

Join us for West Michigan Business Day at the Capitol!

The best business advocacy efforts have faces and stories behind them. That is why the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce is asking members to join us for "West Michigan Business Day at the Capitol," where we can showcase the strength and vibrancy of our membership to our state legislators.

This day-long event (we promise to have you back by 5:00 p.m.) is FREE to members and will take place on Tuesday, March 8 in Lansing. Chartered transportation, from sponsor Indian Trails, will take members to and from the Capitol. We will be joined by Lt. Governor Brian Calley on the ride to Lansing in the morning.

While in Lansing you will meet face-to-face with lawmakers about key issues affecting your business, participate in the committee process, observe House and Senate sessions, and



be a part of our very own West Michigan Business Expo Luncheon. Our delegation will be recognized during an afternoon session of the House of Representatives, and there is also opportunity for a tour of the Capitol building, just in case you haven't been there since your fourth grade field trip!

Help the voice of West Michigan business be heard in Lansing on issues affecting your bottom line. Hard decisions lie ahead for this legislative session, as our elected officials work to make Michigan more business-friendly.

Space is limited and demand is certain to be high for this event. Come take part in bringing the voice of West Michigan Business to Lansing. If you would like to participate, please call Chris Glass at 616.771.0311 or visit www.grandrapids.org/capitolday.

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Nominations Are Open for The EPIC Awards!

In 2010, the Chamber combined the Small Business Celebration, Minority Business Celebration and the Salute to West Michigan Business into one new member recognition event: The EPIC Awards. EPIC, which stands for Entrepreneurial, Progressive, Innovative and Collaborative, was a hit, with 400+ members attending and five awards being given.

We are happy to announce that nominations are now open for this year's EPIC awards, which will be held Tuesday, May 18, at the Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park. Nominations are being

EPIC
awards
small business celebration +
minority business celebration +
salute to west michigan business

Continued on page 7

Teach a Chamber Summer School class!

The Chamber is currently seeking proposals to provide training/development to members through our Chamber Summer School series. Summer School is a series of professional and business development classes on a variety of topics, with each class presented by fellow Chamber members in their area of expertise. Are you an expert in your field? Would you like the opportunity to share your expertise with fellow Chamber members? If you are interested in presenting a topic at this year's Summer School, visit www.grandrapids.org/events to download the Request for Proposals form. Contact Bridget Meyers at 616.771.0342 or meyersb@grandrapids.org for more information.

A MAP Welcome

The Multiracial Association of Professionals (MAP) helps West Michigan look and feel more inclusive by providing a New Employee Connection Luncheon. This service delivers a warm welcome to newly hired professionals of color and highlights the diversity within the Grand Rapids community.

Over a casual lunch in downtown Grand Rapids, MAP members of color will share what they find great about the community and will identify goods and services that cater to racial and ethnic minorities.

Any employer can take advantage of the New Employee Connection service. The \$200 participation fee includes a 2011 MAP membership, a minimum of five personal follow-up contacts, and participation in "Welcome Home: A Reception For New Residents" held in early fall.

To register, visit www.grandrapids.org/map or contact Farris Withers, at 616.771.0320 or wITHERSF@grandrapids.org.

The Chamber News Editorial Policy

Articles written by outside authors do not necessarily reflect the view or position of the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce. The position of the Chamber will be clearly stated.

The Chamber reserves the right to reject advertising based on content and does not accept advertising that conflicts with a position of the Chamber.

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The Chamber News (USPS 357-010) is published monthly by the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce, 111 Pearl St. NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503.
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Advertising: Leslee Fritz | 616.771.0357 | fritz@grandrapids.org

Second Class Periodical Postage Paid at Grand Rapids, MI.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Chamber News at the address above



Spring Roundtables: Enroll by March 4

Since its inception in 1987, the CEO Roundtable Program has grown into one of the most successful programs of the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce.

The mission of the program is to assist CEOs, business owners, and managing directors to improve business performance through structured peer-to-peer, cooperative and confidential interaction. Roundtables are comprised of fellow business owners who face the challenges of running a business. More than 300 people currently participate in the program, which now has 28 roundtables.



"When I first joined the CEO Roundtable Program, I was uncertain of the value I would receive for my investment of time and money," says Mike Novakoski, President & Chief Operating Officer of Elzinga & Volkers, Inc. "After my very first meeting I understood the power of this program and was hooked. Coaching from others in my group who 'blazed the trail' before me has allowed me to make sound decisions in countless areas of my business."

Two types of Roundtables

Two different tracks are available. The first is the CEO Roundtable program for those who are the President, Partner, Owner or CEO of the company. You can choose to join an Original, Family-Owned Business, Nonprofit, or Manufacturing Roundtable.

The second track is geared toward the next level of executive -- Management Roundtables, which include Sales, Marketing, Finance/Accounting and Leadership Development tables for those who are a Vice President of that division of a company.

Shannon Cooper of Axios, Inc. is a member of the sales table. "I have been involved in my sales roundtable since 2008, and to me it is my monthly 'sales therapy,'" she says "I have made great connections with some amazing people, and grown personally and professionally as a result of my participation in the roundtable program."

Visit www.grandrapids.org/ceo-roundtable-program to download a brochure with registration information and return to the Chamber by Friday, March 4. The spring session will begin with a mandatory orientation on Thursday, March 24 and your first meeting with your roundtable will be in April. The CEO Roundtable Program requires a one-year commitment with a cost of \$60. Contact Bridget Meyers at meyersb@grandrapids.org or 616.771.0342 for more information.

Speaker Barbara Corcoran Inspires and Draws Laughs at 123rd Annual Meeting

More than 700 members joined us for the 123rd Annual Meeting of the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce on January 18. All were treated to a review of the Chamber's 2010 accomplishments, a look ahead at 2011 from new Board Chair Meg Goebel, President of Paul Goebel Group, and a rousing and entertaining keynote from New York real estate entrepreneur and media maven Barbara Corcoran.



Above: A full house in the Steelcase Ballroom at DeVos Place. Below left: 2011 Chamber Board Chair Meg Goebel addressed the membership. Below right: Keynote speaker Barbara Corcoran wowed the crowd with her anecdotes, humor and business advice. Bottom: 2010 Board Chair Curt Wells and Chamber President and CEO Jeanne Englehart reviewed the Chamber's accomplishments over the last year. Photos: Tiberius Images, www.tiberiusimages.com.

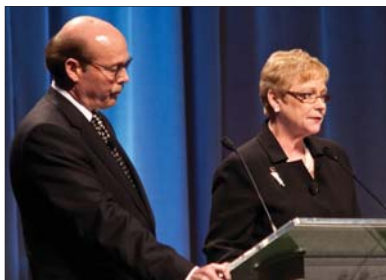
"Great venue, great food, I truly enjoyed Meg's speech and Barbara was a lot of fun to listen to," said Rob Meachum from Noordyk Business Equipment, LLC. "I really enjoyed my first ever GRACC Annual Meeting. I'll be attending them going forward!"



Terri Sobolewski of Davenport University agreed. "Barbara Corcoran was excellent. I have five take-aways from her presentation, but I wish I had a recording of it so I could reinforce all of her insight!"

Some of the points Barbara made in her keynote include:

- Creativity and innovation coupled with good publicity can take you a long way.
- A common trait of Super Star Salespeople: the ability to withstand rejection and bounce back from it quickly.
- The heyday of the little guy is during the bad times because that's when creativity and ingenuity can make a huge difference.
- Creating a fun corporate culture makes it a business no one can touch.



Thank you to the Chamber members that sponsored this event. It would not have been possible without their generous support.

Event Underwriters:

Amway, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, Davenport University, Huntington Bank

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Sponsorship not only supports the mission of the Chamber but is also a great marketing opportunity. Want to find out which event on the Chamber's calendar for 2011 best fits the needs of your company? Contact Leslee Fritz at 616.771.0357 or fritzl@grandrapids.org for more information.

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Join us for Public Policy Breakfast with Legislators!

2011 is sure to be a year of difficult decisions as the new legislature works to reinvent Michigan. In order to be engaged in this discussion the Chamber is bringing you face-to-face with your elected leaders for six Public Policy Breakfasts.

The Chamber is offering a "Buy 5, Get 1 Free" special. For just \$75, you can have direct access to legislators six times during this year. Save the dates below, and register now to make sure you have a say in how major decision makers can improve the economic climate in Michigan.

February 28	The Rapid
March 28	Davenport University
April 18	Amway
May 23	MSU College of Human Medicine
September 26	Hope Network
October 24	Dykema/Western Michigan University

Each breakfast is held from 7:30 - 9 a.m. Cost to attend is \$15 per breakfast or \$75 for all six; \$20 at the door and for future members. Please contact Chris Glass at glassc@grandrapids.org or 616.771.0311 to register.

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Club Names Ambassador of the Year

In her rookie year with the Ambassadors Club, Dawn Martinson, Regional Manager for International Student Exchange (ISE), succeeded in beating out some tough competition to become the Chamber's 2010 Ambassador of the Year!



The Ambassadors Club members are fierce competitors! Members earn points based upon their service to other Chamber members throughout the year. The Ambassadors serve as advocates for the Chamber to the business community and focus on Chamber membership retention through mentorship and involvement.

"My Chamber membership has allowed me to meet new people and businesses that I would not have otherwise been in contact with. Many of the connections that I have made have been very valuable to me personally as well as to ISE," says Dawn. "Membership with the Chamber, and getting involved with the activities they offer, will greatly help any industry!"

If you are interested in bringing culture and diversity into your world, consider welcoming an exchange student into your life! To find out more, contact Dawn by visiting her website, www.cmw-exchange.org.

Thank you for your hard work this year, Dawn!

December 2010 Ambassador of the Month

Congratulations to Patty Baker – the Chamber's December 2010 Ambassador of the Month!



Patty is the Sales Manager of the Hampton Inn North and SpringHill Suites North by Marriott, and also manages sales operations for a sister property in Lansing. She joined the Ambassadors in September 2010 and has been a Gold Circle Ambassador the past three months. You may see Patty at various Chamber events, as she is always one of the first Ambassadors to sign up to greet guests and make them feel welcome.

Get in touch with Patty to learn more about the meeting and guest room availability at her beautiful hotels by calling 616.647.1000 or email patty.baker@archonhospitality.com.

The mission of the Ambassadors Club is to represent the Chamber by exhibiting the highest degree of professionalism, knowledge and integrity to our members and the business community. Ambassadors serve as advocates for the Chamber to the business community and promote member participation. Their primary focus is on membership retention through mentorship and involvement.

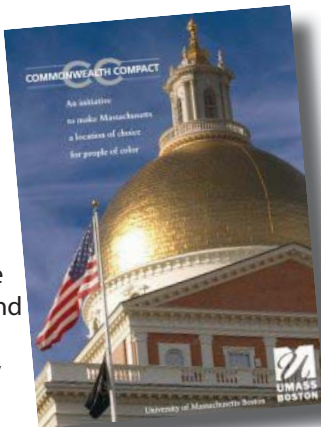
The Ambassadors Club is generously sponsored by:



Diversity Leads to Reaching a Community's Full Potential

March 29 keynote to explore becoming welcoming to all

How does a community become a location of choice for people of color? What must happen to truly reach a community's economic, civic, and social potential? These questions will be addressed by Georgianna Melendez, co-director of the Commonwealth Compact and the keynote speaker at the March 29 Diversity Visionary Award Celebration.



The Commonwealth Compact is a Massachusetts initiative established to make the state a world leader in diversity and inclusion. Its mission is "To establish Massachusetts as a uniquely inclusive, honest, and supportive community of-and-for-diverse people. To acknowledge our mixed history in this effort, and to face squarely the challenges that still need to be overcome, understanding that the rich promise for the region's growing diversity must be tapped fully if Boston and Massachusetts are to achieve their economic, civic, and social potential."

The Compact requires those participating to input quantitative data including the racial and gender diversity of the signers' leadership team, board, employees, customers, consumers, vendors and

suppliers; as well as CEO commitment to diversity and recruitment strategies for identifying a diverse pool of candidates for Board members and hires.

As of November 2010, just two years after its founding, the Compact had 183 signatories, with 125 submitting the required data that will help the area benchmark and identify needs.

Sonya Hughes, Vice President of Diversity Initiatives and Programs at the Grand Rapids Chamber is pleased about what Melendez can teach the Grand Rapids Community. "I believe we can learn from the Commonwealth Compact and apply their practices to our region's efforts of being welcoming to all."

The Diversity Visionary Award Celebration will take place March 29, 5:30 - 8:30 p.m., at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel. For more information or to register visit www.grandrapids.org/visionaryaward.

Show your organization's support for inclusion and diversity by sponsoring this event. Contact Leslee Fritz at 616.771.0357 or fritzl@grandrapids.org.

New Location and Format for the 2011 Chamber Open!

Mark your calendars for Tuesday, June 14! The Chamber Open will be held at Watermark Country Club, with golfers and sponsors having the option of an 8:00 a.m. or 1:30 p.m. shotgun start. The Chamber Open Committee members and Chamber staff are already busy planning this event, which attracts a wide range of decision makers and community leaders while providing an opportunity to play eighteen holes of extraordinary golf.

To register for the outing, or for more information about the event, contact Bridget Meyers at 616.771.0342 or meyersb@grandrapids.org.

Sponsoring this event is a great way to engage in effective one-to-one marketing! For sponsorship information and opportunities contact Leslee Fritz at 616.771.0357 or fritzl@grandrapids.org.



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Call 616.771.0357 for advertising information.

Issue of the Month: Michigan Business Tax

For Michigan to be "Open for Business," Close the Book on the MBT

Tax season is right around the corner and chances are if you're a business that pays the cumbersome and complicated Michigan Business Tax, you've already started to calculate your liability. Tack on the 21.99% surcharge for good measure, and you will discover why Michigan is ranked as one of the worst places to do business.

For three years, Chamber members have been telling us the MBT should be the top policy issue for the Chamber. We have listened, and alongside other business groups around the state, have advocated for repealing the MBT and replacing it with a broad-based, low-rate tax that is easy to calculate. Although businesses were eager for change, Lansing has lacked the courage to take action.

The Chamber, like many voters, used last November's election to support candidates who were eager to repeal the MBT. For the first time since 2007, leadership in Lansing agrees this is the top priority. The first bill introduced in the House of Representatives seeks to repeal the MBT surcharge. The first Senate bill introduced was a wholesale repeal of the tax. We applaud these actions and consider it the first of many steps to ensuring a successful replacement and increasing the competitiveness of job providers statewide.

Although the MBT is the most important tax issue for our membership, it is not the only tax issue facing Michigan businesses. Throughout February, the Government Affairs Division will educate members on the issues we are advocating for to ensure Michigan becomes a business friendly state once again.

For information on Chamber's Tax and Regulatory Affairs Legislative Priorities or if you are interested in participating on the committee, please contact Chris Glass at 616.771.0311 or glassc@grandrapids.org.

Watch your mailbox! 2011 Business Directory is on its way



The Chamber's 2011 Business Directory will be landing in members' mailboxes soon! In it you will find valuable community, statistical and government information as well as alphabetical

and buyers guide listings of Chamber members. Additional copies of the 2011 Business Directory are available at the Chamber, 111 Pearl St. NW in downtown Grand Rapids, at no charge to members.

But you'll find more in your mailing than just the directory. Also included is the Chamber's annual report, "2010 At a Glance," as well as a cling sticker you can use to display your membership in the Chamber with pride. The clings also contain a QR code which, when read by a smart phone scanner, will take users directly to the Chamber's website for all the latest news, benefit and event information.

EPIC, from page 1

accepted in the following categories:

Excellence in Business - business or non-profit with more than 50 employees

Small Business of the Year - business with 50 or fewer employees

Young Entrepreneur of the Year - business owner under 35

Minority-Owned Business of the Year - business must be at least 51% minority owned

Woman-Owned Business of the Year - business must be at least 51% woman owned

Non-Profit of the Year - non-profit with 50 or fewer employees



2010 EPIC Award recipients (l to r) Alternative Mechanical's Kevin Faas and Dick Ortega (Minority Business of the Year), Karen Scarpino of Promotional Impact/GreenGiftz.com (Woman-owned Business of the Year), Susan Ledy, Literacy Center of West Michigan (Small Business of the Year), Tami Vandenberg of The Meanwhile Bar (Young Entrepreneur of the Year) and Mike Van Gessel, Rockford Construction (Excellence in Business Award). *Photo: Tiberius Images, www.tiberiusimages.com.*

form at www.grandrapids.org/epic-awards. Nominations will be accepted through February 18.

After being nominated, nominees receive an extensive questionnaire. The top three finalists in each category will be selected based on those responses. Finalists are then interviewed. All finalists will be highlighted at the EPIC Awards dinner with the six award recipients announced that evening.

Mark your calendar for this event! Reception will begin at 5:30 p.m. Questions about the event or the nomination process can be directed to Bridget Meyers at meyersb@grandrapids.org or 616.771.0342.

EPIC Awards sponsorships are available for every budget. Contact Leslee Fritz at fritzl@grandrapids.org or 616.771.0357 to see how your company can get involved.

Any business who has been a Chamber member in good standing for at least one year by May 18 is eligible for nomination. Make a nomination via web or downloadable fax-back

Register Today for These Upcoming Chamber events!

To Register

Unless otherwise noted, register for events by calling the Chamber's RSVP hot line at 616.771.0303 (please have your credit card information handy when you call) or online at www.grandrapids.org. Please call 616.771.0300 with questions about events. Special needs: Vegetarian meals are available, please let us know your dietary requirements when registering. Reasonable arrangements for people with disabilities will be made if requested in advance. Registration and Cancellation Policy: Prepayment of events is required and guarantees a reservation. Cancellations must be received at least two business days prior to an event to be eligible for a full refund. No-shows will be billed.

February

1 | ATHENA Scholarship Applications available

Visit www.grandrapids.org/athena for details. Deadline is May 6.

2 | Chamber Member Orientation

Learn to use your membership to its fullest! Event sponsored by Accident Fund Insurance Company of America.

Time | Noon – 1 p.m.

Location | Chamber Offices, 111 Pearl St. NW

Cost | FREE, includes lunch



3-4 | Facing Racism

Intensive two-day Institute for Healing Racism Program that works to eliminate individual and institutional racism.

Time | 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. both days

Location | Miller Johnson, 250 Monroe Ave. NW, Suite 800

Cost | Members: \$200/person from non-profit organizations, \$300/person from for-profit. \$50 extra for future members.

9 | Wake up Wednesday: What's Next for Grand Rapids?

A panel discussion focused on the next steps for Grand Rapids as we position ourselves as a destination for arts, culture, entertainment and business.

Time | 7:30 – 9 a.m.

Location | Grid 70, 70 Ionia Ave. SE

Cost | FREE for CCL Trustee Members;
\$10 CCL Connector Members;
\$15 Non-Members

9 | MAP Let's Dine

Dine and network with fellow MAP members at local ethnic restaurants.

Time | 6:30 – 8 p.m.

Location | Thai Cafe, Knapp Corner

Cost | Attendees are responsible for the cost of their own meals and cocktails. This is a MAP member-only event; members may bring one non-member guest.

10 | Business Exchange Luncheon

The Chamber's #1 networking event!

Time | 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Location | Crowne Plaza, 5700 28th St. SE

Cost | \$18/member-early registration,
\$23/member after 5 p.m. February 4,
\$23/future members (may attend once)

15 | Institute for Healing Racism

The ten-week Institute format provides an optimum learning experience for reflective learners. Ideal for those interested in healing racism, inequality, and building an inclusive community.

Time | 7:30 – 10 a.m.

Location | YWCA, 25 Sheldon Blvd. SE

Cost | Members: \$125/person from non-profit organizations, \$225/person from for-profit. \$50 extra for future members.

15 | Institute for Healing Racism facilitator info session

See page 11 for details.

Time | 4 – 5 p.m.

Location | Chamber Office, 111 Pearl St. NW

Cost | FREE

17 | Business After Hours

Enjoy an evening of networking at the Michigan State University College of Human Medicine.

Time | 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Location | MSU College of Human Medicine,
15 Michigan NE

Cost | FREE (members only)

In-kind Parking Sponsor: The Christman Company

22 | West Michigan World Trade Association

Join the WMWTA to welcome Richard Walawender of Miller Canfield as he presents, "The World is Flat Upside Down: The New Globalization."

Time | 5:30 p.m. Cocktails,

6:15 p.m. Dinner & Speaker

Location | Watermark Country Club,
5500 Cascade Rd SE, 49546

Cost | \$35 WMWTA members; \$50 future members

Sponsored by GNS America Co.

28 | Breakfast with Legislators

Meet your elected officials and voice opinions on issues that affect your bottom line! Networking and facilitated question and answer sessions offer first-hand information on upcoming legislation.

Time | 7:30 – 9 a.m.

Location | Rapid Central Station,
50 Grandville Ave. SW

Cost | \$15/members, \$20/future members

March

2 | Chamber Member Orientation

Learn to use your membership to its fullest! Event sponsored by Accident Fund Insurance Company of America.

Time | Noon – 1 p.m.

Location | Chamber Offices, 111 Pearl St. NW

Cost | Free, includes lunch

8 | West Michigan Business Day at the Capitol

See page 1 for details

Time | 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Location | State Capitol, Lansing

Cost | FREE to members, \$50 to be an exhibitor at the lunchtime business expo.

9 | Wake up Wednesday: Leadership Skills Development

Features Max Gibbard from Davenport University's Leadership & Management Development Institute.

Time | 7:30 – 9 a.m.

Location | Goei Center, 818 Butterworth St. SW

Cost | FREE for CCL Trustee Members; \$10 CCL Connector Members; \$15 Non-Members

RIBBON CUTTINGS

10 | Business Exchange Luncheon

The Chamber's #1 networking event!

Time | 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Location | Prince Conference Center, 1800 East Beltline Ave. SE

Cost | \$18/member-early registration,
\$23/member after 5 p.m. March 4,
\$23/future members (may attend once)

16 | Business After Hours

NOTE: This month's After Hours is on a WEDNESDAY, not the usual Thursday!

Time | 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Location | Kids' Food Basket
2055 Oak Industrial Drive

Cost | Donation of 100% Fruit Juice Boxes

22 | West Michigan World Trade Association

Join us for "Japanese: Modern Myth, Reality & Practical Tips." Presented by Andrew Thorsch and Makiko Masuda of Warner Norcross & Judd, LLP

Time | 5:30 p.m. Cocktails,

6:15 p.m. Dinner & Speaker

Location | Watermark Country Club, 5500 Cascade Rd SE, 49546

Cost | \$35 WMWTA members; \$50 future members

Sponsored by SoundOff Signal

28 | Breakfast with Legislators

Time | 7:30 – 9 a.m.

Location | Davenport University W.A. Lettinga Campus, 6191 Kraft Ave. SE

Cost | \$15/member, \$20/member

29 | Diversity Visionary Award Celebration

Attend and support your community Diversity Visionary Award recipient who demonstrates excellence and commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion.

Time | 5:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Location | Amway Grand Plaza Hotel

Cost | \$60/members, \$75/future members,
\$750/corporate table of 10

Congratulations to the following Chamber members who recently had reasons to celebrate! If you have a ground-breaking, grand opening, product launch event or other reason to celebrate, Visit www.grandrapids.org/ribbon-cuttings. We even bring the giant scissors!



Access Insurance Agencies celebrated their one-year anniversary at 2258 28th St. SE in Grand Rapids on January 11.



ORG West Michigan celebrated the grand opening of their new showroom at 201 Monroe Ave. NW in downtown Grand Rapids with a ribbon cutting and open house event in December.



Quaker Steak & Lube celebrated its grand opening at 4515 28th St. SE.



Wolven & Coonen, PLLC celebrated their relocation to new office space at 6250 Jupiter Ave. NE Ste. A in Belmont.

Member Seminars, Events & Celebrations

February

11 | **Overview for Planning and Starting Your Own Business** - This SCORE workshop covers what professional assistance will be needed, identifying your competition, business plans, what legal entity to incorporate as, marketing research, financing and more. \$45 for one or two people. Register at www.scoregr.org. Also offered Feb. 16.

24 | **Should You Upgrade to Sharepoint 2010?** - COMSYS is pleased to announce that Susan Hanley, an internationally recognized SharePoint expert, will be our guest speaker for this FREE educational seminar in Grand Rapids. For details and registration, please contact Bill Jones (616) 285-8968 or william.jones@na.manpower.com

March

11 | **Overview for Planning and Starting Your Own Business** - This SCORE workshop covers what professional assistance will be needed, identifying your competition, business plans, what legal entity to incorporate as, marketing research, financing and more. \$45 for one or two people. Register at www.scoregr.org. Also offered March 16.

9 | **Speak Up & Be Effective™** - *Be an assertive communicator.* In this program, you will learn how to think on your feet, project more confidence, manage your nerves, and get your points across. 616.336.7058 to register and for more information.

22 - 23 | **Speak Up & Be Effective™** - *Advanced - Communicate with Impact.* Learn how to Communicate with impact through oral presentation skills, create focused, concise, activating messages that influence others and projects style and presence of today's leaders. 616.336.7058 to register and for more information.

Travel with the Chamber to Greece or Thailand!

Although we announced the trips in *The Chamber News* last month, we realized the trip to Greece and the Greek Isles included a national holiday, which would mean less opportunity to experience the city of Athens. So, please note that the trip dates have changed.

Greece and the Greek Isles
May 10 - 17, 2011
\$2,730 for members
\$2,830 for future members

On this nine-day air, land, and cruise vacation, you'll journey to Athens, Mykonos, Kusadasi, Patmos, Crete and Santorini. Visit the Acropolis, the Olympic Stadium, the Parthenon and walk the Temple of Zeus.

This trip includes air travel from New York's JFK airport, transfers, taxes, all ground transportation, window cabins for the cruise portion and 13 meals. There is a maximum group size of 36 for this tour, and pricing is based on double occupancy.



Thailand and Hong Kong
November 3 - 11, 2011
\$2,495 for members
\$2,595 for future members

You and fellow travelers will visit Bangkok's Golden Palace, travel by long-tailed boat to the canals of Thonburi, take an elephant ride on the beach at Coral Island, visit the capital of Siam Ayutthaya, a ruined city built in 1350 A.D.

The Hong Kong segment of the trip is filled with visits to Victoria Harbor, Ngong Ping and Stanley, a former fishing village.

This nine-day trip includes air travel from LAX, all ground transportation, numerous meals, and a personal tour host to guide us through these amazing destinations. Pricing is based on double occupancy.

For details and itineraries, contact Kathy Nelson at nelsonk@grandrapids.org or Laurie Forte at fortel@grandrapids.org or 616.771.0300.

Leadership West Michigan graduates 23

The 2010 class of Leadership West Michigan (LWM) graduated on December 16, 2010. The class of 23 participated in eight day sessions over four months which included a two-day bus tour of the region and culminated in Regional Trustee day and graduation.

The mission of Leadership West Michigan is to create a regional mindset by developing and engaging an effective

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Leadership West Michigan's 2010 graduates. I to r: Rebecca Dickenson, Tina Dee, Janessa Smit, Mike Stock, Karyn Boyd, Abe Carrillo, Sara Hambley, Ric Roane, Charen Buyce, Tom Werkman, Sonja Johnson, Claudine Weber, J.R. Duncan, Jennifer Allard, Ann Erhardt, Carla Hill, David Quinn, Kara Wood, Ellie Frey, Amy Miller, Kris Drake, Shawnee Tate, Michelle VanTorre-Tellier

Newsflashes

Newsflashes is feature of the Chamber News that recognizes Chamber members' new products or services, new or promoted employees and recognition that they have received. E-mail press releases to brown@grandrapids.org. Deadline: first Friday of each month.

Amway Grand Plaza's The 1913 Room and The Grill at 1913 announced the addition of Lucas Grill as dining room Manager and Sommelier.

Andrews Hooper & Pavlik is pleased to announce Megan Banfield has been promoted to Senior Accountant.

Arts Council of Greater Grand Rapids announced that 23 arts educators in the Kent Intermediate School District will receive a total of \$15,750 in arts education grants for 2010-2011.

Barnes & Thornburg LLP's Chair of Finance, Insolvency and Restructuring Department Patrick E. Mears and fellow law partner John T. Gregg recently collaborated on two book projects: a chapter for the "Collier Guide to Chapter 11: Key Topics and Selected Industries," and co-authorship with the Honorable Scott W. Dale of a book titled "Michigan Security Interests in Personal Property."

Basic Communications' corporate controller Ben Gunter is assuming the additional duties of Operations Manager.

BBTelsys named Brad Morrill General Manager and Alan Littlefair Account Manager.

Bissell Homecare appointed Chris Reinke, Director-Consumer Design; Ali Ozbeki, Director-Global Technology and Innovation; Rosario Ciancimino, Director-International Marketing and Product Portfolio Management; Steven Davis, Manager-IT Project Management Office; John Cekander, Director of Engineering and Ryan McLean, Senior Director-Marketing.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan was recognized with the Blue Works award for the development and launch of its patient-centered medical home program.

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has selected Calvin College as a recipient of the 2010 Community Engagement Classification-an honor bestowed on just 115 higher education institutions. The 2010 Open Doors report ranks Calvin College second nationally among baccalaureate institutions for the number of students who participate in a short-term duration study abroad.

C/D/H added Eric McKee and Mark Jordan as consultants.

Chase Bank has hired experienced bankers Robert C. Robbins and Derek Geerlings as Relationship Managers for its business banking grouping West Michigan.

Chemical Bank announces the appointment of Donald W. Farmer to Vice President, Commercial/Agriculture Lender.

Draper Group USA has named Wesley A. Jones Vice President/Business Development.

Dykema announces the addition of Associate Mark J. Magyar to the firm's Business and Commercial Litigation practice group.

Echelbarger, Himebaugh, Tamm & Co. promoted Damian Casey to Enterprise Resource Planning Practice Manager.

Engineered Protection Systems, Inc. was presented the 2010 Circle of Excellence Award by First Alert, a National Security Technology Company. In addition, Kevin Carlson, President of EPS Security was presented the 2010 Medal of Honor Award from First Alert. EPS also earned a Sales Leader Award presented to David Hood, Director of Sales and Marketing, and a second place award for Dealer of the Year and a Community Service Award.

Tracey Golden-Sanchez, Employee Solutions Specialist at Express Employment Professionals, recently received the Certified Staffing Professional Designation from the American Staffing Association.

Chamber members who will be serving on the 2011 Feeding America W. Michigan's Board of Directors are: Kevin Begin, Country Fresh Dairies; Patrick L. Repins, Crowe Horwath; and Tom Bylenga, Star Truck Rentals, Inc.

The Ferris State University Board of Trustees authorized the purchase of space on Grand Rapids' Medical Mile that will be used to deliver instruction to third-and four-year Doctor of Pharmacy students. The Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University Big Rapids Campus is scheduled to open in early January. Ronald E. Snead Sr. was recently named Chair of the Ferris Board of Trustees, becoming the first African-American graduate of Ferris and the second African American to Chair the Board.

Diane Flatt has joined First Telecommunications as a Customer Service Representative/Project Manager.

Thomas R. TerMaat of Foster Swift Collins & Smith was recently appointed by the Kent County Board of Commissioners to a three-year term on the Officers' Compensation Committee.

Founders Bank & Trust added Mark Herro as Vice President-BSA and Compliance Officer.

Grand Rapids City Commission appointed David Maxam, AIA, LEED-AP, to the Historic Preservation Commission for a three-year term.

Grand Rapids Community College has selected Raul Alvarez Jr. as Director of Communications. Grand Rapids Community College has selected Rebecca R. Whitman as its new Chief of Campus Police.

Grand Rapids Community Foundation announced two new Board Leaders; chair, Carol Karr, Miller Johnson, and Vice Chair, Eva Acuirre-Cooper, WOOD

TV8. Laurie Beard, Founders Bank & Trust, was named a Trustee.

Grand Valley State University's News and Information Services has won two Platinum and two Gold Ava Awards for videos. The videos were written and produced by Mary Eileen Lyon. The physician assistant studies program at GVSU has selected Education Management Solutions' simulation software to manage its state-of-the-art simulation center in Grand Rapids. Steve Buckridge, has been named Director of GVSU's Area Studies Center.

Habitat for Humanity of Kent County is proud to announce Accreditation of Project Manager, Dave Zimmerman, as a LEED® Green Associate.

Amada P. Hunt has joined Holiday Inn Grand Rapids Downtown as the new Sales Manager.

David Ysseldyke was hired as an Account Executive with Interphase Interiors.

Elliott Church joined Kreis, Enderle, Hudgins & Borsos as an Associate.

Legacy Trust Investment Associate Laina Mills has been promoted to Portfolio Manager and has received her Certified Financial Planner Certification.

The Lighthouse Group has added Mike Boros as Commercial Lines Manager; Kelley (Rossman) Monterusso, Director of Communications & Organizational Development and Carrie Farnum, Benefits Account Executive.

Vera Grishkina accepted the role of Acting Director of the Customized Workplace English Program at the Literacy Center of West Michigan.

Craig Hankinson was appointed Senior Vice President and Chief Credit Officer for Macatawa Bank Corp. Cecil Mac Laren has joined the bank as Vice President, Senior Commercial Loan Workout Specialist located in their Grand Haven office.

Floriza Genautis, CEO of Management

Business Solutions was named a 2011 Women Business Enterprise Star.

Metro Health will be expanding its breast and cervical cancer prevention program for under-insured and non-insured women thanks to financial support from the Metro Hospital Foundation. Also, Metro Health Hospital announced that three of its cardiology programs have received accreditation from National agencies, and Metro Health Allendale recently received the Community Involvement and Service Award from the Allendale Chamber of Commerce.

James F. Scales and Matthew E. Fink have become members of the law firm of Mika Meyers Beckett & Jones PLC.

Miller Canfield has been recognized as a leading litigation firm in Michigan by Benchmark Litigation: The Guide to America's Leading Litigation Firms and Attorneys. The Guide gave special recognition to Miller Canfield's litigators Thomas W. Cranmer, Gregory L. Curtner, Donna J. Donati, Michael W. Hartmann and Carl H. von Ende.

Miller Johnson announced the addition of Stephanie J. Cebulski, Christopher J. Schneider, Aliyya A. Clement and Neil J. Marchand as Associates in the Grand Rapids office. Also, Steve Ryan has been elected to the Management Committee.

Office Depot was awarded the Environmental Partner Award from Webster Industries for diverting millions of pounds of plastic from landfill through the sale of recycled content ReClaim™ and Earth Sense™ trashcan liners.

Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services is pleased to welcome three clinicians, Brie Walters-Rook, Carol Rich and Elaine Decker to the Northeast Clinic location. Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services is pleased to announce that the acquisition of the practice of Bruce Springer, M.D., who will work closely with Talal Khan, M.D., Service Chief for Addiction Medicine, and Larry Vander Plaats, L.M.S.W., C.A.A.C., Director of Substance Use Disorder Services, in making Pine Rest's continuum of

care for individuals with substance use disorders seamless.

Priority Health announced the additions of John Ahrens as Associative Vice President of Actuarial and Underwriting services and Gene Cronin as Associative Vice President for Product and Market Development.

Regal Financial Group and Regal Investment Advisors welcomes Timothy Creath to their team.

Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge announces that Thomas W. Aycock, Andrew J. Blodgett, and Matthew L. Wikander have been named shareholders of the firm. Charles F. Behler, Cindy C. Boer, Peter J. Boyles, David J. DeGraw, William L. Henn, William J. Hondorp (CEO), and Todd W. Millar will serve on the firm's Board of Directors in 2011.

Carol A. Crawford, President of The Alternative Board West Michigan recently was elected Chairperson of the Franchise Advisor Board for The Alternative Board, an international organization providing peer advisory boards and executive coaching for business owners of privately held companies.

Trivalent Group recently joined the Microsoft Partner Research Panel (MSPRP), a new component of the Microsoft Network. Mark Hepinstall, Virtual Chief Information Officer, has been selected to represent the company on MSPRP.

Tim Myers has been named Vice President and CFO of Van Andel Institute.

Darin Mulcahy has joined Van Manen Petroleum Group as Director of Sales and Marketing.

Veolia Energy Grand Rapids named Jim Monterusso new General Manager.

Vos Glass received the Award of Excellence in two categories from Associated Builders and Contractors of Western Michigan.

Warner Norcross & Judd announces 10 attorneys have been named partners:

[Continued on page 14](#)

Newsflashes (from page 13)

Jason L. Byrne; Rob M. Davis; Charlie Goode; Frank E. Henke; Matthew D. Johnson; Jay A. Kennedy, Chad E. Kleinhessel; Heidi A. Lyon; Michael B. O'Neal; Todd W. Simpson and Jennifer Watkins.

Wedgwood Christian Services has announced the following additions to its staff: Elyse Putnam, Communications Coordinator; Dr. Elizabeth Raese, Clinical Supervisor, Outpatient Services; and Cindy Hardy, Associate Director of Finance.

Sheri Harper of Western Michigan University, received its Make a Difference Award. David Burnie, Professor of Finance and Commercial Law at WMU, has been named the National City Corp. endowed Chair in Finance and Commercial Law. The award includes a stipend and funding for research and research related activities, and is bestowed for three years.

Michael Walenta of WGUV-TV/FM/AM was appointed to the PBS Interactive Station Advisory Council.

The following Chamber members will be serving on the Western Michigan Chapter of the Association for Corporate Growth 2011 Board of Directors: Paul Guerre, Barnes & Thornburg; Chuck Smeester, WilliamCharles Executive Search; John Arndts, Mika Meyers Beckett & Jones; David Hensch, JP Morgan Chase; Kraig Harper, Service Express; and Executive Director Julie Metsker, Professional Administrative Resources.

The following Chamber members will be on the World Affairs Council of Western Michigan's 2011 Board of Directors: Vicky Ludema, Crowe Horwath; David Hoogendoorn, Ernst & Young; Paul Kozulis, Deloitte; Ellen Levey, The Employers' Association; Gary Malburg, Steelcase; Craig Meurlin, Warner Norcross & Judd; Mike Perry, Progressive Architecture; Ted Gedra, Wolverine World Wide; Craig Witcher, Amway; & Anette Estrada, BDO.

Program Yields Big Dividends for West Michigan Businesses



The Chambers from Grand Rapids, Holland, Muskegon, Kalamazoo and Battle Creek all participate in the Accident Fund Insurance Company of America Workers Compensation Insurance program. It allows our members to not only get a 5% discount on Workers comp insurance, but also dividends. This year, participating members will get a whopping 11% dividend! We recently celebrated Accident Fund's distributing more than \$1 million to West Michigan businesses with a check presentation. Watch next month's issue of *The Chamber News* for more details of your Chamber's participation in this program. Pictured l-r: Theresa Ross of Accident Fund, Muskegon Area Chamber of Commerce President Cindy Larsen, Holland Area Chamber of Commerce President Jane Clark and Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce President & CEO Jeanne Englehart.

Mark Your Calendar for our 2011 Signature Events!

Join us for these "can't-miss" Chamber events in 2011:



Diversity Visionary Award Celebration
Tuesday, March 29, 5:30 - 8 p.m.
Amway Grand Plaza Hotel



The EPIC Awards
Wednesday, May 18, 5:30 - 8 p.m.
Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park



The Chamber Open
Tuesday, June 14 (two shotguns 8 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.)
Watermark Country Club



ATHENA Award Luncheon
September 14, 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Amway Grand Plaza Hotel

Photos: Tiberius Images, www.tiberiusimages.com.

Special Thanks to Chamber's Trustee Members

Trustee members are leaders. Companies that join at this most prestigious level see Chamber membership as an active investment in the entire West Michigan business community, their investment helping other businesses grow and succeed. Thank you to the organizations who support the work of the Chamber through membership at the Trustee level. *(List reflects membership as of 1/10/11)*

a. j. Veneklasen, Inc.
 Above & Beyond Banquets, Catering & Events
 ADAC Automotive
 Adtegrity.com
 Advantage Health Physician Network
 Aldi
 American Seating Co.
 Amway Corp.
 Amway Grand Plaza Hotel
 Andy J. Egan Company
 Appletree Christian Learning Center
 AT&T Michigan
 Autocam Corporation
 BDO
 Beene Garter LLP
 BISSELL Inc.
 Blackmer, A Dover Company
 Blue Care Network of Michigan
 Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan
 Bob Evans
 Bouma Corporation
 Calvin College
 Cascade Engineering, Inc.
 Chase
 Comerica Bank
 Consumers Energy
 Costco Wholesale
 Country Fresh, LLC
 Dave Cole Decorators, Inc.
 Davenport University
 DP Fox Holdings, LLC/Fox Motors
 Eaton Aerospace Actuation Systems
 Grand Rapids

Ernst & Young LLP
 Fidelity Investments
 Fifth Third Bank
 Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber, Inc.
 Foremost Insurance Company
 Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith, P.C.
 Founders Bank & Trust
 GE Aviation
 Goodwill Industries of Greater Grand Rapids
 Grand Rapids Community College
 Grand Valley State University
 Grandville Printing Co. Great Lakes
 Heavy Haul
 Grotenhuis
 Heartland - Greenview
 Herman Miller, Inc.
 Hope Network
 Huntington Bank
 Hylant Group
 Imperial Design Companies
 Irwin Seating Company
 L - 3 Avionics Systems
 Lacks Enterprises, Inc.
 Little River Casino Resort
 Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital
 Meijer, Inc.
 Mercantile Bank of Michigan
 Metro Health
 Miller Johnson
 MVP Sports Clubs
 Paul Goebel Group
 Perfect Staffing Solutions

Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services
 Plante & Moran, PLLC
 PNC Bank
 Pridgeon & Clay, Inc.
 Priority Health
 Proaction Behavioral Health Alliance
 ProCare Systems, Inc.
 Rapidparts Inc.
 Rhoades McKee PC
 Rockford Construction Company, Inc.
 RoMan Manufacturing, Inc.
 Saint Mary's Health Care
 Simple Energy
 Skytron
 Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge, PC
 Spartan Stores, Inc.
 Spectrum Health
 Spectrum Health The Medical Group
 Steelcase Inc.
 The Grand Rapids Press
 The Rapid
 Total Plastics, Inc.
 University of Michigan Business Engagement Center
 UPS
 Varnum LLP
 Walgreens
 Warner Norcross & Judd LLP
 Wolverine World Wide
 WOOD TV8/WXSP/WOTV
 X-Rite, Incorporated
 Zondervan



Include an item in our New Member Welcome Bags!

Be one of the first to welcome new members to the Chamber by sharing some of your company's promotional items with us. The new member welcome bags contain member benefit and event information along with member promotional items as a welcome gift.

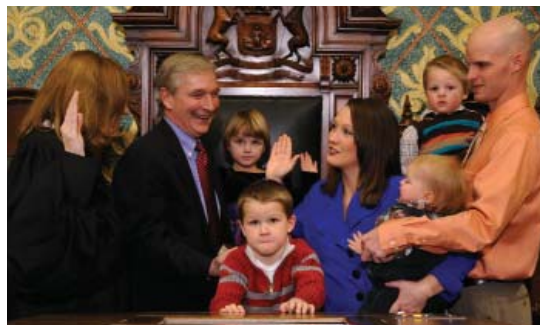
If you are interested in donating promotional items to the Chamber, please contact Mark Allen at 616.771.0348 or allenm@grandrapids.org.



West Michigan Legislators Go to Work

West Michigan's legislators were sworn in in early January. The Chamber thought it might be helpful to provide our members with contact information for members of the House and Senate who represent West Michigan's interests in Lansing.

Should you have questions about how what's going on in Lansing may affect your business, please contact the Chamber's Government Affairs team by calling 616.771.0300.



Lisa Posthumus Lyons (in blue) took the oath of office surrounded by her husband, four children and her father, former lieutenant Governor Dick Posthumus, second from left.

Governor

Rick Snyder (R) - (517)373-3400
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, MI 48909

Lieutenant Governor

Brian Calley (R) - (517)373-6800
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, MI 48909

Michigan State Senate

P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536
District 24 Rick Jones (R) - (517)373-3447
District 28 Mark Jansen (R) - (517)373-0797

District 29 David Hildenbrand (R) - (517)373-1801
District 30 Arlan Meekhof (R) - (517)373-6920
District 33 Judy Emmons (R) - (517)373-3760
District 34 Goeff Hansen (R) - (517)373-1635

Michigan House of Representatives

P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514
District 61 Margaret O'Brien (R) - (517)373-1774
District 70 Rick Outman (R) -

(517)373-0834
District 72 Ken Yonker (R) - (517)373-0840
District 73 Peter MacGregor (R) - (517)373-0218
District 74 Dave Agema (R) - (517)373-8900
District 75 Brandon Dillon (D) - (517)373-2668
District 76 Roy Schmidt (D) - (517)373-0822
District 77 Thomas Hooker (R) - (517)373-2277
District 86 Lisa Posthumus Lyons (R) - (517)373-0846
District 87 Mike Callton (R) - (517)373-0842
District 88 Bob Genetski (R) - (517)373-0836
District 89 Amanda Price (R) - (517)373-0838
District 90 Joe Haveman (R) - (517)373-0830
District 91 Holly Hughes (R) - (517)373-3436