



Morning Business Brew at The Northfield News

**Chamber Board News**

By Jesse Streitz, Chamber Board Chair

As the new 2016 chairperson of the chamber board, I would like to take a moment to thank the outgoing chair Beth Ayotte Naumann. She will indeed be a tough act to follow. As many of you are aware the board has had a few challenging years. Under her leadership and along with Todd's experience I can honestly say the chamber is not only back but better than ever.

In 2015 the chamber welcomed sixty new members. Thank you. And of course a big thank you to all the existing

members that have renewed and stayed with us for so long. One of my goals for 2016 is to make sure we earn this trust every day and continue to bring value to your membership.

One of the chambers goals for 2016 is to increase our membership by another thirty six. I would be excited to be able to announce at next year's annual Banquet that we achieved a total membership of 300. This is a challenging goal but very doable with your help. Please consider inviting fellow businesses to join. Tell them what you

See BOARD NEWS on page 2

**In This Issue:**

Chamber Board News	Page 1
Minne-Roadtrip Co-op Marketing Effort Rolls Out	Page 2
Special Offer for Chamber Members from The Rare Pair	Page 3/4
Northfield Chamber Business Recognition Banquet	Page 5
Home & Garden Show & Golf-a-Polooza	Page 6
Business Spotlight - Brushwork Signs	Page 7
Ambassadors in Action	Page 8
2015 Chamber Buck Total	Page 8

1

**BOARD NEWS, con't**

get out of the chamber and why you joined. Invite them to a chamber event, a business after hours, or a morning business brew. As a membership driven organization our strength lies in its members.

Another Chamber goal I have for 2016 is financial growth and stability. To continue to bring you, our members, value the chamber needs to have a strong balance sheet. How can you help? Attend chamber events, become an event sponsor, bring employees and

guests to events, become an ambassador, join a committee, and pass along any suggestions you may have to myself, Todd, Lindsay, or any board member.

The next big chamber event is the 2016 Northfield Area Home and Garden Show. While it may be called a Home and Garden show it is much more than that. It really could be called a business expo. Banks, non-profits, chiropractors, automotive related businesses, really any business could and should be there. If you do not get a booth, be sure to attend as a guest and encourage your

customers to just "take in" the show. This year is shaping up to be the best ever. We will even have it in a warm arena this year.

As you can tell, 2016 promises to be an exciting year for the chamber - come along for the fun.

Thank you for allowing me to be the 2016 chairperson of the Chamber Board of Directors. Please contact me with any suggestions or concerns and I will bring them to the attention of the full board.



**Minne-Roadtrip Co-op Marketing Effort Rolls Out**

Innovative Coop Effort Serves Northfield, Faribault and Owatonna

By Lisa Peterson, Director of Tourism

Marketing and Tourism Directors at the Northfield, Owatonna and Faribault Chambers of Commerce have been working on ideas to help all three communities better prosper from travel and tourism. Those high level efforts have led to the development of a brand and marketing plan to increase overnight stays in those communities.

According to Nort Johnson, Director of Community Marketing in Faribault the team concluded that the product offerings of art, history and culture from the three communities collectively make a compelling case for travelers to book an overnight. Combined with

great out-door and night life amenities – our "Minne-region" has it all. Katie Godfrey, Tourism Director from Owatonna shared, "Past marketing efforts focused on each individual community rather than our regional assets. It was clear that a compelling and easy to respond to message was needed." "That's when we went to work creating a new brand" shared Lisa Peterson, Director of Tourism for Northfield. She continued "The work was really positive, and moved swiftly given the fact that each town has terrific, unique opportunities for visitors."

Minne-Roadtrip was chosen as the trio's theme and it quickly evolved into a brand and logo. Godfrey told us "Minne- Roadtrip represents everything we are. Minnesota, close in proximity to the metro area (Minne-apolis), short distances between communities as well fun and unique attractions. It really encapsulates our mini region and what a visit here is about." Peterson added "We went about this work with the pretense of extreme cooperation. Each of us put on our regional hat and the work was done without regard to each town's borders. That's what made this work, that's why it's so special."

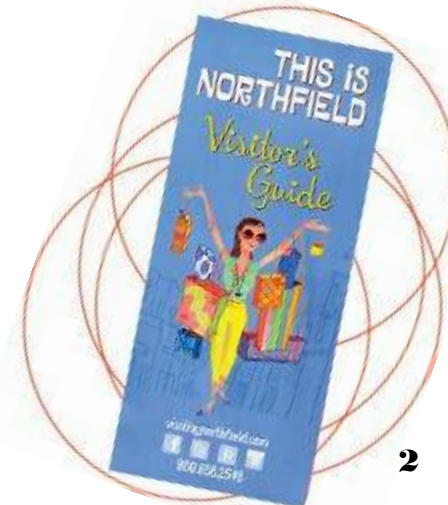
Johnson concluded with this. "It's a great brand. Each organization is contributing to the efforts and funding without stipulation of individual

exposure. Travelers don't really care much about city or county borders. They want a great experience and are happy to make short drives to fill a weekend. Combined we have that."

The group's first ads have rolled out, and the new website which links back to each community listings is now active. They plan to populate the site with suggested 3-town itineraries, current information and blogs about local attractions, events, activities and unique dining opportunities. Go to minneroadtrip.com for more information or like the new Facebook Page Minne-Roadtrip.

For more information contact:  
Email: Lisa Peterson  
lisa@visitingnorthfield.com  
Website: www.minneroadtrip.com

**The 2016 Northfield Visitor's Guide is Here!**



2

The Rare Pair is located in the heart of historic and beautiful downtown Northfield, MN. It has been a local favorite and a destination spot for visitors of this college town since 1977.

## Comfortable Shoes, Clothing & Accessories for Men & Women

Locally owned & operated since 1991 by Dale & Krin Finger.

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Do you remember Todd's list of the **Top Ten Tools Under \$125** to expand/increase/highlight your business from January's eNews Letter? How about Lindsay's List of Five Reasons **Why You Should Join a Northfield Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Committee** from February's eNewsletter? Well, we are back at it and have gone one step further!

**Top Ten Chamber Tools to Promote Your Business AT NO COST!**

1. Show off your business credibility by using of the **Proud Member of the Northfield Chamber of Commerce** logo on your marketing materials and website
2. Send in your latest business news (new hires, milestones, promotions) to be featured in the **Member News** section of our monthly eNewsletter
3. Drop off your **business cards and brochures** to display on the brochure rack in the **chamber office lobby**. Hundreds of locals and visitors come walking through our door each year looking for information, we want to hand them yours!
4. Hold a Grand Opening, Remodeling, or Anniversary **Ribbon Cutting Ceremony**. We will take care of inviting chamber members, city of Northfield representatives and the press to share in your celebration
5. Sign up to have your **Business Spotlited** in an upcoming chamber eNewsletter or printed Quarterly Connection. Share your story with other chamber members and what services you provide
6. **Join a chamber committee** and learn a new skill, expand you social and professional networks and make a difference
7. Attend or have an employee represent your company at a **Morning Business Brew** or **Business After Hours**. Get to know your fellow Chamber members, enjoy the food and beverage, and be eligible to win fabulous prizes
8. Log into your **Chamber Master account** and verify your businesses information, description, keywords and website are accurate. That is the information people see about your business on our website, that is what is printed in our directory and that is passed on when someone inquires about your business
9. If is it acceptable for your business category, promote that you accept **Chamber Bucks** in your own marketing materials to complement our list and advertising efforts. Chamber Bucks add another revenue stream, promote buying local and since chamber businesses redeem them for FULL VALUE they cost you nothing
10. Have big news? Send us your press release and we will put it on the **Area News** section of our website







**Business Spotlight**

Business Name: Brushwork Signs  
 Contact Person: Ann M. Meillier  
 Email Address: [ann@brushworksigns.com](mailto:ann@brushworksigns.com)  
 Phone Number: 507-334-8446  
 Physical Address: 909 6<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Faribault  
 Website URL: brushworksigns.com

**How did the business get started?**

Dave and Ann met when attending Detroit Lakes Technical College in the Sign Lettering & Design course. After graduating we worked in Milwaukee for three years (Dave for Kid Signs / Ann for By-Line Signs) then decided to move to Ann's home town of Faribault to start our own sign business.

**What products or services do you sell?**

We specialize in custom crafted signs; dimensional store fronts and low profile monuments, restoration (antique signs, and statues) gold leaf, glue chip, carving, and commercial signage; vehicle labeling, window graphics, banners, real estate and development site signs etc., and large murals.

**What's one thing your business is known for over your competitors?**

We continue to create signs with hand lettering, whereas most sign shops utilize only computer generated sign production, which we also provide, but painting signs by hand puts us in a unique category in this geographical area.

**Who is your target market?**

Businesses in historic downtowns, commercial contractors, and municipalities.

**Have economic effected your business?**

Between 20018 and 2013 the slow economy impacted our volume of production, but we were just bust enough to retain our employee base and maintain our positions until the moderate-to-excelling upswing we've been seeing the past few years.

**How do you market your business?**

Word of mouth, especially via other Chamber members, has been our best resource for advertising. Our Facebook

page also has been a perfect way to promote our business. Having potential customers see our work, which of course is almost exclusively one-of-a-kind visual content, says more than can be described with words.

**If you could do it all over again, what is one thing you would do differently?**

We would have made more time to pass onto our two children the craft if hand lettering. But we were so busy wearing all the hats of a business that meeting our customer's needs trumped that. However, we're making up for lost time now by bringing our two adult kids with us on mural projects. As you can imagine, they are talented artists and swing a brush like they were born for it!

**Is there anything additional you would like fellow Chamber member to know about your business?**

The best way to get to know our business is to visit us and have a tour of the shop and mini sign museum. Consider this our open invitation to all Chamber members to stop by!



Owners Dave Correll & Ann Meillier with long time employee Adam Schollejgerdes

**Ambassadors In Action!**

Ambassadors are an essential committee who actively participates within the Chamber to promote membership growth and retention.

Northfield Auto Body Ambassador Visit



College City Beverage Ambassador Visit



Linder & Associates Ambassador Visit

The Grand Event Center Ambassador Visit

**\$ 7,188.63**

**STAYED IN NORTHFELD WITH THE CHAMBER BUCK PROGRAM IN 2015!**



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Contact Lindsay Reddy at the Chamber Office for additional details and pricing.