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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.

May/June 2018

### A Message From Economic Development Director, Jim Klarich

When Jackie asked me if I'd write this article my response to her was literally, "really"? You see, she knows that I'm not a good writer and a 500-word article might equate to 250 edits for her, but she asked me anyway. I think that she also gave me the freedom to write about whatever I wanted to. Thanks Jackie. So here it goes.

Each February I get to deliver a few words to an ever-growing number of people at our annual dinner - over 600 this year. When people ask me if it's frightening or if I am nervous, my answer is no, not really. In reality, I am very humbled by it. It's amazing to see so many people contribute to the community and our economic development efforts in so many ways in one place without the expectation for personal gain but with the expectation of a return for the community. We really don't do what we do for the people who attend the dinner, they know it, and they still invest in us. What we do is for the people who can't afford to attend, or don't have it as good as us. It's for the dad who needs to support a family, for the kids who deserve a good education and a job one day, for the moms who need a career or a second job to make ends meet, for the kids that haven't even been born yet, for the people who don't live here yet, and for the rest of the people who have to earn a living in our world. It's like all of us are reaching and stretching for something that we can't see and when we finally get ahold of it we're completely prepared to give it away to the next person. Nearly every day of the week you can find a meeting designed to push the community forward. It might be at the Chamber, at a service club meeting, at the DDA, or elsewhere. No one is paid to show up - they are there because they believe in moving the area forward. Walk up on that stage with all of that churning around in your head, look out at that crowd and it's flat out humbling.

All of us have elevated expectations and ours aren't confined to or always about the next store, hotel, or restaurant. There's more to it. It's about setting the stage for more industry, more and better opportunities for more people, balancing everyone's needs and wants, and then controlling how all of it connects to the fabric of our community which embraces its character but is undoubtedly going to grow.

### CHAMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For ribbon cuttings and event details, contact the Chamber at 989.354.4181 or visit [www.alpenachamber.com](http://www.alpenachamber.com).

#### May 2018

- 2 - Ambassador meeting, 8:00 a.m.
- 3 - Government Relations Committee meeting, 7:30 a.m.
- 4 - Leadercast, 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., advanced registration required\*, tickets start at \$65 per person
- 8 - Economic Development annual meeting, 7:30 a.m.
- 11 - Good Morning Alpena breakfast, 7:00 a.m., advanced registration required\*, \$9 per person, sponsored by Accident Fund, location: Ramada Alpena
- 24 - "Become a More Successful Restaurant/Brewery", 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m., ACC Concrete Tech building room 106, \$20 for members, \$25 for prospective members, registration required\*
- 30 - Military support event, 6:00 p.m., Ramada, \$10, registration requested\*

#### June 2018

- 1 - Fireworks bracelet sales at Alpena Alcona Area Credit Union on Bagley, 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
- 1 - Congressman Bergman business roundtable, details TBA
- 6 - Ambassador meeting, 8:00 a.m.
- 7 - Government Relations Committee meeting, 7:30 a.m.
- 19 - Truth Tour Day, Strong Economy forum at 11:30 a.m. and "Divided Michigan" documentary viewing at 5:30 p.m., registration required\* for Strong Economy Forum, \$10 per person
- 23 - Fireworks bracelet sales at the roller derby event, 6:00 p.m.
- 26 - Chamber of Commerce Board meeting, 7:30 a.m.

\* register by contacting the Chamber: [info@alpenachamber.com](mailto:info@alpenachamber.com) or 989.354.4181

### 2018 CHAMBER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairperson: Cindy Limback, RE/MAX New Horizons  
Past Chairperson: Ryan Fairchild, Omega Electric  
Vice Chairperson: Brian VanWormer, Employment Services Inc.  
Secretary/Treasurer: Eileen Budnick - First Federal of Northern Michigan

Directors: Tom Berriman - Alpena Public Schools/AHS; Kevin Burr - Burr Auctions; Bruce Duncan - Thunder Bay Therapy; Pat Gerow - R.S. Scott and Associates; Rose Nowak - Better Living Massage Center and Spa; Adam Poll - City of Alpena; Shawn Shankie - Days Inn; Diane Shields - MidMichigan Medical Center - Alpena



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### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Alpena Resource Recovery Facility**  
4395 M-32 West  
Alpena, MI 49707  
989.354.2607

**Karma's a Fish!**  
2312 US 23 South, Suite 210  
Alpena, MI 49707  
989.340.2260

**Wild Wild West Tobacco**  
2205 US 23 #116  
Alpena, MI 49707  
989.340.2050

**Cabin Creek Coffee**  
201 N. Second Avenue  
Alpena, MI 49707  
989.356.5613

**Blue Water Marine Adventures, Inc.**  
350 East Huron Avenue  
Rogers City, MI 49779  
989.734.2333

**DeVere Industrial, LLC**  
1685 West Hamilton Road  
Alpena, MI 49707  
989.358.8043

**BiggBean LLC/Biggby Coffee**  
224 E. Chisholm Street  
Alpena, MI 49707  
989.884.3853

**The Local Basket Case, LLC**  
109 West Chisholm Street  
Alpena, MI 49707  
989.354.0425

**Besser Senior Living Community, Inc.**  
665 Johnson Street  
Alpena, MI 49707  
906.440.6118

As we continue to grow in membership we are able to accomplish more. We appreciate all of our members - both new and returning.

We realize that everyone hopes for a home run but know that with each at bat and with every single and double that we hit the chances get better and better that we'll hit one out of the park.

Many thanks for all your contributions, hard work, and for helping to keep me humble and on point.

**Thank you, Volunteers!** The Chamber of Commerce has five paid staff members. Take a look at the work accomplished and you'll wonder how five people can get it done. It's because of many amazing volunteers. Thank you, volunteers for all you give toward our mission! From the Board and Ambassadors, to the Government Relations and Good Morning Alpena event committees, we couldn't be as successful without you. Thank you.

## Young Professionals of Alpena Showcase

When the Board of Directors planned for 2018, one of the things they wanted to do which falls under our educational attainment/workforce development goals is to showcase stories of young professionals who have chosen to make Alpena their home. We are currently putting this plan into ACTION. We are in the process of interviewing young professionals (40 or under) in the area and creating videos to tell their stories. These videos will be shared on social media but will also be used in our work with the youth when we engage them in career readiness training. Although it is starting to change, we still hear too often that there is nothing here for young professionals and that they can't move here and raise families. That is simply not true and we will be using these videos to help showcase that the opposite is true. There is opportunity, and lots of it!

If you are a young professional please contact us to participate. If you know of one, please connect us with that person. The young professionals we have reached out to so far have been excited about this project and very willing to assist. We want as many stories as possible so your help is very much appreciated.

## The WHY Behind Upcoming Chamber-Hosted Events

We have a very busy May and June scheduled. We hope you are planning on joining us for at least a few of the scheduled events. Read below to learn the WHY behind some of the events we have scheduled.

The WHY of **Leadercast**: No one is a perfect leader. We all have room to improve. We know there is a need to continually develop leaders from within our own community. This is just one of the ways we are achieving that goal. If we don't develop strong leaders from within our own community and our organizations, we know we are setting ourselves up for a difficult future. We need good leaders. Join us May 4th for this event.

The WHY of **Good Morning Alpena/The Courage to Grow**: We chose the theme, "The Courage to Grow" for the May 11th GMA event because not only is it the start of growing season but we have several examples of businesses in the community that have had courage to expand and grow their business and we want to share their stories. We also have the opportunity to host Business Leaders for Michigan at this event and they are all about Michigan growing.

The WHY of **Become a More Successful Restaurant/Brewery**: Running a business is tough work. Running a restaurant is no exception to that. We try to provide opportunities for our members to learn and be more successful. After learning about the opportunity to bring an expert on the industry to share with our members, we knew we had to. This event is May 24th.

The WHY of the **Truth Tour Day**: Government. Just saying the word causes mixed reactions, feelings, emotions, and opinions. We know there is a growing divide in our country and we know it impacts our community. Through our Government Relations Committee, we want to help bridge the divide and educate the community. We achieve this in many ways, the Truth Tour being just one of them. The Truth Tour is June 19th and includes both a forum on a strong economy (very interactive) and a viewing opportunity of the documentary, "Michigan Divided."

The WHY of the **Economic Development Breakfast**: We are required to have an annual meeting. We could make it a small meeting without the added content but we choose to give those at the higher economic development tiers of membership additional information about the work they are supporting. A lot goes on behind the scenes when it comes to economic development and sharing more of the work is important to maintaining support. The event also allows us to say thank you to our economic development supporters.

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

**The Boys and Girls Club of Alpena** has been serving the youth in Alpena since 1926. They currently serve over 1200 youth in the community annually through a diverse range of programming and outreach efforts designed to align and fulfill their mission. The mission of the Boys and Girls Club of Alpena is:

"To inspire and enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential as productive, caring and responsible citizens."

The Boys and Girls Club of Alpena is a year-round non-profit 501(c)3 organization. They focus on the school year and summer programming for youth ages 6-18 years old. Their average attendance is 115 youth each day between their two sites. The main site is the Lanny Kingsbury Center located at 601 River Street and their second location is the Alpena High School Wildcat Unit/VolunTeen Center which is located at the High School at 3303 South Third Avenue.

The Boys and Girls Club nurtures young peoples' self-esteem by instilling in them a sense of belonging, usefulness, influence, and competence. They do this daily by providing them with one-on-one relationships with caring adult professionals and fun, age-appropriate, well-rounded programming.

Members develop a strong sense of belonging through connections they establish with staff and peers. Staff members make the club feel like home, fostering a family atmosphere and creating a sense of ownership for members.

Call them at 989.356.0214 for a list of hours and upcoming activities.

**Stephen's Menswear** opened in March, 1987. Joanne and Stephen Gallagher noted a need for a dedicated professional clothing store.

The store has had three different homes since 1987. They began in what was called the Small Mall, then moved to the space that now houses Downtown Scoops, and finally landed at their current location of 119 North Second Avenue when they purchased the building. The building was formerly Mischley Shoe Store, where Joanne recalls her parents buying her shoes and there was an opportunity to win a bike. They started the business because a local men's clothing store had closed because of a retirement. Stephen always had a sense of style and grace that made a good pairing for this type of business. They have stayed true to their original clothing lines and are always looking for American made products to sell. They attend two buying shows a year in Minneapolis, generally purchasing inventory six to nine months before the season starts.

They are grateful for all of the support they have received since inception from family and friends. Because they carry classic men's clothing, they haven't seen a major change in styles except in tuxedos. It is now just as common to rent a suit as it is a tuxedo for a dressy occasion. They look forward to expanding the tuxedo business and will continue to offer quality clothing for men.

Summer hours are Monday to Friday from 10:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. and Saturday from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. They are also willing to meet by appointment for the convenience of their customers. All it takes is a phone call. You can find them online at [www.stephensalpena.com](http://www.stephensalpena.com) or on Facebook. Contact them at 989.354.8221.

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smarter, together.

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