



Alpena Area Chamber of Commerce
Serving all of Northeast Michigan
235 West Chisholm Street
Alpena, MI 49707
989.354.4181
www.alpenachamber.com



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 2020

A Positive Message

We are all in an unprecedented scenario that none of us ever would have imagined just a couple months ago. The COVID-19 virus response has led us to live our lives differently, independent from our physical social ties and has created an environment where we have to rely on our technology to communicate. Our vocabulary has shifted and the terms “social distancing”, “quarantine” and “Zooming” have become everyday phrases. The simple act of going to the grocery store and picking up common items such as rice, flour, or toilet paper has become a challenge. Many of our local businesses have been forced to temporarily shut down, or at the very least greatly alter how they operate.

The national headlines seem to always dwell in the negative, but in my Zoom meetings and phone conversations I have witnessed something else. **POSITIVITY.** Nearly every conversation I have had has been a positive experience. People are going out of their way to help others, from buying groceries for those that can't, to ordering local foods and services, or to reaching out to acquaintances they may have not talked to in years to check in on them. Some churches and non-profits have told me about receiving more donations than usual over the last month. Daily I hear about organizations that are actively working to utilize any resources to help the individuals and businesses that have been affected. The Alpena area is full of generous and kind people.

I want to encourage our membership to pass on the kindness and positivity. When someone goes out of the way to do something helpful for you, think about how you can pass that along to someone else. This could range from purchasing takeout food from a local restaurant, giving gift cards from a local retailer, or just offering words of encouragement to someone that may need it.

Chamber staff has been working very hard behind the scenes trying to pass along all the positivity and good will that we have received from our membership. We may not be in our usual offices, but we have been diligently working on various programs, advocating at all levels for our businesses, and answering member questions. I would

encourage all of our members to help each other out if you can and let us at the Chamber know if there is anything you need. The headlines may dwell on the negative, but working together, we can stay positive.



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

*Adam Poll
President & CEO*

CHAMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

May 2020
6 - Ambassador virtual meeting
7 - Government Relations Committee virtual meeting
7 - Community Conversations, 9 a.m. register to get link
12 - Economic Development Board virtual meeting

June 2020
3 - Ambassador meeting
4 - Government Relations Committee meeting
23 - Chamber Board meeting
June's meetings may have to be held virtually as well. We will keep you posted.

2020 CHAMBER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairperson: Eileen Budnick - mBank; Vice Chairperson: Diane Shields - MidMichigan Health; Past Chairperson: Brian VanWormer - Employment Services Inc.; Secretary/Treasurer: Tom Berriman - Alpena Public Schools/Alpena High School

Directors: Julie Allen - Holiday Inn Express; Nick Brege - Alpena Community College; Gretchen Kirschner - Builders First Source; Janis Sahr - Thunder Bay Winery/Regalo Luxury Gifts; Anna Soik - City of Alpena; Adam Szydowski - Besser Company; Travis Weide - Lafarge

We are keeping an up-to-date COVID 19 resource page for businesses on our website - <https://alpenachamber.com/alpena-business-resources/>

Strategic Plan Update

Advocacy

Staff has been meeting regularly with the Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance in order to make sure our area is receiving the resources that we need. We have also participated in many calls with legislators both State and Federal. Through the Alliance, we have requested additional funding for the EIDL and PPP programs and emphasized the need for funding to be allocated for northern and rural Michigan. The State has really leaned on its Chambers and Economic Development Organizations to roll out their programs and we want to make sure that these organizations can continue to operate and help their members into the future and can be eligible for any aid if needed.

Education

We have been working to keep our members informed of the everchanging situation. We have the goal of connecting our members to the best sources of information, but not overwhelming them with non-relevant information. We are also partnering with the DDA to provide educational and interactive webinars, the first of will cover online marketing and retail operations as online may be the best opportunity in the near future for businesses to operate. We are hoping to put together a series of these events covering various different relevant topics utilizing local experts from the community that can dispense helpful information.

Exposure

Even though the office is closed we are still taking calls and answering emails. The whole staff have been answering questions and trying to point people in the right direction for help. The Chamber has used our website as a central hub for businesses seeking assistance. We are constantly updating the website as these programs change and the whole staff has become resident experts as we try to keep up with all the changes.

And more....

We have been in communication with other committees regarding various summer events and the continued impact of social distancing. It is unlikely that many events are going to be held in their usual fashion and staff is exploring options and working to ascertain when and if these events can be held. Needless to say, this is a fluid situation and we are learning more about future restrictions every day.

We are looking forward to getting back into the office to better serve our members but in the meantime just remember, we are still here to help!



Accident Fund offers group discount rates to members of your chamber of commerce.

FIND AN AGENT
AccidentFund.com/Groups

AccidentFund
Insurance Company of America
Part of the AF Group

* IA, KS, MO, NC, TN, TX and WI do not allow for the 5% up-front discount due to state filings.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Lasting Expressions has been proudly serving Alpena. We are committed to offering only the finest floral arrangements and gifts, backed by service that is friendly and prompt. Because all customers are important, their professional staff is dedicated to making your experience a pleasant one. That is why they always go the extra mile to make your floral gift perfect. Same day delivery in the Alpena area if ordered before 2:00 p.m. They are dedicated to helping you find the perfect flowers to deliver your message and enhance your special occasion. Free delivery to hospitals, funerals and care homes. Their stunning arrangements will allow nature's beauty to inspire your special moment. And because they are a local florist dedicated to your satisfaction, you can always expect your needs to be treated with all the attention to detail they deserve.

Their shop serves the following areas: Alpena, Herron, Lachine, Ossineke, Presque Isle, Spruce and surrounding areas including Grand Lake, Long Lake, Hubbard Lake and Beaver Lake. Let Lasting Expressions be your first choice for flowers.

Contact them at 989.356.9372 or stop in and see what they have to offer, 204 W. Washington Ave., Alpena. Check out their websites at www.lastingexpressionsalpena.com or www.leflowers.com.

White Pine National Golf Resort is located in Alcona County, near the south shore of Hubbard Lake. 2020 marks the 28th season for this great golf course. A lot has changed in 28 years. There have been gypsy moth infestations that ate away at the oak trees and, more recently oak wilt and oak decline, so they're really glad they had the foresight to name the course White Pine National and not Oak Hill!

But, more than the trees, there have been a lot of changes in 28 years and all of them were for the good. The original design, by Bruce and Clem Wolfrom has held up well over the last 28 years. The playing conditions are top notch and get better with every year that passes. Still challenging golfers of all abilities and providing wonderful glimpses of wildlife that have made White Pine their home. From the friendly deer to the fox kits that show up every now and then. Wild turkey, rare bear sightings and all kinds of song birds make for the chance to see wildlife during every round.

Starting out as cinnamon rolls on a Sunday morning and morphing into all kinds of food availability, the Roadhouse Bar & Grill, located inside the clubhouse has great offerings from the best Margarita around to fresh homemade pies. Their seafood specials are famous in the area, with a spotlight on scallops most every evening. Monday evening team trivia and their burger and brew special has become very popular, too. Friday night is dedicated to seafood, from fish and chips to perch to scallops; you'll find delicious and imaginative fare at the Roadhouse.

This year's newest change has been one that everyone is being challenged by: Covid-19. The course is open to walkers only, but they are looking forward to being able to use their shiny one-year old Yamaha Quiet Tech golf carts soon. They haven't opened the Roadhouse yet, but when they get the okay from the state they will be back at it, serving up your favorites. They accommodate groups for meals whether reunions, birthdays or business meetings. You can enjoy a great meal with your companions. Call 989.736.3279 for reservations.

You can make golf reservations online at www.whitepinenational.com. Or, like them on Facebook to find out the latest on golf or dining. They have both a White Pine National Facebook page and a Roadhouse Facebook page. Hope to see you soon!