



March 2009

## March 18th – Business Day at the Capitol

### Business Day at the Capitol: Challenge!

“The world is run by those who show up.” An old saying, but never more true than it is today. Here is the reality:

- The business community is outnumbered by spending advocates at the Capitol by 20-to-1, at least.
- Minnesota’s economy is struggling, and the projected budget deficit is likely to exceed \$6 billion with the forecast later this month.
- Governor Pawlenty recognizes that we need to strengthen Minnesota’s economy to grow out of this cycle of budget deficits. He has proposed the Jobs Recovery Act which includes cutting the corporate income tax rate in half over six years; converting the capital equipment sales tax refund to an up-front exemption; a one-year deduction of equipment purchases and several other pro-growth provisions. He also knows this is the wrong time to raise taxes.

The spending lobby is at the Capitol every day. On March 18, you have an opportunity to make your voice heard, and it is more important than ever this year. If the business community does not show up in a big way to support balancing the state budget by cutting spending and enacting the jobs recovery plan, then we will have lost an opportunity that may not come again for a very long time.

Let’s bring 2,000 business leaders to converge March 18 on the Capitol. If we commit together to this goal, we can be successful. Think of the impact of business owners of all types and sizes statewide descending on the Capitol to make their voices heard. In 1995, we had more than 1,500 business people participate in Day at the Capitol, and by no coincidence that was the year we finally pushed workers’ compensation reform over the top!

Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>

7:30 -1:30p or 9:30a-3:45p

\$60 (\$70 after March 4<sup>th</sup> deadline)

For an agenda or more information on Business Day at the Capitol please contact Deb McMillan at (952) 448-5000 or [deb@swmetrochamber.com](mailto:deb@swmetrochamber.com). If you are interested in carpooling please contact the chamber office.

## Special Thanks to the SouthWest Metro Chamber of Commerce Sponsors

### Founding Partner



### Chamber Sponsors



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# Meet the Chamber Staff



**Deb McMillan**  
President

I began my chamber career in May of 2000 as the President of the Waconia Chamber of Commerce. I was there until November of 2007 when I became the president of the Chaska Area Chamber of Commerce. In 2004 I graduated from the Institute of Organizational Management and have served on the board of directors for the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Executives, the Metropolitan Coalition of Chambers of Commerce and the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce. I also served as chair of the board for MCCE in 2007 and chair of the board for MCCC in 2005. I am currently serving on the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Grow Minnesota! advisory board. I enjoy spending time with my husband, Kerry, our four daughters and our dog Charlie.



**Mary Hadaway**  
Member Services

I am a native Minnesotan, born and raised in the St. Cloud area. I have resided in Victoria, Minnesota for the last 19 years. I graduated from Bemidji State University with a degree in English and a minor in Journalism and spent most of my business career in the field of public relations with Investors Diversified Services, now known as Ameriprise Financial. I was Communications Coordinator with the Victoria Chamber of Commerce and am thrilled to be a part of the new SouthWest Metro Chamber of Commerce as Member Services Coordinator. I look forward to meeting and working with all the membership of this dynamic new organization.



**Kelly Joseph**  
Executive  
Assistant

I grew up in Bloomington and moved to Chanhassen about 4 years ago. I graduated from the University of Wisconsin River Falls with a French/Theatre double major and I have traveled to Europe many times and have visited 11 countries. My family all lives in the metro area and I have 6 nieces and nephews under the age of 5 who are quite the handful. In addition to working for the Chamber I am also a movie critic for the local newspapers (see my reviews at [www.letsgosouthwest.com](http://www.letsgosouthwest.com)) and a French Tutor.



**Kristie Mitchell**  
Communications  
& Events

I am from Northern Minnesota and moved to the Chaska area almost 20 years ago. I have been the head skate instructor at the Chaska Community Center for almost 20 years and enjoy teaching young kids how to skate. I have been with the Chamber since January of 2007. When I am away from the office or rink you can find me spending time with my fiancé Steve, my 22 year old son, Luke and our dogs, Lena & Gonzo.



**Ashley  
Wickenhauser**  
Administrator

I was born & raised in Chaska and graduated from Chaska High School in 2003. I received a bachelor's degree in Communications and a minor in business administration from the University of Minnesota-Duluth in 2006. I started with the Chaska Area Chamber of Commerce in April 2007. In my spare time I enjoy spending time with my family and friends including my boyfriend Jeff, our 9 month old daughter, Riley, and our 2 year old yellow lab, Deuce.

# Business Highlights

## February Ambassadors

Melissa Carlson - Community Bank, Robin Fink – Security Bank, Gwen Jansen - Carver County Workforce, Jerry Little – PostNet, Julie Litzenberger – Bank of the West, Nancy Madsen - Klein Bank, Bob Mechtel – Promolink, Jennifer Moore – bridgecreek consulting group, inc., Suzanne Thiesfeld – Objects & Art, Steve Wein – Send Out Cards

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### ABC Chiropractic

1600 Arboretum Boulevard, Victoria, MN 55386  
952-443-3710

Dr. Becky Pauly and Dr. Belinda Hauger  
Website: [www.abcfamilychiro.com](http://www.abcfamilychiro.com)

Specialized in pediatrics and pre-natal chiropractic care, but love to take care of the whole family. We offer computerized spinal scans & X-rays as necessary for evaluation. We are a very family and kid friendly office. Most insurance plans are accepted, but have great cash options also. Our goal is to help our patients of all ages reach their health and wellness goals, whatever they may be. Office hours are Mon & Wed 9a-6p, Tues 2-7p, Thurs 9a-7p and Fri 9a-5p. Select Saturday by appointment only.

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### School of the Wise

1750 Tower Boulevard, Victoria, MN 55386  
952-361-4307

Owner: Brandon Willis  
Website: [www.schoolofthewise.net](http://www.schoolofthewise.net)

Located in Victoria, School of the Wise plays host to teas parties, book clubs, groom's dinners, rehearsal dinners, chamber meetings and other meetings. Waffles and quiche along with a wide variety of pastries are served with your morning coffee. Lunch is served 11a-4p daily. We are also open for dinner and offer a full bar with a wide variety of wines. First class, live music every weekend.

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### Victoria Auto Werks

1885 80<sup>th</sup> Street, Victoria, MN 55386  
952-443-2868

Owner: Steve Frankwitz  
Website: [www.victoriaautowerks.com](http://www.victoriaautowerks.com)

Provide automotive repair, maintenance and tire sales for all foreign and domestic vehicles, specializing in European automobiles – Audi, BMW, Mercedes Benz, Volvo and Volkswagen. We also do fleet vehicle maintenance. We are a full service shop and can accommodate any year, make and model with a quick turnaround. Mon-Fri 7a-6p, Sat 9a-1p by appointment only.

# Business Highlights

## February Member Services

Greg Benedict- Isagenix, Vicki Franzen – Americana Bank, Tiffany Hartert- Mary Kay Cosmetics,  
Jeannie Savage – Community Bank Chanhassen

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### **American Family- Pat Gaffney Agency**

564 Bavaria Lane, Chaska, MN 55318  
952-361-0004

Pat Gaffney and Jill Carlson Gaffney  
Email: [jgaffne1@amfam.com](mailto:jgaffne1@amfam.com)

Full Service agency providing home, auto and life insurance. We also provide commercial insurance to our business and farm clients. "As your American Family Insurance Agent, I believe there's more to insurance than the policy itself. It's about providing excellent customer service and dependable protection." Stop by and see us 9a-5p Monday through Friday, evenings and weekends by appointment only.

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### **Electrical Production Services, Inc.**

2431 Galpin Court, Suite 140, Chanhassen, MN 55317  
952-401-1888

Contact: Carla Struble

Website: [www.electricalproduction.com](http://www.electricalproduction.com)

Owners Jim and Carla Struble started this full service electrical contracting company. Continuing to expand services while maintaining their status as high quality, the staff works throughout the Twin Cities Metro and statewide performing construction management, telecommunications and technologies. This award winning company can help you with a wide variety of services.

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### **Florapalooza**

9520 Lakeview Circle, Chaska, MN 55318  
952-443-3245

Owner: Amy Senechal

Website: [www.florapalooza.com](http://www.florapalooza.com)

We design floral arrangements for your special occasion. When you are ready to send out fresh flowers throughout the Chaska area, we are your florist. To send flowers call us during our business hours: 9 am to 3 pm CST Monday-Friday, 9am to 12pm CST Saturday, closed on Sundays. Flower delivery available in the Chaska and surrounding areas in Excelsior, Chanhassen, Shakopee, Waconia, Victoria, Eden Prairie, Minnetrista, Shorewood, Bloomington, Minnetonka and Norwood Young America. Local orders must be received before 12 pm to insure same day delivery. Please call 952-443-3245 for more information; wedding consultations by appointment only.



## Get ready for impact of state budget cuts

By David C. Olson

Death, taxes and budget cuts. When asked about the things in life that are certain, the first two are the most common response. It's time to add "budget cuts" to the list at least for 2009.

By this June, Minnesota will have a new biennial budget. The ledger must be balanced as required by our State Constitution. Right now the shortfall between expected revenues and spending in current law is \$4.8 billion. After the February forecast, the gap will likely grow to at least \$6 billion or almost 20 percent of the state's general fund.

Budget cuts are as certain as the sunrise. Even if the state's big-spenders have their way and we require our state's job-producers to pay higher taxes, it won't close a \$6 billion hole. Reductions in expected state spending are inevitable.

Let me make it very clear that this will be painful. It is a lot more fun to increase spending than it is to make cuts. Given this reality, what should business leaders and chamber of commerce executives do? It is time to tell the public sector, including and especially its "vendors," to start immediately to figure out how to get the job done with reduced resources.

This is not a license to tell government to "run like a business." Its responsibilities are too broad. But some common-sense practices do apply. And, the sooner we share them, the better.

First, protect the customers. When a business faces trouble, its last resorts are reducing services and raising prices. Governments and their vendors apparently don't understand. How many times do we have to hear that the first cuts will be police and fire protection, classroom teachers and plowing our streets? Far too often public officials go right to areas they know will scare their constituents. What are these officials thinking about? Politics, not their customers.

Second, protect your workforce. More often than not, layoffs mean good workers are permanently lost to the enterprise, and the affected workers and their dependents face chaotic, desperate times. When business improves – and it will – firms have to recruit and train all over again. A better route for all is for employers and employees to agree on reduced wages and benefits, sufficient to make it through "the night." The enterprise keeps and continues to serve its customers. The trauma of job loss is minimized. And the organization is ready to rebound with the economy. There is still plenty of pain, but it need not be fatal.

Third, start now. The new budget in June and the accompanying cuts are around the corner. Every organization that receives a state check – whether it is school aid, local government aid or Medicaid reimbursement – should act immediately to reduce personnel costs, and, if possible, other overhead expenses. The negotiations won't be easy. Those who represent workers will predict dire consequences to customer service and offer tax increases as the only solution. Everyone should resist this public drumbeat and instead follow the example at thousands of businesses competing for private-sector business by protecting customers and keeping their employees even though it means lower wages and benefits

Budget cuts are inevitable. But, this time, government customers and the customers of organizations supported by state and local governments need not be victims.

Local chambers and their private for-profit members can make this happen. We should gather our elected officials and the executives

who manage tax-supported institutions. We should make our expectations clear: Maintain services by retaining workers at reduced expenses. The old way that holds customers hostage to tax increases is history. Period. No excuses. No exceptions.

David Olson is president of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce. For more information, visit the Web at [www.mnchamber.com](http://www.mnchamber.com)

## Chamber Membership: A Solid Business Decision

As you navigate the current economic environment and make decisions about how you will invest in your business growth make sure Chamber membership is on the list.

In 2007, the Shapiro Group did a research study entitled *The Real Value of Joining a Local Chamber of Commerce*. Here is a synopsis of that study that is reprinted with the permission of the Shapiro Group:

### The Proven Value of Chamber Membership

The Schapiro Group/ Market St. Study has shown in its results that "Chamber membership and community involvement are good business investments", according to J. Mac Holladay, CEO of Market Street Services.

"There is a strong correlation between your involvement level as a chamber member and the perception by your customers that your business practices are beneficial to the local economy, that you are a business leader, that you care about your customers, that you are reputable and trustworthy.

### Here are some additional findings—

Consumers believe that being active in the chamber is **29% MORE EFFECTIVE** for communicating that a company uses good business practices

**70% OF CUSTOMERS** believe that a company actively involved with the chamber is an effective strategy for enhancing a businesses' reputation and for demonstrating that it uses good business practices.

**12% OF CUSTOMERS** think that a business highly active in its local chamber has products and services superior to its competition.

Consumers who know that a business is a chamber member are **50% MORE LIKELY TO PATRONIZE.**

Consumers who know that a restaurant is a chamber member are **38% MORE LIKELY** to eat there in the future. Chamber membership **INCREASES BY 76%** the likelihood of customers trying a new restaurant or business.

"The message from this national study is as simple as it is groundbreaking," said Jim Blasingame, small business expert and president of Small Business Network, Inc.

"Join your local chamber. Be an active participant in your chamber's programs, and be sure to let your customers and prospects know you're a proud chamber supporter when they enter your business and when they see your marketing material."

During times of economic instability or adverse events, it has never been more important to fortify your business or organization with the advantages of Chamber membership.

Why not gain the "Chamber Advantage" today?

Source: *The Schapiro Group/ Market St. National Web-based Survey*, which was completed 2007. Conducted scientifically, this study is demographically and geographically representative of the adult population in the United States.

564 Bavaria Lane, Suite 100  
Chaska, MN 55318  
952.448.5000 • swmetrochamber.com

**March Chamber Calendar**

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| <p>1 West Metro Home Improvement &amp; Landscaping Expo, Chapel Hill Academy, 10:00-4:00p</p> <p>3 Education Grant Committee, 8:30-10:00</p> <p>4 Ambassadors, Susan Duchon, Rey Azteca -Chanhassen 11:30a</p> <p>5 Breakfast Networking, Summerwood of Chanhassen, 7:30-9:00a</p> <p>10 Women's Biz, "Marvelous Me," TBD, 4:00-6:00p</p> <p>10 Public Policy, Community Bank Chaska, 11:30a</p> | <p>11 Member Services, Chamber office, 8:30a</p> <p>17 Board of Directors, Water Treatment Plant, 11:30-1:00p</p> <p>18 Victoria Business Council, School of the Wise-Victoria, 8:00a</p> <p>18 Business Day at the Capitol, State Capitol, 7:30a</p> <p>19 Chanhassen Business Council, Community Bank Chanhassen, 10a</p> <p>24 Chaska Downtown Business Council, Community Insurance Advisors, 1:00p</p> <p>25 Member Luncheon, 11:30,</p> <p>26 Economic Development, Chaska City Hall, 11:30a</p> |
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**Welcome New Members!**

**Brouillette Group**

*Commercial Insurance*  
1425 Knob Hill Lane  
Excelsior, MN 55331  
(612) 325-3423  
Bill Cutshall

**By The Woods**

*Custom Landscape Design & Build*  
8225 Bavaria Road  
Victoria, MN 55386  
(952) 443-9941  
Laura Wood

**Coupons 4 Twin Cities**

*Coupons*  
570 West 78<sup>th</sup> Street  
Suite 2001  
Chanhassen, MN 55317  
(952) 457-9967  
Hanley Lewis & Denise Prince

**Excel Systems**

*Telecom*  
5929 Baker Road  
Suite 430  
Minnetonka, MN 55345  
(952) 939-9755  
Tim Maher

**Faelon Partners, Ltd.**

*Business Consultants, Mergers & Acquisitions*  
4979 Olson Memorial Highway  
Minneapolis, MN 55422  
(763) 231-4200  
Nina Faelon

**Fresh Seasons Market**

*Supermarket*  
7999 Victoria Drive  
Victoria, MN 55386  
(952) 443-1600  
Dale Riley

**New York Life**

*Financial Planning*  
3600 Minnesota Drive,  
Suite 100  
Edina, MN 55345  
(952) 897-5032  
John Valdez

**Promotion Graphics**

*Sign Company*  
15781 County Road 40  
Carver, MN 55315  
(952) 368-3052  
Ken Forner

**Wanted: Senior Students  
Needing College Scholarships**

The SouthWest Metro Chamber of Commerce Education Committee has been awarding scholarships to high school seniors for the past 22 years. We currently award a minimum of five \$1,000 scholarships to students who will be attending either a four-year college or a two-year community, technical or business college.

The scholarships are awarded based on the following criteria:

- 2009 graduating high school senior who resides full-time in one of the cities served by the SouthWest Metro Chamber of Commerce (Carver, Chanhassen, Chaska and Victoria).
- A student's dedication to and involvement in work, community, school, place of worship and/or family with an emphasis on generosity of spirit – not GPA or class rank.
- Enrollment beginning during the 2009-10 academic year at a 4-year college/university or a 2-year technical, community or business college.

Applications must be turned in to the student's high school Career Center or they can be mailed to the SouthWest Chamber of Commerce and postmarked by March 20, 2009. Finalists will be contacted to schedule a personal interview with our Education Committee sometime in April and scholarships will be awarded in May, 2009.

A copy of the Education Scholarship Application can be found at [www.swmetrochamber.com](http://www.swmetrochamber.com). For more information, contact the Chamber office at 952-448-5000.