On behalf of the Chamber Board of Directors and Staff, thank you for your support in 2013! Our business community has faced many challenges and changes over the past year, and the Chamber is here as your advocate.

We could not accomplish all that we do without your assistance. Over the past year, more than 800 volunteers have participated in Chamber functions. I would like to extend my appreciation to our Chamber members, our Board of Directors, our Ambassadors and each individual who has volunteered to make the Chamber what it is today.

In 2014 we will again work to aggressively promote and grow our business community. Attracting visitors and businesses to the community is always a top priority of the Chamber. Using the collective resources of our membership, the Chamber is the eyes, ears and voice of the business community. We work daily with many state and local partners to protect business interests and to keep the community healthy.

We invite you to participate in the Chamber in 2014 and we look forward to continuing to serve our nearly 600 members. Have a great new year!

Sincerely,

Mike Jordan
President
Chamber and Visitors Center Relocation

The Chamber continues to work closely with the City of Chippewa Falls and the community on plans to relocate to the corner of Bridge Street and Spring Street. In 2014, we will have building plans for the project completed and will bid the project out in February. It is our plan to relocate into the new building in late 2014 to early 2015.

Riverfront Development Plan

The Chamber has been working diligently with the City of Chippewa Falls to help our community realize the Riverfront Development Plan. The Riverfront Development Plan is a five-step urban re-development plan that includes a riverfront park, bike and pedestrian trails, new business and residential districts, and a festive area that would make Chippewa Falls a regional destination. In 2013, big steps were made to make the plan a reality.

In 2013...
- In May, Chippewa Falls Vision 2020 presented community survey results to the city council outlining a purpose statement and ideas for the new city park between Bridge Street and Main Street along the Chippewa River.
- In July, Short Elliott Hendrickson (SEH) broke ground for its new 21,000 square foot office building downtown.
- In October, the roundabout was completed. The roundabout changed Bridge Street from a one-way, northbound street into a two-way route that will help guide traffic and make downtown easier to access, safer, and more convenient.
- Plans to relocate the Chamber/Visitors Center downtown are on-going.

Through the city’s leadership and commitment from the business community, a new main gateway to Chippewa Fall’s downtown and riverfront is coming to fruition. The Chamber is committed to continue working with the city on the future pieces of the project.
Membership Programs and Services

The Chamber had a banner year welcoming more than 65 new businesses and organizations to the Chamber growing our membership close to 600 members, the most ever. More than 18,000 referrals to members of the Chamber were made in person in the Visitors Center, on the phone and in writing. The Chamber is always here to welcome individuals and families who relocate to the community by providing them with relocation packets. Chamber members also enjoy the networking and community involvement programs we run throughout the year including the following:

June Dairy Days
More than 2,200 people joined us for a beautiful evening, great food, music and friendship at our annual June Dairy Days Dinner where over 1,400 tickets were donated to local farm families in Chippewa County. This event is sponsored by more than one hundred area businesses providing a venue to join urban and rural families together to celebrate the importance and continued success of local farmers.

Excellence in Education
At the 28th Annual Excellence in Education Banquet, the Chamber recognized 21 seniors for being in the top 5% of their graduating classes. More than 30 businesses and organizations sponsored the event so that the students, their families and honored teachers could be guests at the banquet.

NEW: Chamber Golf Outing
The sky was blue and the sun was shining at the First Annual Chamber Golf Outing held at Lake Wissota Golf. More than 110 participated in an afternoon of golf, laughs and fun. Seasoned golfers were welcome as well as first timers to this nine-hole golf outing.

Networking
Business ‘n Breakfast and Business After Hours events throughout the year ensured networking opportunities for Chamber members.

Leadership
In 2013, the 14th class of Leadership Chippewa Falls graduated after an eight month training session preparing the area’s future business leaders for greater community involvement through community awareness and leadership training.

Political Advocacy
The Chamber works continually to represent its members’ interests at the city, county, state and federal levels of government. For the 18th year, representatives of the Chamber joined Eau Claire and Menomonie Chambers for the Chippewa Valley Rally, where the group traveled to Madison to meet with legislators about issues important to the Chippewa Valley. Throughout the year, the Chamber welcomes and hosts our elected officials and makes an effort to keep them abreast of changes in the area’s business climate.
Ambassador Outreach
In 2013, the Chamber recognized 34 businesses with Ambassador visits, ground breakings and ribbon cuttings. A special thank you to the hardworking Chamber Ambassadors; Trina Banks, Matthew Bartholomew, Kyle Berg, Melissa Bowe, Jason Brandner, Erin Brunke, Erin Clemens, Rolly Enderes, Mike Horan, Tom Hubbard, Tom Krista, Ben Lane, John Lynn, Ray Myers, Carrie Nielsen, Steve Pregent, Jackie Sadler, Tami Severson, Mike Shillin, Debi Waldusky and Cheryl Wirth.

Oktoberfest
Oktoberfest continues to be one of the most beloved events in Chippewa Falls and welcomed large crowds to the area in 2013. The event remains true to its mission to provide quality entertainment for all ages, increase travel and tourism dollars spent in the community and provide a venue for local non-profit groups to generate revenue for upcoming projects.

In 2013, over $20,000 was donated to local charities including service groups, religious institutions, recreation clubs and high school athletics as well as the new building project in Irvine Park, the Boys and Girls Club and Family Support Center.

To date, Oktoberfest has donated over $220,000 to local charities since it began 11 years ago.
TOURISM DIVISION

In an effort to best reach potential visitors across advertising platforms, the focus of Visit Chippewa Falls advertising is in the target markets of Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois and Wisconsin. The Tourism Division continuously evaluates and adjusts online, print and social media strategy while focusing on the shoulder seasons of spring and fall.

The online presence of Visit Chippewa Falls continued to see growth in 2013 through increased website page views and social media followers. As technology continues to change, the Tourism Division has begun working on a website upgrade to responsive design that will better serve mobile and tablet users.

The Chicago Daily Herald Newspaper, Circulation: 110,000

AAA Magazine, Circulation: 135,000

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<th>Report Card</th>
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Chippewa Falls in the (International) News

Together with the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, the Tourism Division hosted a writer and photographer from Motorrad Magazine in Germany. The story will feature motorcycling in the Great Lakes Region, highlighting impressive fall color routes and activities.

Film crews were also in Chippewa Falls capturing interviews for the well known Public Television show, Around the Corner with John McGivern. The 30 minute program will feature 17 interviews with local residents and business owners about why they call Chippewa Falls home. The episode featuring Chippewa Falls will air in early March 2014.
Governor Walker appointed two new members to the Governor’s Council on Tourism effective July 1, 2013 including Chippewa Falls Area Chamber of Commerce Tourism Director, Allyson Gommer. A total of 20 Governor appointed individuals make up the council which is in place to provide strategic insight and advisement to the Department of Tourism to further its mission to grow the tourism economy in the state.

Group Travel & Themed Packages

As a convenience to leisure visitors, themed vacation packages are organized and marketed focusing on specific traveler interests: fall colors, golfing and the Yellowstone Trail. In 2013, 22 packages were purchased for a total of 33 room nights showing a 73 percent increase over 2012.

Six motor coach groups and two car clubs worked with the Tourism Division in 2013 to book tours and accommodations in the area for an estimated economic impact of over $25,000. Several other groups have confirmed for 2014 and beyond, including the GMC Motorhomes International group, for an estimated economic impact of over $263,000.

Gommer Appointed to Governor’s Council on Tourism

Partnerships

We recognize that tourism is often a regional effort and the Tourism Division has worked hard to foster and maintain relationships through these projects throughout the year:

- Chippewa County Tourism Council featuring a website redesign in 2013
- Menomonie Area Travel Wisconsin Welcome Center partnership: Greater Menomonie Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center, Visit Eau Claire, and Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau
- Yellowstone Trail Passport Project: won the Wisconsin Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus Trailblazer Award for the partnership amongst the Chippewa Falls Area Chamber of Commerce, Greater Menomonie Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center and Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau

Visitors Guide

Over 26,000 copies of the Chippewa Falls Visitors Guide were distributed at 8 Travel Wisconsin Welcome Centers, 70 area businesses, within 1300 Chamber relocation and visitors packets, and at 30 Chambers and Convention and Visitors Bureaus statewide.

Tourism is big business for our city, county and state with a 2012 state economic impact of $16.8 billion.