publicity
- Your business name on professionally designed hole sponsor sign
- Sponsor acknowledgment in an issue of the Chamber Newsletter "The Voice of Business"
- Green fees, lunch and dinner for one golfer
- Opportunity to have a game or promotional event at the hole you sponsored

#### Prize Sponsor - \$213 .00 (Includes Tax)

##### Sponsorship package includes:

- Your business name in all event publicity
- Sponsor acknowledgement in an issue of the Chamber Newsletter "The Voice of Business"
- Green fees, lunch and dinner for one golfer
- Sponsor recognition during the Awards Program

#### Prize donation

##### Donation package includes:

- Your business name in all event publicity
- Acknowledgement in an issue of the Chamber Newsletter "The Voice of Business"

### REGISTRATION FORM

\*\*\*\*Registration and Prepayment required\*\*\*\*

In the event of rain - You will receive a rain check for 18 holes of golf and a 1/2 cart to use at Wendigo Golf Course at your convenience.

No Cancellations after July 10, 2009.

Individual Registrations X \$96.00 each (includes sales tax) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Optional money game X \$40.00 per four person team = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hole Sponsor - \$315.00 (includes sales tax) call for availability  
 Prize Sponsor - \$213.00 (includes sales tax)  
 Dinner Only - \$38.00 (includes sales tax)

Visa or Master card number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail check or credit card information to:

Renee Thompson  
 Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce  
 One NW 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
 Grand Rapids, MN 55744

Credit card registration also available by phone, email or fax.  
 Phone - 326 - 6619, email [renee@grandmn.com](mailto:renee@grandmn.com) , fax 326 - 4825.

Names of Golfers:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

If foursome is not complete, you will be placed with other individual golfers.



[www.grandmn.com](http://www.grandmn.com)

*"The Right Place  
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## THE GRAND RAPIDS AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

*"Advocate for a business  
environment in which our  
members can prosper."*

[www.grandmn.com](http://www.grandmn.com)

## 2009 - Board of Directors

<b>Chair of the Board</b>	
Margie Ritter	SMR Software, Inc.
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<b>Treasurer</b>	
Amy Trast	American Bank
<b>Past Chair</b>	
Sherry Frick	Minuteman Press
<b>Visit Grand Rapids</b>	
David Marty	Reif Arts Center
<b>One Year Term</b>	
June Johnson	Northern Business Products
Brandon Sharp	Wal-Mart
Mike Iaizzo	KOZY/KMFY
Sholom Blake	Sholom Blake, CPA
Peggy Schagh	US Bank
<b>Two Year Term</b>	
Gary McInerney	RE/MAX
Cheryl Lemler	Up North Kettle Corn
Jane Bymark	Itasca Economic Development Corp.
Greg Chandler	UPM/Blandin
<b>Three Year Term</b>	
Megan Christiansen	Northern MN Builders
Lisa Randall	Northway Group
Dave Leveille	Minnesota Power
Kim Jamtgaard	Wildwood Resort
Chad Simons	Rutgers Sugar Lake Lodge

## Staff

Bud Stone President  
 Renee Thompson Administrative Assistant  
 & Finance Coordinator  
 Kerry Larsen Membership & Tourism Coordinator  
 Ruth Gildersleeve  
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## \$ Promote \$

OFFER A CHAMBER MEMBER TO MEMBER SPECIAL  
 This is a opportunity for Chamber Members to offer a special deal to other Chamber Members. You can use the Chamber e-mail system to reach over 600 potential customers. Only one MEMBER TO MEMBER special is available each week. That's only 52 a year! Now that is special! It's a perfect way to put your business in front of your most wanted customers and it offers special treatment to members of your own organization. Renee Thompson or Kerry Larsen at 218-326-6619 or [renee@grandmn.com](mailto:renee@grandmn.com) or [kerry@grandmn.com](mailto:kerry@grandmn.com).

\$ your business \$

### Charlotte McDermott

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