



235 West Chisholm Street
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www.alpenachamber.com

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CHAMBER NOTES

Alpena Area Chamber of Commerce

By serving its members, the Alpena Area Chamber of Commerce actively champions economic development and the advancement of the community's quality of life.

March/April 2017

Construction: The final phase

Lately our office is a crazy mix of dust, noise, strangers in and out, wires, and stacks of building materials. This is all in addition to our busier-than-usual every day activities. We just entered into our final phase of building renovations (on the same day that our technicians started our entire computer system/server overhaul, which was the Monday just after Annual Dinner - we don't deny that we are a little crazy!). Once this construction is completed, our entire building will have been renovated over the course of the last six years.

You might be wondering what this mean to you, our members, and that's a great question. We want to be responsible with our resources and so renovating a building might not always be the responsible thing to do, but in this case, it was definitely the right thing for us to do. Prior to renovations, the building did not fit our needs. It did not allow for much privacy or confidentiality, it was a terrible place to hold meetings, and it was dark and unwelcoming to visitors/guests. The new building matches more of who we have become. We are professional - and now our building looks professional. We strive to be productive and efficient - and now our building allows us to be more efficient and productive. We have a common area where we can shares ideas and catch up with one another, and we also all have the privacy of our own spaces for when we need to work in private or engage in a confidential conversation. Dozens of guests come to our location every week. Our building is now professional and welcoming in appearance, which leaves a much better impression on the visitors.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome these organizations to the Chamber. As we continue to grow in membership we are able to accomplish more. We appreciate all of our members - both new and returning ones.

Johnson & Schulze, PC
120 N. Ripley Street
Alpena, MI 49707
989.354.8707

First United Methodist Church
167 S. Ripley Blvd.
Alpena, MI 49707
989.354.2490

John's Electric, Inc.
6622 Bolton Road
Alpena, MI 49707
989.356.5797/989.464.6906

South Bay
Alpena, MI 49707
989.464.9047

Alpena Knights Hall
1880 Hamilton Road
Alpena, MI 49707
989.356.0777

Michigan Lighthouse Conservancy
PO Box 973
Fenton, MI 48430
844.654.4487

2017 CHAMBER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairperson: Ryan Fairchild - Omega Electric
Past Chairperson: Luciana King - Lappan Agency
Vice Chairperson: Cindy Limback - RE/MAX New Horizons
Secretary/Treasurer: Brian VanWormer - Employment Services Inc.

Directors: Eileen Budnick - First Federal of N. Michigan; Bruce Duncan - Thunder Bay Therapy; Pat Gerow - R.S. Scott and Associates; Rose Nowak - Better Living Massage Center and Spa; Elaine Orr - Alpena Power Company; Adam Poll - City of Alpena; Shawn Shankie - Days Inn; Dylan Wallace - The Wallace Firm, P.C.



Nonprofit corporations and independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

CHAMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For ribbon cuttings and event details, contact the Chamber at 989.354.4181 or visit www.alpenachamber.com.

March 2017

- 1 - Ambassador meeting, 8:00 a.m.
- 2 - Government Relations Committee meeting, 7:30 a.m.
- 3 - The Cool Things We Make, Part Two Good Morning Alpena Event, 7:00 a.m., Ramada Inn, \$9 per person, registration required, sponsored by Friends of Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary
- 14 - Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance meeting
- 14 - Economic Development Board meeting, 7:30 a.m.
- 24 - New Member breakfast

April 2017

- 4 - Ireland Trip meeting
- 5 - Ambassador meeting, 8:00 a.m.
- 6 - Government Relations Committee meeting, 7:30 a.m.
- 11 - Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance meeting
- 25 - Board of Director's meeting, 7:30 a.m.
- 27 - Chamber of Commerce Open House, details TBA

* register by contacting the Chamber: info@alpenachamber.com or 989.354.4181

We are very happy with the results so far, and look forward to this final phase being completed. When it is, we invite you to stop in and take a look. The tentative date for our open house is April 27th.

We will have before and after photos of all the phases available on our Facebook page once this final phase is completed.

What a difference!



Membership investment reminder: Member investment invoices were mailed in December, 2016, with a due date of January 31, 2017. That date has come and gone, and as usual, a handful of members have yet to pay. If you have not paid your investment invoice, please remit as soon as possible. If you have misplaced your invoice please let us know. Thank you for your continued support!

2017 is off to a Successful Start

We jumped right in to 2017 with a very aggressive plan of action, and what a success it has been. Below is a review of our year so far, and a few reminders of what's coming up.

Military Support Flyer's Hockey Game - This was the first year our military support committee chose to host this appreciation hockey game. It exceeded our expectations. The stands were full, there were lots of military in attendance (of all ages), the Flyer's won, and we all went home happy and exhausted. The next military support event is tentatively scheduled for Monday, June 19th. Details are being worked out.

Why does the Chamber host a military support committee? For three reasons. First, to thank our military for their service. Second, to showcase our community to those who choose to train at the Alpena CRTC. Third, to assure those who train here have a good time and to encourage them to choose Alpena for future training. The impact that the CRTC has on our local economy is tremendous and we want to see that continue and grow.

Business Expo Exclusive Networking Event - For the past few years we have partnered with the Alpena News and their Business Expo to host a networking event the evening prior to the expo. This year's event went smoothly, as expected. We gave away some prizes, enjoyed some networking, and business people got to visit one another's booths instead of trying to squeeze that in the next day when the expo is open to the public, making it difficult to get away to see the other vendors.

Good Morning Alpena - Our first Good Morning Alpena event of 2017 was held in January. We didn't have a record attendance but we did have more than 80 people in attendance, which is large for our January GMA. We learned about health and wellness in the workplace - everything from specific health and wellness programs to ergonomics. Our next Good Morning Alpena event is Friday, March 3rd at 7:00 a.m. Interested? Give us a call! The event sponsor is Friends of the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and the topic is Cool Things We Make, Part Two.

Annual Dinner - A sell-out event with 600 people, this dinner went really well. We changed the program, and have received a tremendous amount of positive feedback on it. The theme, Connecting the Community, was a big hit. The awardees were grateful, and the audience was full of energy and positivity. We are already talking (briefly) about next year's event so now is the time for you to provide us any additional feedback on this year's event.

Educational Attainment/Workforce Development - You have probably already heard of our job shadow efforts, our classroom presentations, and the award we gave at our annual dinner to Elly Diamond for being a teacher that goes above and beyond when it comes to connecting the classroom with the business community, but there is more! Starting in March, we will be working with volunteers from the business community to teach a nine week course on career readiness with all Alpena High School seniors. We are still looking for help on some of the dates. If you are interested please contact Jackie at the Chamber to learn more.

Your membership investment allows us to achieve these things, and more. Once things slow down from the first quarter's events, you will see some additional activities from us. The start to 2017 has been the busiest start to a year we have quite possibly ever experienced. That is good news for sure - it means things are happening! If you have any questions at any time, on any Chamber-related topics, remember we have an open door policy and welcome your questions.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

When Blarney Castle #2 gas station first opened its doors in Bear Lake, Michigan in 1933, the station's owner, Denny McCarthy, prided himself on providing superior customer service. More than 80 years later, the McCarthy family remains committed to putting their customers first.

As it was in 1933, **Blarney Castle Oil and Propane** is a Michigan-based, family-owned business. With more than 120 EZ Mart convenience store locations, propane and fuel oil service, commercial fuel and bulk lubricant sales, their primary goal is satisfying their customers. They are dedicated to providing you with fair and competitive prices, with nine offices in Michigan to serve customers.

As they look ahead to the future, they are grounded by their humble beginnings and grateful for the opportunity to continue to serve their neighbors in Michigan. For fair, competitive pricing on propane and fuel oil, and service you can trust, count on Blarney Castle Oil and Propane. Give them a call at 989.354.2844 or stop by 2222 US 23 South in Alpena. They have seven EZ Mart Stores in the Alpena Area - at the following locations - 1035 West Chisholm Street, Alpena; 2222 U.S. 23, Alpena; 1000 M-32, Alpena; 449 US 23, Harrisville; 27400 M-32, Hillman; 11596 US 23, Ossineke; 101 South Bradley, Rogers City.

Thunder Bay Accounting has been around for over 50 years in the Alpena area. Joyce Brilinski purchased the business in January of 1990. After working in the accounting industry for many years Joyce decided she wanted to own and operate her own business. Since her educational background was in financial accounting and tax preparation services she knew that was the kind of business she wanted to invest in.

Thunder Bay Accounting offers financial accounting services, pay processing services, business and individual income tax preparation services, and QuickBooks accounting set-up and training. They aren't your average tax preparation or accounting firm. With two convenient locations in Alpena and Rogers City, their local, female-owned business offers complete and individualized financial solutions for both businesses and individuals. They combine big firm service with the customer service you'd expect from a small firm, creating a more personalized approach. Whether you need your taxes prepared or need a licensed professional to handle payroll, their experts have you covered.

As family-owned business, with the hope that Joyce's daughters will take over the company after she fully retires, they look forward to continuing to offer valuable business services to the community.



Thunder Bay Accounting can be reached at 989.356.3222 or 800.4747.1008 or you can find them at www.thunderbayaccounting.com. You can also connect with them via Facebook.

The Alpena office is located 1400 US 23 South and is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. with extended hours during the tax season.