

Fort Frances Chamber of Commerce

ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET 2006

**PRESIDENT'S WELCOME SPEECH – as written and presented
by Gary Rogozinski**

I would like to welcome everyone to the Chamber of Commerce's 11th Annual Awards Banquet. It is nice to see such a great turnout again. I personally enjoy the Banquet every year as it presents the opportunity to honour those businesses that continually have a strong presence in the business community.

The business community in any small centre is always in a state of change. Annually we see existing businesses close and new businesses open. Some years the new openings out number the closures and some years they don't. Many outside factors influence how successful a business operates from year to year and these factors change regularly. Tax assessments, power costs,

sewer and water costs, raw material costs, customer service, competition, **and** shipping costs are among a few of the items that can impact day to day business costs. Some of the items we have little influence over but others we can impact the end results.

Individually our concerns may not be heard but as part of a larger group we can present a strong lobbying effort that in many instances can alter the outcome. The Fort Frances Chamber of Commerce is your voice in the business community. As a local lobbying association that represents 200 businesses we can raise concerns to local politicians on decisions that directly impact you, the local businesses. We can be heard. On provincial issues the Chamber is a member of the Northwestern **Ontario** Associated Chambers of Commerce which lobby the provincial government on issues that impact all the communities and businesses in Northwestern Ontario. While perhaps not enough effort has been made informing you

of existing lobbying efforts, there have been numerous successes over the years.

Over the next two weeks each and every business person and their employees will have the opportunity to individually influence the direction this community takes over the next 4 years. I am talking about the municipal election. Take the time to consider what each candidate has to offer to the community going forward and what impact their decisions will have on the business community. After all, a strong business community means a progressive town and district.

So make sure you take the time to vote, it could mean your future success.

Tonight we are here to show our appreciation to the business community. We have **75** great nominations for awards and while every nominee cannot come up on stage and receive an award, the Chamber considers everyone a winner!

Thank you for being **apart** of the Chambers
11th Annual Awards Banquet.

Gary Rogozinski
President