

Fort Frances Chamber of Commerce

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING – April 25, 2006

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (Gary Rogozinski)

- **I would like to welcome everyone to the Chamber's General Membership meeting. It is nice to be able to talk to the membership after a successful year.**
- **2005 was another good year for the Fort Frances Chamber. Continued hard work by the Board of Directors and our Chamber Manager over the recent years has realized a Chamber that is now more financially stable and one that is making significant strides in becoming a stronger voice in supporting business in the community and district.**
- **I am a firm believer in the expression that "Success Breeds Success". As the Chamber continues to operate successfully we will learn from those activities and become even more successful in the future. As we become more visible in the community our membership will increase which will further stabilize our operating finances and allow more time for governmental affair issues. This is key to becoming a more vocal Chamber.**
- **Our three main events were very successful in 2005. Due to the commitment from many Directors and our Chamber**

Manager the Home and Leisure Show, Quest for the Best and the Annual Business Awards we were able to meet our financial budget projections for the year.

- **The Chamber continued to grow as the Voice of the Business Community in 2005. Several key areas that we were involved with included active participation on the Downtown Core Committee, presentations on the proposed significant water and sewer rate increases and , active work on the Business By-Law. As well we did a presentation at the Forestry Summit on the Economic Impact of Closing a Mill which was received well. Lately we are working hard to gather support for NWOTA's effort on Border Issues and get NOACC to take a stronger stance on the issue. Being more involved with local issues that directly impact our business community is a big part of our goals for 2006.**
- **Marketing was another area of successful activity in 2005. Advertising in key regional brochures and magazines such as FedNor's "Discover Beautiful Fort Frances" and "Mom's Way" publications as well as the "Sunset Country Travel Guide" and the "Border Water Visitor Guide" has resulted in an increase in the number of tourist requests for information.**

This was the third year in a row that we saw an increase in the number of calls. In 2005 we had over 2,500 requests, (these include e-mails, phone calls and visitors) and typically result in the Chamber sending out a package or providing information, which include such items as brochures on restaurants, hotels, motels and local attractions.

The Chamber is directly involved in the Fort Frances & District Marketing Project that is being directed by the Rainy River Future Development Corporation. This project alone has seen over \$65,000 spent in 2005 on marketing and over \$130,000 since it commenced. As this marketing project continues its focus on key populated areas in the nearby central USA States, the Chamber anticipates that requests for information on Fort Frances will further grow.

- Again, 2005 was a very successful year for the Chamber due to the hard work of a lot of dedicated people. Our goals for 2006 will continue to focus on supporting our business community on key issues and be a leader going forward in marketing the area and improving the quality of life in our community.**
- Thank you for attending our Spring General Membership Meeting.**

