

2004
ANNUAL
GENERAL
MEETING

MORDEN AND DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

2004 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

PRESIDENT	Dale Stambuski	Eagleye Printing & Design
VICE PRESIDENT		
TREASURER	Robyn Cepeda Javier	Don Boulton Tax Service
PAST PRESIDENT	Dan Pona	Pona Gallery
MANAGER	Cheryl Link	
AGRICULTURE	Art Petkau	Petkau Enterprises Limited
CIVIC AFFAIRS	Ernie Epp	Town of Morden
COMMERCIAL	Kent Winning	Winning Advertising Co.
CORN & APPLE FESTIVAL	Carol Heppenstall	Travellers' Inn
EDUCATION	Ted Fransen	Western School Division
IMMIGRATION	Irma Maier	Pathfinders Canada
INDUSTRY	David Weiss	Pembina Valley Containers
MEMBERSHIP	Kevin Friesen	Golden West Radio
MEMBER-AT-LARGE	Bob Neufeld	Krahn and Friesen Chartered Accountants
MORDEN COMM. DEV. CORP	Jonathan Martens	Solutions
MORDEN BUS. IMPR. AREA	Basil Holewka	Photography by Basil
MORDEN MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION	Ana-Maria Dawshka	Dimensions
MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS	Allan Toews	R.M. of Stanley
TOURISM	Anita Janzic	Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre
YOUTH	Sally Marsolais	The Warehouse

2004 NEW MEMBERSHIPS

BLADE CONSULTANCY	Dave Wilkinson
CREASY'S BILLIARDS, PIANOS & SPAS	Ryan Creasy
D & M ROADSIDE CAFÉ	Dennis Boille & Maryann Klassen
DANDEE SASKATOONS	Dan & Dianna Zacharias
DE LAGA	Eddie Sitompul
GATEWAY RESOURCES	Wayne Benedet
GREAT PLAINS THERAPY	Adam Trimble & Marcel Laroche
HEALING HANDS REFLEXOLOGY & MASSAGE	Nancy C. Wiebe
HIRING HOUSE INCORPORATED	Jim Swackhamer
MJS PERFORMANCE BENEFITS	Mark Sawatzky
MEXI MENNO'S RESTAURANT	John Fehr
MOUNTAIN AUTOMOTIVE	Ed Lucier
MOVIE GALLERY	Terra Bergmann
MUD EEZE CAR WASH	Ken Wiebe
PRICERK ENTERPRISES	Al Price
QUILTER'S JEWEL	Pearl Braun-Dyck
SCHWARTZ AND MCVEY LAW OFFICE	Barton Schwartz & Mollie McVey
SOUTHMAN AGRI SALES	Jack and Pat Metcalfe
THE FLYEST	Will Vizer
TOWN 'N COUNTRY GROOMING	Michelle Budz
WOLFE ENTERPRISES	Rod Wolfe
YOUR DOLLAR STORE WITH MORE	Brad Wainnikka

AGENDA
2004 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
TUESDAY FEBRUARY 22, 2005

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ESTABLISH A QUORUM (TEN MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING)
3. PRESIDENT'S REMARKS
 - a. PRESENTATION OF NEW MEMBERSHIPS
4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2003 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
5. 2004 AUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT
6. APPROVAL OF THE EXECUTIVE REPORTS
7. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. ELECTION OF 2005 EXECUTIVE OFFICERS
 - b. APPROVAL OF THE 2005 BUDGET
 - c. INTRODUCE NEW PROJECTS TO BE PAID FOR WITH SURPLUS
8. PROGRAM INFORMATION
 - a. MORDEN MOOLAH – SMALL DENOMINATIONS NOW AVAILABLE
 - b. MEMBER BREAKFAST GET-TOGETHERS
 - c. CANADIAN FOSSIL DISCOVERY CENTRE UPDATE
9. ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Morden Area Foundation Community
Builders Luncheons**

February 24 and March 31, 2005
12:00 noon, Friendship Centre

**Morden Collegiate presents "Guys and
Dolls"**

March 5 – 11, 2005
Kenmor Theatre

10. ADJOURNMENT

11. GUEST SPEAKER

Mayor John Wiens "State of the Community Address"

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2003 HIGHLIGHTS

- Held two general and ten Executive Meetings
- Chamber of Commerce office relocated to *311 North Railway Street* on February 26th. Space is shared with *Pathfinders Canada, Corn and Apple Festival and Morden Area Foundation*.
- Renewed Membership with the *Manitoba Chamber of Commerce, Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Manitoba Taxpayers Association and Pembina Valley Tourism Association*.
- *Basil Holewka* is the Chamber of Commerce representative on the *Morden Business Improvement Area Board*
- *Reg Braun* is President of the *Corn and Apple Festival Inc.*
- *David Weiss* is the Morden representative on the *Manitoba Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors*.
- *Carol Heppenstall* was the Chair of the 2004 *Corn and Apple Festival*. The organizing committee held seven meetings including the wind-up.
- *The Morden Marketing Team*, chaired by *Ernie Epp* spearheaded many initiatives including: advertising in *Pembina Valley Guide* and newspapers in *Winnipeg* and *northern Manitoba*, the continued installation of community signage, the circulation of the updated *Walk the Extra Mile Customer Service Excellence Manual*, and conducted visitor surveys through tourist sites and at the *Corn and Apple Festival*. Committee members have formed a *Tourism Action Plan* for Morden.
- Participated with Western School Division in a Morden display at the *Teacher Recruitment Fair in the Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba*.
- Sponsored *Eric Dalke, Meghan Menzies and David Willoughby* to the *Forum for Young Canadians* in Ottawa.
- Presented the 2004 *Loreena McKennitt Award* to *Aaron Loepky* at the *Festival of the Arts Highlights Concert*.
- *Reg Braun, Braun Financial and Mark Sawatzky, MJS Performance Benefits* are the new agents for *Chambers of Commerce Group Insurance Plan*.
- Worked with *Imperial Oil* and the Town to relocate the *Tourist Information Centre* to *Thornhill and 11th Street*.
- Reprinted the *Morden Visitor's Guide*.
- All Morden events/dates were submitted to the *Travel Manitoba Events Guide* and the *Pembina Valley Guide* and, on the Internet on the *Manitoba Events and Festival.com* and *www.mordenmb.com* sites.
- Past President *Dave Weiss* attended the *Winkler Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting*.
- With Town Councillors *Alex Fedorchuk* and *Wayne Hosea*, visited new businesses, presented a plant and took pictures for promotion.
- *Ted Fransen* is Morden's representative on *Red River Community College Community Liaison Committee*.
- *Cheryl Link* is the Treasurer for the *Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre Board*.
- Promoted Morden at the *University of Manitoba Faculty of Education Job Fair, Discover Manitoba Travel Show at the Winnipeg Convention Centre and the Community Services Expo*.
- Articles about Morden appeared in *Country Harrowsmith Magazine, Maclean's Magazine* and *The Co-operator* newspaper. We also enjoyed international media exposure following the *Fossil Centre's* discovery of the *plesiosaur fossil skeleton*.
- *Dale Stambuski, David Weiss and Cheryl Link* attended the *Manitoba Chambers of Commerce Annual Convention* in Brandon. Sponsored resolution regarding the *Floodway Expansion Project*.
- Published new Morden demographic brochures in both German and Russian languages.
- Hired *Meaghan Andrew* as Administrative Assistant for the *Corn and Apple Festival*.
- Hired *Cherrie Smith and Sid Rashid* as *Tourist Information Centre Coordinators*. The Information Centre operated from May 17th to September 3rd.
- Hosted a seminar on the *Personal Information Protection Act (PIPEDA)* with the *Volunteer Centre of Winnipeg*.
- Hosted nine *Breakfasts with Members* to discuss issues, concerns and ideas in an effort to improve communication between the Chamber Executive and Members.
- Forty-two issues of *Just the Fax* have been faxed and emailed to members on a weekly basis to inform them of Chamber and community events and issues.
- *Moonlight Construction* was the *Platinum Sponsor* for the *Corn and Apple Festival*. Corporate Fundraising was highly successful.

CHAMBER HIGHLIGHTS continued

- The *Morden Moolah* program continues its success, to date; \$34,760.00 has been spent in Morden businesses.
- Attended the *Ecole Morden Middle School Grade 8 Medieval Days* banquet.
- Co-hosted with *MCDC* and *Town of Morden*, a presentation by motivational speaker *Paul Martin*.
- *Morden Market Days*, southern Manitoba's most successful Farmers' Market started on Thursday June 17th and continued every Thursday until October.
- Co-hosted with Golden West Radio, the Portage Lisgar *All Candidates' Meeting* prior to the Federal Election.
- *Jessica Lautenschlager* was the 2004 winner of the *Chamber of Commerce Young Citizen Award* (\$500) presented at the Morden Collegiate Graduation ceremony.
- Continue as the regional site for the *Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre*.
- Co-hosted with the *Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre*, a presentation on "Surviving the Big Box Invasion" by speaker *Mark Baxter* and the *Intellectual Properties Seminar* with speaker *Tom Boyd*.
- Organized the 4th Annual *Morden Community Services Expo*.
- President Dale Stambuski and Past President *Dave Weiss* attended the *Canadian Chambers of Commerce Annual Meeting* in Calgary, Alberta.
- Tourist Information Centre saw an increase of approximately 11% in tourist traffic this summer
- President represented the Chamber of Commerce members at the Town Budget meetings; Breakfast Meetings; grand opening of the Adult Education Centre, Parent Child Centre, Creating a Future, Health Baby and Baby First/Healthy Start; the Provincial Conference of Hospital Auxiliaries; meetings with Nancy Allen, Minister of Immigration & Labour; Corn and Apple Festival Parade and Opening Ceremonies; grand openings at De laga, Quilter's Jewel, Blade Consultancy and the Morden Collegiate Welding Shop; attended various meetings with Town Council and visiting dignitaries; was interviewed by various media and represented the Chamber of Commerce at the Remembrance Day banquet.
- Lobbied for an *additional terminal in the Morden Post Office* and for a *new Tabor Home* and sponsored resolutions for *opening up employment opportunities to non-union suppliers on the Floodway Expansion Project at the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce Annual Meeting* and for *encouraging empowerment, independence and freedom of first nations people at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting*.
- The *Morden Merchants Association* President is Ana-Maria Dawshka.
- Provided community information to prospective businesses, new professionals, new residents, convention/meeting planners and students working on school projects.
- Presented *Recognition Awards* for Chamber Members celebrating significant business milestones. Presented to *Pembina Valley Containers* for 25 Years in Business; *IS Image Promotions* for 10 Years in Business and *Pharmasave* for 10 years in Business.
- Participated in radio promotions for *Small Business Week*.
- *Kirby Penner* was crowned Corn and Apple Queen with Princess *Kerri Christensen*.
- M.B.I.A. Retail Promotions included *Morden's Monster Sale, Krazy Daze, Corn and Apple Festival promotions, Christmas Lighting Ceremony and Pictures with Santa, and Turkey Draw*.
- Assisted local searches for new Pastors, Doctors, etc. by providing information packages.
- Advertised and promoted Morden in the *Pembina Valley Tourism Guide, Woodall's Campground Directories, CAA Manitoba Tour Book, Travel Manitoba Explorer's Guide and Events Guide, the Manitoba Tour Operator's Guide and the Canadian Tour Planner and Operator Guide*.
- Assisted with Morden Area Community Service awards presented to *Dale Lambert* and *Eric Dalke*.
- Saw many changes in the Morden Business Sector"
 - 23 new Businesses
 - 12 Business Expansions
 - 8 New Owners for Existing Businesses.

**MORDEN AND DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
FEBRUARY 22, 2005 – MORDEN FRIENDSHIP CENTRE**

President Dale Stambuski called the 2004 Annual General Meeting to order and established a quorum of 90 members. He welcomed all, noted the highlights printed in the annual report and introduced the Directors attending.

New Memberships were presented to Bee Well Apothecary, Blue Marlin Restaurant, ELAX Inter mart, Grass Roots Chiropractic, Mansapro Distributing, Organize to Maximize, Pianoworx, Stampin' Up and Stick Fix Morden.

MINUTES

K. FRIESEN/P. PLETT: That the Minutes of the 2003 Annual Meeting be adopted as printed in the meeting book.
CARRIED

FINANCIAL REPORT

K. WINNING/A. JANZIC: That the audited Financial Report be adopted as printed in the meeting book.
CARRIED

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

B. NEUFELD/I. MAIER: That the Executive Reports be adopted as printed in the meeting book.
CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS

Election of 2005 Executive Council

A. FEDORCHUK/P. SMITH: That the Slate of Executive Officers as printed in the meeting book be declared elected.
CARRIED

D. Stambuski introduced the new Executive Members.

2005 Budget

K. WINNING/T. FRANSEN: That the 2005 Budget be adopted as proposed.
CARRIED

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Morden Moolah

D. Stambuski noted that SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN November 2002, \$34,760.00 in Morden Moolah was purchased and spent in Morden businesses! That's \$34,760.00 that could have been spent anywhere but was not.

New for 2005 is small denomination Moolah (5, 10 & 25 cents and \$1.00) is available for in-store promotions (just like Canadian Tire money). More information will be available from the Morden Merchants Assoc.

He reminded members that Morden Moolah is available for sale at face value from the Chamber Office. All Morden businesses are encouraged to accept the Moolah and are reimbursed in full by the Chamber. This program is intended for long term as an encouragement to shop local. It is not just for Christmas or special occasions.

Member Breakfast Meetings

D. Stambuski reported that the Chamber continues our monthly get-togethers with members. Members from various sectors are invited for breakfast and conversation with Chamber Executive members. The intention is for an open exchange of ideas which are shared with the Chamber Executive, Town, etc. The next will be held Thursday, March 17th at 7:30 a.m. in the Thriftlodge dining room.

Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre

D. Stambuski asked Curator Anita Janzic for an update on name change and activities at the Museum.

GUEST SPEAKER

D. Stambuski noted the announcements in the Annual Report and added that Portage Lisgar MP Brian Pallister will be at the Blue Marlin Restaurant at noon on Wednesday, March 2nd to discuss the new federal budget and other issues and wants to hear from the Morden business community about what we would like to see in the new parliamentary session.

D. Stambuski introduced His Worship Mayor John Wiens as guest speaker. Mr. Wiens was thanked and presented with a gift.

ADJOURNMENT

DALE STAMBUSKI – PRESIDENT

CHERYL LINK – MANAGER

PROPOSED SLATE OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS FOR 2005

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

PRESIDENT	Dale Stambuski	Eagle Eye Printing & Design
VICE PRESIDENT	David Wilkinson	Blade Consultancy
PAST PRESIDENT	Dan Pona	Pona Gallery
TREASURER		
MANAGER	Cheryl Link	

Responsibilities to include Human Resources, Finance, Administration, Government Relations, Liaison, Policy Positions, Public Relations, Business Service Centre and Tourist Information Centre.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CIVIC AFFAIRS	Bob Neufeld David Weiss	Krahn & Friesen Chartered Accountants Pembina Valley Containers
EDUCATION & TRAINING	Ted Fransen	Western School Division
MEMBERSHIP	Kevin Friesen	Golden West Broadcasting
PROGRAMMING	Kent Winning	The Winning Advertising Company

Responsibilities to include Membership and Product Promotion, Market Research, Networking and Special Events, Business Retention, Business to Business Communication and Development, Education and Training.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Morden & District Chamber of Commerce has been serving Morden's business community since 1890. In 2004 Membership increased by 37 to 218 members. Our positive business climate resulted in 23 new business start-ups; 12 business expansions and 8 businesses under new ownership. It was another busy and productive year!

The relocation of the Chamber office in February has been very positive for our Chamber as well as for the tenants who share the space with us, Pathfinders Canada, Morden Area Foundation and Morden Corn & Apple Festival. The downtown exposure has conveniently provided for far more walk-in traffic from Chamber Members and residents seeking information and more visibility for the Chamber programs especially the Canada Manitoba Business Service Centre.

We are pleased to host the phenomenally successful 38th Annual Corn & Apple Festival with huge thanks to the volunteers without whom the Festival could not continue to grow. We are also proud of the best Farmer's Garden Market in southern Manitoba for the 9th year running, thanks to Cheryl Link, Ana-Maria Dawshka and our loyal vendors and exhibitors.

Dave Weiss & I traveled to Canadian Chamber Conference in Calgary this past fall & our Chamber attained official National Accreditation status, one of only 12 in Canada; A very proud achievement with many thanks to the hand work of our Office Manager, Cheryl Link and our present and past executive members. While it's easy to revel in our achievement, the Chamber executive continues to be true Mordenites (a real word) by continuing to climb to new heights. We have recently starting on our "Strategic Planning" and are working towards its inception early this year.

Life is like a bicycle, you don't fall off unless you stop pedaling.

Claude Pepper

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mayor John Wiens, Town Councilors and CAO, Ernie Epp for the encouragement they have provided to the Chamber over the past year. Although we don't always agree, we continue to work diligently to gain understanding on Chamber and business issues with the goal of making Morden a better place in which to live and do business. I feel that the word "Live" in our mission statement is important to the business community. Continuously improving Morden's "Quality of Life" will attract and retain business and industry which in turn attracts a skilled and superior work force to our community.

I have touched on only a very few highlights. As you go through this report you will see a lot of activity. There are many behind the scenes workings.

Please feel free to express your opinions and ideas to further our positive Chamber environment in our community.

One gauge of success is not whether you have a tough problem to handle, but whether it is the same problem you had last year.

Respectfully submitted,

Dale Stambuski

AGRICULTURE REPORT

To say that Agriculture was challenging in 2004 would be a huge understatement!

The early part of 2004 was not too bad for most of the crop production side. But then the May 10th snow storm hit and everything seemed to be downhill from there right through to year end. The late, wet spring plus a record cold summer and a wet fall took its toll on crop yield and quality to the point where tens of thousands of acres were written off, not deemed good enough to harvest. An August frost devastated quality right across the prairies which has led to an abundant feed supply but at depressed prices.

The livestock sector has had its challenges also. The pork producers had a tariff placed on exports which has had a major impact on their bottom line.

The impact of B.S.E. on the beef industry has been well documented during the past twenty-one months and needs no additional comment. The U.S. plan to open the border to live cattle under 30 months of age on March 7, 2005 is a long-anticipated announcement. And the closer March 7th gets, the more optimistic the beef industry is that it will actually happen. This will not alleviate all of the beef industry's problems but it will erase a huge amount of pessimism that is currently paralyzing that sector of agriculture.

The future appears to have a continuing number of challenges; high fuel prices and low commodity prices will certainly have an impact on the plans for the 2005 season.

In the meantime, I'm sure the Ag community is enjoying the mild winter and is looking forward to the new projection year.

Respectfully submitted
Art Petkau

CORN AND APPLE FESTIVAL REPORT

The Morden Corn & Apple Festival (hereafter referred to as "the Festival" was established in 1967 as a part of Canada's Centennial Celebration and it's original priority was to welcome local farm families into the Town of Morden and offer them free food and entertainment. Two hundred people attended that first one-day Festival. It was indeed a humble beginning for what has now become Manitoba's largest and most readily recognized summer street festival.

Although our hospitality has since been shared with visitors from all over the world, the Festival's primary focus has not changed. We are a family festival committed to providing free food and entertainment for everyone.

We believe that the Festival is Morden's primary source of community pride and another priority is that the Festival remains an easy way for Morden's citizen's to become involved regardless of age or ability, and no matter if they can give their time for an hour, for a day or on a year-round basis. In as much as the Festival raises the profile of Morden within the Province of Manitoba and provides direct measurable economic spin-off within the community, we believe that the Festival represents excellent value for each dollar contributed to the Festival by the Town of Morden.

The Festival relies on the good will and support of the business community in Morden both in the form of sponsorships and in the cooperation required in order to have Stephen Street closed for the Festival each year. The Festival will continue to collaborate closely with local business whose generosity and participation has made the Festival what it is today.

The Festival actively seeks donations of money for both its annual operating costs and also for capital projects. The Festival is committed to providing value and finding creative ways to advertise the sponsors in return for those donations. The Festival is also committed to a steady improvement and enhancement of our visitors' experience when they visit Morden.

CORN AND APPLE FESTIVAL REPORT, continued

The Festival believes that it has a responsibility to provide a leadership role in the promotion of other local events and attractions and the Festival will endeavor to promote and market these equally important attractions, and to provide a venue for these organizations to further their own marketing efforts.

Mission Statement

It's fun! It's Free!

Structure

There are two separate organizing bodies of the Festival. The Corn & Apple Festival is organized from year to year by the Festival Committee. Overall direction and capital projects are the responsibility of the Morden Corn & Apple Festival Board of Directors which is made up primarily of people who have previously acted as Festival Committee Chairpersons. Festival operations are administered by the Morden Chamber of Commerce.

Capital Projects

The Board of Directors recently approved several significant capital expenditures designed to improve the safety and comfort of our visitors. New bench seating for the main stage area and the addition of another bathroom trailer are planned for completion before the 2005 Festival. This is in addition to the long-term commitment made to participate in the costs of the Stephen Street electrical improvements along with other minor improvements and renovations of existing Festival assets. Wherever possible, the Festival will make its assets available to other community organizations as needed. The Festival runs the "250 Club Lottery" and applies for other available provincial and municipal grants to fund all capital projects.

Strategic Direction

The Board has identified key issues that will require attention as Festival attendance grows. Strategies to address these issues will be developed by the Board in consultation with Festival visitors, Committee Members, volunteers, and the Town of Morden.

These issues include:

- Development of a vehicular traffic and parking management strategy.
- Continuous improvement of a crowd control and shuttle bus management strategy.
- Continuous improvement of washroom sanitation and garbage disposal strategy.
- Continuous improvement of the Festival's security strategy to ensure safety of our visitors.
- Development of a marketing strategy to bring national recognition to the Festival.
- Encouraging independent vendors who rent street space to be compliant with fire and health regulations.
- Continuous improvements and enhancements to the festive atmosphere of Morden during the Festival.

Respectfully Submitted:

Reg Braun, President

Morden Corn and Apple Festival Inc.

EDUCATION REPORT

The past decade or so has been a time of curriculum renewal in Manitoba. Western School Division takes pride leading in the implementation of new curricula. The changes have been positive for our students. Our staff and board are committed to providing the very best education for this community. When we create and nurture such a system we not only serve our 1600 students, but we serve the entire community. A community's vitality will be no stronger than its education system. To that end we need and appreciate the support for public education in our community. Supporting public education is enlightened self-interest. The more you support it – the better off you will be.

During the past year WSD was pleased to successfully address a long time objective – increased vocational opportunities for our high school students. The dynamic partnership between local industry and WSD made it possible to open a state-of-the-art welding technology centre at Morden Collegiate (off-campus facility). Rick Kneeshaw at Buhler deserves special recognition for becoming such a stalwart supporter of this project. Our welding program is fully subscribed. We were very pleased to have both the Premier of Manitoba and Mr. John Buhler preside at our official ribbon of steel cutting ceremony in early October.

With the opening of the welding program in Morden, WSD was able to become a member of the Red River Technical Vocational Area (RRTVA) opening the doors of other vocational programs to our students. Programs include: cosmetology, building construction, culinary arts, power mechanics, auto body, health care aide, and information technology. Morden Collegiate has about 50 students enrolled in vocational courses this year.

Other highlights of the past year include:

- ongoing support from Manitoba Education and UM for our reduced class size project,
- Morden being the home base for the UM Masters Cohort program. 19 teachers from across the region travel to Morden on Saturdays to work towards their M.Ed. UM sends a professor to Morden. We're fortunate to have the Dean of Education, former Morden Collegiate principal Dr. John R. Wiens, teaching during this winter term.
- Arranging the school division calendar to allow the entire teaching staff at EMMS to participate in the national conference of the National Middle School Association in Minneapolis in early November. WSD took the lead and organized a bus – filling it with teachers from GVSD and Prairie Rose SD.
- Being selected by UM Professor Dawn Wallin to be part of her rural education study. She received a prestigious national grant to conduct the study.
- Growing student population – half of the growth is with students who have English as a Second Language (ESL).
- Growing international education program. We have 15 students this year representing Mexico, Brazil, and Japan. The parents of our international students speak highly of our community.
- Holding the line on the property tax mill rate while adding a major new program and maintaining others.
- Attracting excellent staff when we recruit. WSD is seen as a great place to live and work.

Respectfully submitted

Ted Fransen
Superintendent of Schools, WSD

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Respectfully submitted

Art Petkau

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

In 2004, Membership in the Morden and District Chamber of Commerce is stronger than it has ever been, at 218 it is up 30% since the beginning of the new millennium.

Achieving national Accreditation on the first attempt, one of only twelve Chambers in Canada to do so, proves that the Morden Chamber of Commerce meets the highest standard of excellence in service to our members through strict adherence to the nationally prescribed set of programs, services, management and governance principles and policy and advocacy initiatives. The Chamber is a leader and the “Voice of Business” in Morden.

Positive Chamber policies, co-operatively working with Town Council and its many Committees for growth and development and Volunteers tirelessly working to promote the social, civic, commercial, industrial and agricultural progress of Morden and District have set the Morden Chamber apart and proved its worth to the businesses and organizations that have invested in membership.

Membership in the Morden Chamber comes with many benefits and opportunities designed to increase your competitiveness, provide for your wellbeing and protect your investment in this community.

Benefits include enhanced listings in the Morden Business Directory and the Morden Web Site; weekly *Just the Fax* Newsletters; Cheque Fraud and Parking Pledge programs; Criminal Activity Warnings from Police about Counterfeit bills, shoplifting activities, etc.; monthly Breakfast Discussions for current, timely feedback; Milestone Recognition; business and information referrals.

Opportunities include the Chambers of Commerce Group Insurance and Retirement Savings Plans specifically designed for small business; Merchant Credit Card and terminal discounts; Affinity Program telephone, cellular and alarm service discounts; education and networking events; Direct Driver Fleet Discount program; and rental car discounts.

2005 will be an exciting year filled with many changes and new initiatives. Working with your Chamber of Commerce, sharing your energies and ideas as well as resources for future economic growth and development can best safeguard your investment in Morden.

As Members you understand the correlation between a strong community and business success but some do not. It is up to all of us to talk to those who are not members, explain the benefits, invite them to networking events, and help them to recognize that their success depends on a strong Chamber of Commerce promoting their interests.

Respectfully submitted:

Kevin Friesen