



# North Branch Area Chamber of Commerce

*Planting the Seeds of Success*

February 2014

## Community Connections Expo

**Booths available now**

*Business & Home Show for the communities of North Branch, Almelund, Harris, Stacy and Sunrise.*



**Saturday, March 15, 2014**

**10 am - 3 pm**

**North Branch Area High School**

**Add value to your Chamber Membership!**

***\$25 Discount as a member with the opportunity to choose your booth space.***

Last year, we had 1500 in attendance at Community Connections Expo. There were 135 businesses and organizations participating with booth spaces; 86 of those were our members. We appreciate your support and would like to help you continue to make those connections with the community again this year.

Community Connections Expo gives you the opportunity to:

- Build a stronger relationship with area residents, future clients and present customers.
- Develop name recognition while displaying the products and services you offer.
- Show support to the chamber and fellow members by participating in the chamber's programs such as Buy Local.

If you need assistance in planning your booth, we would be glad to help. If you would like new signs, banners or printed materials for your display, we'll help you find these resources, locally. Most important... Plan ahead!

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### North Branch Area Chamber of Commerce

PO Box 577  
6063 Main Street, Suite B  
North Branch, MN 55056

(651) 674-4077

Contact@NorthBranchChamber.com

Office Hours: Mon - Fri 8 am to 4 pm

*Mission Statement: The North Branch Area Chamber of Commerce will promote and enhance the North Branch area by planting the seeds of success.*

### Chamber Calender

Promotion Committee	Feb 4
Winter Fest	Feb 5-9
Luncheon	Feb 11
Morning Coffee Networking	Feb 12
Board Meeting	Feb 13
Ambassador Committee	Feb 14
Buy Local Committee	Feb 18
Member Services Committee	Feb 27

# February Chamber Luncheon

**Tuesday, February 11, 2014**

Noon to 1pm

N.B. American Legion,  
6439 Elm St, North Branch

Caterer: China Taste

Guest Speaker: Susan Burke,  
MN DNR Invasive Species Program

Topic: "PlayCleanGo  
Stop Invasive Species in Your Tracks"

Featured Business: Haven Centers, Inc.

\$8 at the door or "Prepaid Express"  
RSVP required by Fri., Feb 7th  
call 651-674-4077 or email  
Arlys@NorthBranchChamber.com

North Branch Area Chamber's

## Morning Coffee Networking

You are invited to join us:

### Family Pathways Teen Center

6381 Main St, North Branch

**Wednesday, February 12th**

7:30 to 8:30 am

Bring your business cards  
Share this invitation with co-workers  
Share this invitation with friends  
Free to attend, refreshments provided

RSVP required by Feb 11th  
Call (651) 674-4077 or  
Arlys@northbranchchamber.com

Join Us: Committee Members Wanted

### Buy Local Committee

Purpose: Encouraging Local Patronage

Commitment: 1 hour per meeting

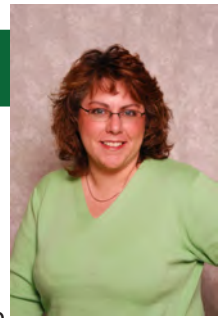
Meets: 3rd Tuesday of each month at 12 noon to 1 pm

Lunch on your own, location T/B/A monthly

Staff Liaison: Kris Greene (651) 674-4077 or

Kris@northbranchchamber.com

## Director's Corner



Mother Nature has certainly hit us this winter with full force, lots of snow, bitter cold and some more snow. That makes me want to stay inside and hibernate and not go out and enjoy the fun and beauty winter has to bring. I am looking forward to Winter Fest 2014 which is February 5-9. The Chamber and other businesses have been busy planning a variety of activities to help us get out and chase away those winter blues.

Make sure to buy a Winter Fest button. You have two ways to win! For those ready for the challenge, the Medallion Hunt begins February 5. You could win \$300 cash if you find the medallion and have a button. Clues are posted at the Chamber and on their website. For those that don't want to hunt for the medallion if you purchase a button you will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 Shopko gift card. In addition, with the purchase of your button you will receive a coupon with great offers from some of our local businesses. Get your buttons at the Chamber office, North Branch Liquor, Rapid Press and County Market.

Saturday is jammed packed with fun activities. This year the Chili Show Down has been moved to JJ's Bowl along with the Vintage Snowmobile Expo and Ride. Come out and support our chili cooks, vote for your favorite chili and see some neat old snowmobiles. Visit Central Park and watch the ice carver, play our Olympic games and try your hand at Smooshing. It is amazing what the ice carver can do with a chainsaw, a block of ice and "magic glue" aka water! On Saturday Frosty will be at the North Branch skating rink and Sunday he will be at the Stacy Park to go sliding. Rumor has it he will be bringing cookies and hot chocolate! Other activities going on throughout the week include: North Branch Rotary Gala, Lake State Credit Union Snow Bowl, ECFE Scrapbook and Hobby Day, the Freeze Your Bunz 5K, and S.L.A. Omelet Breakfast.

Grab your friends and neighbors and come out and chase away the winter blues! We hope to see you for all of the Winter Fest activities.

Bridgitte Konrad,  
North Branch Area Chamber Board of Directors  
City of North Branch

## Winter Fest

"Thank you" to these event sponsors:

**Platinum Sponsor**  
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Minnesota Energy Resources  
Sno-Baron's Snowmobile Club

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Lake State Credit Union, Minnco Credit Union  
North Branch Dental  
North Branch Veterinary Hospital  
Peoples National Bank  
Prefer Paving & Ready Mix, Provide Care  
Rapid Press Printing & Copy Center, Xcel Energy  
Fairview Clinic North Branch  
Fairview Lakes Medical Center  
Fairview Pharmacy North Branch  
Fairview Physical Therapy North Branch

**February 5th - 9th**

**W**ays to be involved...

- I**nvestigate the clues
- N**ever hidden on private property
- T**eam Smooshing on Saturday
- E**at "award winning" Chili
- R**ide Snowmobiles
- F**rosty has fun skating
- E**njoy cookies & hot chocolate
- S**lide with Frosty
- T**eam Bowling





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www.northbranchliquors.com

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## February Featured Business

Haven Center Counseling is making an exciting transition in 2014 to become the "Haven Center Counseling Referral Network."

This change means:

- Formal networking arrangements with related businesses, including advertising.
- Contracted counselors have greater visibility to promote and manage their own businesses.
- Clients have greater access to life-changing services, products and resources.

Currently, referrals come to our agency through advertising, or the recommendation of friends, family, or health care professionals. These new clients are seen by our own therapists at either our North Branch or Cambridge offices. As we expand our focus, Haven Center will refer clients and customers to other like-minded professionals and businesses belonging to our referral network.

This may include independently contracted counselors, therapists and life coaches, as well as people providing related health and wellness services. Haven Center wishes to better serve the community by promoting products and services which may benefit our clientele. Like-minded businesses can choose to advertise onsite and through our website. By working together, everyone benefits!

Haven Center's new referral network will be a good match for many businesses in the North Branch Community and surrounding area. Please contact the office for more information at 651-277-4283 or [info@mnhavencenter.org](mailto:info@mnhavencenter.org). Brian, the business manager, looks forward to helping you get started!



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[www.mnhavencenter.org](http://www.mnhavencenter.org)  
651-277-4283

## Welcome New Members

### Deep Clean Carpet Cleaning

Lee Buboltz  
651-775-1772  
[lee@deepclean.us.com](mailto:lee@deepclean.us.com)  
[www.deepclean.us.com](http://www.deepclean.us.com)  
Fantastically clean carpets for your home and business.

### Grazeland Farm

Sherry Stirling  
651-257-0827  
[grazelandsheep@gmail.com](mailto:grazelandsheep@gmail.com)  
Cottage industry wool socks and yarn,  
sheepskin rugs and garden mulch.

### Empire Financial Solutions, Inc.

Laura Scaramell  
38780 Eighth Ave, North Branch  
651-674-0990  
[lscaramell@sammonsrep.com](mailto:lscaramell@sammonsrep.com)  
22+ years assisting individuals and businesses with their financial goals.  
Securities offered through Sammons Securities Company, LLC member FINRA/SIPC.  
Investment advisory services offered through Sigma Planning Corporation, a registered investment advisor.  
Empire Financial Solutions, Inc. is not affiliated with Sammons Securities Company, LLC or Sigma Planning Corporation.

### Kirsten Hagen Kennedy Consulting

Kirsten Kennedy  
651-674-5827  
[khagenkennedy@gmail.com](mailto:khagenkennedy@gmail.com)  
21st century innovations in policy advocacy,  
building sustainable communities and organizations.

### North Branch Floral

Geri Wheeler  
6138 Main St, North Branch  
651-674-8341  
[www.northbranchfloral.com](http://www.northbranchfloral.com)  
Floral design for all occasions, an array of green and  
blooming plants. Variety of gifts.

### Rivermile Agile Media

Howie Burke  
763-68-5738  
[Howieburke@gmail.com](mailto:Howieburke@gmail.com)  
[www.rivermile.com](http://www.rivermile.com)  
Web design, content management, analytics and online  
strategies for small business.



# 10 Reasons Why Your Business Needs Social Media

(Yes, even YOUR business)

By Kris Greene, North Branch Area Chamber Staff

Do I “Like” or “Tweet”? “Pin” or “Check-in”? What does the “#” symbol mean? And why would I “+1”? If you’re like me, the thought of the Social Media world is incredibly intimidating. There seems to be a new network popping up almost weekly. Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, Tumblr, Linked In, Instagram, Foursquare; the list goes on. These networks aren’t just social gathering sights anymore. They have become the new way to market and promote your business.

So what is Social Media and what can it do for your business? Frankly speaking, Social Media is a channel for your business to connect to other business, current customers and potential new customers. Traditional advertising such as television, print and radio ads basically had a one-way connection to your audience. Social Media creates an opportunity for you to have a two-way conversation and interact with people on a day-to-day basis. By using these networks, you can connect with your current and potential customers on an emotional level which creates a bond between you.

Let’s look at 10 reasons for your business to be using Social Media:

**1) Branding & creating a buzz-** You can create a recognizable identity for your service or product through Social Media, which is very important for a small business. By creating a brand and getting the word out, you are promoting online conversation.



**2) Build relationships, create trust and be more personal-** 78% of people surveyed trust peer reviews while only 14% trust traditional advertising. Social Media gives you a place to connect online and build that trust. (survey by Hoot-Suite)



**3) Word of mouth-** People trust their friends and loved ones more than anyone else. If your product is recommended by someone whose opinion is valued, chances are higher that it’s your product they will buy.

**4) Boost your customer service-** These network channels give you the opportunity to track what people are saying about your product and services, listen to reviews and join the conversation to answer questions or fix any problems. This could be your first line of defense before incorrect rumors spread about your business.



**5) Small Business can compete with large companies-** In the past, competing with a large company’s monstrous advertising budget was almost impossible for the small business. With the right type of online media, you could get an immense amount of sustainable traffic.



**6) Get valuable product feedback-** Through your online conversations with your customers, you can actively seek feedback and use this information to update or change your product.

**7) Establish yourself as an expert-** Your quick responses to questions from your customers will help you gain their trust. By joining forums or message boards, your answers will earn you respect as an expert in your field.



**8) Valuable low cost marketing-** Not many small businesses have a large advertising budget. With Social Media networks, most marketing can be done for free- except for your time.

**9) Communicate to a world of potential new customers-** Your one client in North Branch has 350 friends. If this client “likes” your Facebook page, your information will now show up on his friend’s newsfeeds. This can start a web of potential new clients. (Keep in mind, if Facebook was a country, it would be the 3rd largest in the world. That’s a lot of “Likes”.)



**10) Track and monitor your products, customers and competitors-** Social Media tools will help you analyze data and monitor who is talking about your product. You can narrow it down to regions, specific terminology or campaigns. By having this data to review, you can see what changes need to be made.



2014 is a new year. It’s time to start interacting in the world of Social Media with your business. In the coming months, the North Branch Area Chamber plans to offer some basic courses to our members. In the meantime, if you have any questions, give me a call and I’ll help you get started on the right path! Kris Greene (651) 674-4077 or Kris@NorthBranchChamber.com

## Member News

When the midwinter blues have you down, look us up! **Haven Center** Counseling is here for you and your loved ones, providing spiritually-based hope, help and healing through counseling, support groups and wellness services since 2008. 651-277-4283 North Branch/Cambridge.  
[www.havencenter.org](http://www.havencenter.org)

Wednesday, Feb. 5 -FREE Today's Health Topics talk: "Beyond LDL—Understanding the New Lipid Guidelines," presented by Cardiologist R.J. Dahiya, MD, University of Minnesota Physicians Heart, Fairview, at **Fairview Lakes Medical Center**, Conference Room B, 5200 Fairview Blvd., Wyoming, MN, 2-3 p.m. No need to preregister.

Feb 17-March 27 Fitness Classes presented by Lino Lakes YMCA in Room 102 at the new Ortho Center at **Fairview Lakes Medical Center**, Wyoming, MN. Six-week session of one-hour classes: \$60; six-week session of 45-minute classes, \$40. To register call the YMCA at 651-795-9622 and ask for Fairview Class 1, 2, 3, or 4.

- Class 1 (begins Feb. 17) Fitness Yoga, 6-7pm
- Class 2 (Feb. 18) Fitness Yoga, 6-6:45am
- Class 3 (Feb. 19) Latin Hip Hop, 6-7pm
- Class 4 (Feb. 20) Fitness Yoga, 6-6:45am

Forest Lake Rotary's Polar Plunge, on Sat. Feb 22nd. Jump in support of **Lakes Area Youth Service Bureau's** programs & services!  
[www.ytblakesarea.org](http://www.ytblakesarea.org)

**The North Branch Beautification Association** would love your support to continue our efforts in beautifying North Branch! Please consider becoming a member. 2014 Individual and Business Memberships now available. Our next project is to get the School Lane (Grand Ave) banners up. We will be hosting a spaghetti dinner fundraiser at the High School on Tues., Mar. 18th to help raise money for this cause. Please save the date! Tickets available soon. Contact Christine Larson, Empire Insurance (651-674-0990) or Kris at the Chamber for membership or other questions about the Beautification Association.

### **Pizza Hut** Lunch Specials:

Mon- \$6.00 med 1 topping pizza

Tues- pasta for \$6.99 and \$10.99

Wed- .50 wings

Thurs- lg 1 topping pizza for \$10.00

Fri-Big Dinner Box for \$19.99

And we have a new better than ever hand tossed dough for \$10.00.

### **Wild Mountain/Taylor's Falls Recreation**

Friends & Family Days- Feb. 8 & 23, Mar. 2 & 15. Special savings on lift tickets & rentals.

Must have coupon- see website:

<http://wildmountain.com/skisb-specials-and-coupons>

### **North Branch Area Community Education's** Winter brochure is now available.

Classes for all ages! [www.nbaceonline.org](http://www.nbaceonline.org)

The **Recycled Wardrobe's** Winter Fest Sale is February 3rd-8th! Save 20% on the purchase of all your STUFF, or your discount DOUBLES with your Winter Fest Button! Sale good at BOTH locations!

**North Branch Veterinary Hospital** February Special: It's Dental Month! Receive a free bag of C.E.T Hextra Chews with a scheduled dental cleaning. Valued @ \$35.60. 651-674-7015

**North Folk Winery's** Valentine's Day Wine Pairing Dinner- Fri. Feb 14th 6p-9p  
Treat that special person in your life to a truly romantic dinner at the winery. Your favorite North Folk Winery wines paired with a 4-course meal.

### Menu:

Cheese, Bison and Cracker Plate with Frontenac Gris Wine or Hard Cider

Salad Greens with Raspberry Vinaigrette Dressing and Apple Wine

Pork Tenderloin or Pasta Primavera (veggie option) with Marquette Wine

Chocolate Decadence Cake with Raspberry Wine

Live entertainment. \$45.00 + 15% gratuity per person. RESERVATIONS ONLY by calling (651)674-7548 or [wines@northfolkwinery.com](mailto:wines@northfolkwinery.com). 43150 Blackhawk Rd., Harris

**North Branch Physical Therapy:** Now offering a 60 minute massage for \$45 if you book an appointment in the month of February!! Call 651-674-7589 to make an appointment today!

## Buy Local

### Community Connections Expo Prize Donations Needed!

The Buy Local committee will be hosting a "Show Us Your Buy Local Receipt" drawing. Participants who show a receipt from a local store are able to enter into a drawing for a prize basket. **We are asking for donations valued at \$25- either a gift card, certificate or physical item.** Our goal is to get our winner back into your store! **Donating businesses will be listed at the Expo as well as in the paper with a photo of the winner.** Please contact Kris if you are interested in donating. Donations must be received by March 7th. [Kris@NorthBranchChamber.com](mailto:Kris@NorthBranchChamber.com)



## Chamber All-Star



*Pictured: Kathy Lindo, Tom Fisk and Nate Olson presenting the All-Star Award at the December 10th Chamber Luncheon.*

I nominate Tom Fisk and Fisk Tire & Auto for a Chamber All-Star.

Last Tuesday Jan 7th, coldest day ever!!! I stayed late at work to help out Sue get her truck up and running, as I went back to my vehicle I noticed the tire was nearly flat! I limped it over to Holiday and put air in it as soon as I removed the nozzle I could hear the air coming out of the tire! I got it over to Fisk Tire at 5:58pm they close at 6:00, I spoke with the gentleman at the desk and explained my situation... they were closing so I would come in on Wednesday. Just then Tom walked out of his office and greeted me with a "Hi Nate!" I told him the situation and he said that there was no way I would make it to Wednesday. He went into the shop had all the guys hold on and got my truck in and out of there in 15 minutes! I will definitely be going back and would urge others to go to Tom! He went above and beyond and it was very much appreciated!!! Thanks Tom!!!

Sincerely, Nate Olson, Stearns Bank

## Chamber All-Star

I would like to nominate the Chamber staff for All Stars!! I don't remember if they ever got this before, but I think all the hard work they do has made our chamber one of the best in the state, they should be All-Stars! I don't think I have ever been to a luncheon when someone doesn't bring up the fact that ours is the most lively AND well attended chamber they have ever seen. Without all their hard work and persistence this would obviously never have happened!!

Thank you! Mary Eslinger, Avon

## Smooshing @ Celebration of the Lakes

Thank you to those that accepted the challenge by the Chisago Lakes Area Chamber to a "Smoosh" race. Braving the winter elements, we strapped on a pair of 2X4s to our feet and dashed across the ice. We may not have won, but at least we showed up!



Matt Ashley Christine Nate



Jenny Kelly Tony Kathy



### "Smoosh On!"

A very special THANK YOU goes to **Charlie Hult and the crew at Lamperts** for make our smooching devises. You can try out Smooshing on Saturday, Feb 8th in Central Park, as part of Winter Fest.

## North Branch Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

Jennifer Neumann - President  
Prism Design & Embroidery  
(651) 674-2509

Christine Larson - Vice President  
Empire Insurance Group  
(651) 674-0990

Bill Young - Past President  
Anderson & Koch Ford  
(651) 674-4465

Brigitte Konrad - Secretary  
City of North Branch  
(651) 674-8113

Nate Olson - Treasurer  
Stearns Bank  
(651) 674-2265

Frank Gomes - Director  
NorthBrook Fellowship  
(651) 277-0100

Ashley Mitchell - Director  
Family Pathways Teen Center  
(651) 277-0098

Kelly Neider - Director  
Get Fit Now  
(651) 755-0578

Tony Peterson - Director  
North Branch County Market  
(651) 317-2100

Helen Rosing - Director  
ECM Publisher, Inc.  
(651) 674-7025

Board meetings are held monthly on the 2nd Thursday starting at 7:30 am at the Chamber Office. Agendas, minutes and financial reports are available on request

### Staff & Hours:

Kathy Lindo, Executive Director  
Mon - Fri 8 am to 4 pm

Arlys Walberg, Promotions Coordinator  
Mon-Thu 8 am to 4 pm

Kris Greene, Administrative Assistant  
Tue - Fri 8 am to 2 pm



**North Branch Area Chamber of Commerce**

PO Box 577 ~ 6063 Main Street, Suite B  
North Branch, MN 55056





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# North Branch Area Chamber of Commerce 2014 Board of Directors

The Board of Directors for the North Branch Area Chamber of Commerce are elected to their positions by our members. These volunteers take the responsibility and provide the leadership to guide the organization. Please contact any board member with questions, comments or concerns. The Board meets on the 2nd Thursday each month starting at 7:30 am at the Chamber Office. The meet is open to all. Agenda, minutes and financial reports are available on request.



**Jenny Neumann, President**  
**Prism Design & Embroidery**  
(651) 674-2509  
jenny@prismdesignemb.com  
Committees: Buy Local,  
Promotions, Executive  
Term 2013-2015



**Christine Larson, Vice President**  
**Empire Insurance Group**  
(651) 674-0990  
clarson@aibme.com  
Committees: Buy Local,  
Executive  
Term 2012-2016



**Bill Young, Past President**  
**Anderson & Koch Ford**  
(651) 674-4465  
anderson@mcq.net  
Committees:  
Membership Services,  
Executive  
Term 2010-2014

**Bridgitte Konrad, Secretary**  
**City of North Branch**  
(651) 674-8113  
bridgittek@ci.north-branch.mn.us  
Committees: Promotions,  
Executive  
Term 2013-2014



**Nathan Olson, Treasurer**  
**Stearns Bank**  
(651) 674-2265  
nateo@stearnsbank.com  
Committees: Ambassador,  
Promotions, Executive  
Term 2014-2015



**Tony Peterson, Director**  
**North Branch County Market**  
(651) 317-2100  
tpeterson@jerrysfoods.com  
Committees: Ambassador  
Appointed 2013-2014

**Frank Gomes, Director**  
**NorthBrook Fellowship**  
(651) 277-0100  
northbrook@izoom.net  
Committees:  
Membership Services  
Term 2013-2014



**Ashley Mitchell, Director**  
**Family Pathways Teen Center**  
(651) 277-0098  
ashley@familypathways.org  
Committee:  
Membership Services  
Term 2014-2015



**Kelly Neider, Director**  
**Get Fit Now**  
(651) 755-0578  
kelly@notouchy.org  
Committee: Buy Local  
Term 2014-2015



**Helen Rosing, Director**  
**ECM Publishers, Inc.**  
(651) 707-2038  
helen.rosing@ecm-inc.com  
Committee: Buy Local  
Term 2014-2015







Pictured: Lake State Commercial Lender Bob Hylland, Clay Stawski and Lake State Senior VP of Sales & Marketing Brad Larson

"Our business account was with a large bank and we've always felt that we were just a number to them and that we had no personal connection.

Just talking to the same person twice was a challenge. I have had a personal account with Lake State Credit Union for several years and always felt they had my best interests at heart.

Recently my father and I decided to move our commercial business to Lake State because of their competitive rates and personal service. We knew we could call and talk to a real person.

Lake State also helped me save a substantial amount monthly on our card processing services!

Competitive rates, improved profitability and a seamless process helped expand our business."

*Clay Stawski*  
Wintergreen's Golf and Grill  
306 Credit Union Drive  
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