

Greetings and Happy New Year! from Mary McPhetridge, Executive Director

As 2017 draws to a close, it's time to look back, analyze, and plan for future projects. This past year was a very successful tourism year. The economic impact from tourism in Ashland County was at an all-time high of \$34.9 Million Dollars in *Direct Visitor Spending* in 2016 and I am confident we will see the same if not higher numbers, based on our room tax receipts. The easy way to gauge activity is to look at the parking lots of the hotel properties. We saw more cars in the parking lots mid-week than we have in the past, which is a good sign. Cars in the lots equal "heads in beds" and that equals economic impact for the entire area. Weekends have continually stayed strong and now mid-week is catching up! The State of Wisconsin Department of Tourism will announce the 2017 tourism numbers in May of 2018.

This past year we have seen many changes in our downtown. We offered a new façade renovation improvement program for our Main Street businesses. Gabriele's German Cookies & Chocolates, Moore's Army Navy, the New England Store, 2nd Street Bistro, and Stagecoach Bar & Grill all were awarded a small amount of money to put towards their facade improvements. Our plan is to continue this program in 2018. We introduced some new events downtown and added to some existing events. The Architec-tour had a scavenger hunt element and this year we will be pairing that event with the 20th anniversary of the murals so folks will be able to hop on the trolley for the mural tours and also be able to tour many of our beautiful historic buildings downtown. Witches Night Out had the biggest attendance of all of our downtown shopping promotions and this event has turned into a very social, well attended, fun shopping event. We introduced the "Doe on the Go" event which celebrates the hunter's widows weekend and had many elements of fun included. The 12 Days of Christmas was a statewide promotion we participated in. Retailers offered gift certificates to their stores during the 12 days and we had a social media contest component each day that had a reach of over 90,000 with nearly 2,500 shares!

We are continually looking at ways of bringing folks to the downtown to shop and enjoy the beauty, charm, and uniqueness that our Historic Main Street offers. We were fortunate to acquire two storefronts that we used for Pictures with Santa and.. the satellite store for the Red Bicycle; Lil' Red was open through the holiday. The Christmas season has been amazing and the local retailers want to thank all that supported their bricks and mortar businesses. Many of you enjoyed savings, great customer service, and ... Free Gift Wrapping! I am so proud of our businesses and the Historic Main Street was absolutely gorgeous and festive with all of the lights and storefront decorations!! Our retail promotions are all created to support local small businesses. From Chamber Dollars, to the Christmas Cash Raffle, to the Shop Small Win Big promotion; these all encourage shopping here in Ashland and give you an opportunity to win money!! We have one more drawing in February for Shop Small Win Big, so please continue to shop small and bring in those receipts!! There is yet another chance to win \$250.00 in chamber dollars.. See page 3 for more details!

In 2018 we will be sponsoring a Retail Business Contest and offer the winner free rent for the first 6 months, marketing packages, 12 hours of complimentary accounting services, and low interest loans. All contestants that move from phase I to phase II will also receive free business planning sessions from UW Small Business Development Center. Please call our office with questions and as we finalize the plans we will keep you updated! This is an excellent way to spur on downtown development.

I am so excited to start my 19th year as the Executive Director of the Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce! Every year brings something new! There are always challenges, but I truly believe that challenges and trials force us as leaders to look at ourselves and our organizations, to make certain that we are consistently staying true to our mission and vision.

Our mission statement is very simple. ***We Sell Ashland!*** *Three simple words that pack a powerful punch!* How do we fulfill our mission? We **Sponsor special events and promotions designed to emphasize the numerous** recreational and tourism opportunities in our area. We **Support a diversified economic base** – one that ensures a healthy business climate and prosperous, progressive, community, and we **Collaborate** with both public and private sectors to improve the quality of life in the Ashland Area.

We wish you and yours a very Blessed and Prosperous New Year! 2018!!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

January 13: Northwoods Harness Sleigh & Cutter Rally at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center, 11am

January 15: Chamber Membership Dues are due. Thank you!

January 17: Business After Hours sponsored by Fall General Surgery. Held at New China Restaurant.

January 20-21: Wisconsin State Free Fishing Weekend, no license required.

January 28: Business on Stage 6pm at the Alvord Theatre.

February 17: Book Across the Bay, 6pm. www.batb.org





Fall General Surgery, LLC

Highlighting Our January Business After Hours host Submitted by: Fall General Surgery

Dr. George Fall came to Ashland 25 years ago, fresh out of surgical residency. In 2002 he started Fall General Surgery with the ultimate goal of providing excellent surgical care to the residents of Ashland and the surrounding region. Dr. Fall prides himself in offering the newest and most minimally invasive technology to his patients. Fall General Surgery currently consists of 5 full-time and 2 part-time employees with their mission statement including;
"If you are not the Lead Dog, the Scenery never changes"!!!!

**Join us on January 17, at 5pm for Business After Hours
Held at New China Restaurant**

Crossroads Outreach Center Inc.

Rich Larson CEO
307 Main Street West
715/682-1053
www.crossroadsoutreach.org



**Welcome to our
newest Chamber
Members**

Koenamann Electric & Control

Michael Koenamann
715/209-0964
mkoenamann@yahoo.com



Business News Email the Chamber with your Business News by the 20th of the month.

13th Annual Ashland Snowmobile Club Cashing in on the New Year Raffle Drawing will be at 7pm on January 13, at the Neighborly Bar. The party starts at noon with food, music, raffles, and fun! Need not be present to win cash prizes. For ticket information, call 715/682-0638. or visit www.ashlandsnowmobileclub.org or stop at the Ashland Chamber.

Encores! A FREE concert presented by **Ashland Rotary Club and Ashland Music Boosters** at 6pm, January 13, Ashland High School Auditorium, Freewill offering. Proceeds will fund Ashland Rotary Education Leadership Grants and Ashland Music Booster Musical Instruments, Summer Music Camps, and Music Scholarships. ashlandencores.org.

Business On Stage presents a duel presentation of the **Northland College Food Systems Center and the Bayfield Regional Food Producers Cooperative** on January 28, at the Alvord Theatre on the Northland College campus at 6pm. For more information, call 715/209-4589 or 715/682-8344 or visit www.businessonstage.org.

The Ashland Historical Society Museum now has the **2018 Ashland History Calendar** available in their retail section of the museum. Calendars can be purchased for \$10 at 216 West Main St. 715/682-4911.

The drawing for the **2017 NCCA Fat Bike Raffle** is complete! **Congratulations to the winner** of the adult Surly Wednesday Fat Bike, Madison Laughlin from Ashland.

maurices, 2418 Lake Shore Drive East now offers **"Your Personal Styling Session"**. Make an appointment at 715/682-6885.

Congratulations on these recent **Ribbon Cuttings:**

Kwik Trip, 1814 Lake Shore Drive West 715/682-2195.

Crossroads Outreach Center Inc., 307 Main Street West, 715/682-1053

Chequamegon Humane Association has now moved into their **new shelter at 923 Rail Drive**. Stop in anytime to tour this new facility and think about adopting a dog or cat in the Shelter. Open Tuesday through Sunday, 1pm to 6pm. 715/682-9744.

Registration is open for the **22nd Annual "Book Across The Bay"** Cross Country Ski Race and Snow Shoe Trek across Chequamegon Bay Ice from Ashland to Washburn, February 17, 2018 at 6pm. www.batb.org

For an **updated Snowmobile report for Ashland County** or an **updated Cross Country Ski Trail report** call the Ashland Chamber, 715/682-2500 or check out their website at visitashland.com.

Winter Fun!!! Get ready and start planning for the Ashland Chamber "No Snow Snowman Contest" in February, 2018. Prizes will be awarded!!! Call the Chamber for details!



The Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce would like to extend a **huge thank you to the many wonderful volunteers** who gave of their time and energy to help out with Chamber events and provide office assistance in 2017.
You are a are very much appreciated!!



We currently send out the following e-blasts.

If you are not receiving these and would like to be on the list please contact us at ashchamb@centuytel.net

- Weekly Area Happenings and Chamber Tidbits
- Ashland Chamber Newsletter
- Ribbon Cuttings/Grand Openings
- Business After Hours

Chamber News



- Each week, the Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce **Highlights A Business** on Heartland Communications radio station WATW 1400AM with a free 30-second commercial. The chosen businesses are also featured on the front page of the Chamber website, www.visitashland.com, and on the Ashland Chamber Facebook page. **January's highlighted businesses** will be: Memorial Blood Centers; Dean Distributing, Inc.; Scenic Drive Resort; Select Benefits Administrators.
- The **new** 2018 Ashland County Visitor Guide will be ready in mid-January. Stop by the Ashland Chamber to check it out.

Happy New Year from the Ashland Chamber!

Shop Small Win Big Contest:



November's Winner of \$250 in chamber dollars was Deb Lewis.

December's Winner of \$250 in chamber dollars was Tom Pesek.

There will be one more \$250 drawing in February so keep sending in receipts attached to the entry form.

Details are available on the Ashland Chamber website.

12 Days of Christmas winners for 2017

Winners

- 1) Karen Smart — Spirit of the North
- 2) Whitney Olby — Red Bicycle
- 3) Jennifer Kretzschmar — Solstice on Main
- 4) Lisa Sturgal — Shoe Shack
- 5) Danielle Jolly-Sickrich — Sears Hometown
- 6) Maggie Vandevoorde — Chequamegon Food Coop
- 7) Sarah Oliphant — Sherwin Williams
- 8) Laurie Gregor — Home Expressions
- 9) Terri Stephenson — New England Store
- 10) Tiffany Hudack — Black Fridays
- 11) Kelly Maday — Moore's Army Navy
- 12) Megan Sell — Color Center

32nd Annual Sleigh & Cutter Rally

Jan. 13, 2018

Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center

Northwoods Harness Club will present their 30th Annual Sleigh & Cutter Rally on **Saturday, Jan. 13**. The past comes alive during this picturesque winter spectacle as 1800s-era costumed drivers and passengers in antique sleighs are drawn by beautiful horses.



Offering **FREE** admission, this popular event attracts more than 1,000 spectators and 35-40 horse units participate each year. The Sleigh & Cutter Rally features narrated and judged divisions. **Hook-up is at 11:00 a.m. with the parade of sleighs beginning at 1 p.m.**

Free sleigh rides sponsored by Northern State Bank will be offered from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. There will be concessions for sale (including hot food) to support the Visitor Center. For more information, call Charlie Singler, rally event coordinator, at 715/685-4725 or visit www.nglvc.org.

Thank you to the Ashland Chamber Ambassadors!!

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Laurie Gregor | Dottie Monroe |
| Kristin Setzke | Marsha Franzel |
| Dawn Chingo | Steve & Wendy Moore |
| Betz North | Nancy Turner |
| Gary & Kay LaPean | Scott Weber |
| Geri Evans | Cheryle Iverson |
| Mindy Ovaska | Mike Yankee |
| Penny Butterfield | Karen Kay |
| Sherry Stolarzyk | Fuzz Sokolich |
| Sylvia Whalen | Diane Lulich |
| Dawn Rivard | Karen Hansen |
| Sharon Sokolich | Ed Monroe |
| Jackson Kyser | Donna Kurilla |
| Daryl Jolma | Tim Kehoe |
| Jeff Muse | Karin Pierce |
| Preston Mikula | Steve Pierce |

Free Winter Fishing Weekend

January 20-21, 2018



Pack up the family or call your friends and head to the water for fishing fun! Fish anywhere in

Wisconsin without a license or trout stamp on Free Fishing Weekend, Jan. 20-21. This includes all inland waters and Wisconsin's side of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River. Other fishing rules apply, such as limits on the number and size of fish you can keep and any seasons when you must release certain fish species.

For more information, go to dnr.wi.gov and search for "Free Fishing Weekend."



2018 Person of the Year nominations sought!

It's that time of year to reflect on someone who has done great things in our community and to nominate them as the 2018 *Person of the Year*. Nominations are being accepted until

Feb. 1, 2018.

Call the Ashland Chamber office for a nomination form.

2017 Christmas Cash Raffle

winner were:

Thank you to all of those who participated.



- | | |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Dec. 1: Angie Shoepach | Dec. 17: Kathy Hansman |
| Dec. 2: Debb Joanis | Dec. 18: Brian & Jenny Mrnak |
| Dec. 3: Scott StGermain | Dec. 19: Joan Provost |
| Dec. 4: Scott Weber | Dec. 20: Hannah Chatterton |
| Dec. 5: Jenny Rae | Dec. 21: Amber Kastern |
| Dec. 6: Terri Bretting | Dec. 22: |
| Dec. 7: Amy Amman | Dec. 23: |
| Dec. 8: Jane Brilla | Dec. 24: |
| Dec. 9: Amy Haukaas | Dec. 25: |
| Dec. 10: Lori Mossuto | Dec. 25: |
| Dec. 11: Alison Gillespie | Dec. 26: |
| Dec. 12: Brian & Jenny Mrnak | Dec. 27: |
| Dec. 13: Kathy Hansman | Dec. 28: |
| Dec. 14: Charlie Singler | Dec. 29: TBA |
| Dec. 15: Karen Tucci | Dec. 30: TBA |
| Dec. 16: Nick & Cheryl Gima | Dec. 31: TBA |



**STAY TUNED FOR THE UPCOMING DOWNTOWN BUSINESS CONTEST!!!
WE WILL BE POSTING CONTEST SPECIFICS ON OUR WEBSITE SOON!!!!**



Find yourself next to the water.

ASHLAND

visitashland.com WISCONSIN

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Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 746
Ashland, WI 54806

**Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce
Board of Directors**

Executive Board Members:

Rick Forsythe, President
Gail Fox-Anderson, Vice-President
Mike Hines, Secretary
Dave Martin, Treasurer & Pres-Elect.
Jeff Moravchik, Past President

At-Large Members:

Nancy Turner Tina Miller
Todd Chingo John Beirl
Lisa Gervais Bill Kacvinsky
Karen Hansen

Ex Officio Members:

Mary Garness, Keith Hilts,
Betsey Harries

Staff:

Mary McPhetridge, Executive Director
JoAnn Erickson, Office Manager
Maribeth Monroe, Customer Service
Lily Jolma, Customer Service

Phone: 715/682-2500 or 800/284-9484

Fax: 715/682-9404

Email: info@visitashland.com

Business After Hours

January's host:

Fall General Surgery

Wednesday, Jan. 17, 2018

at 5:00 p.m.

Held at:

**New China Restaurant
300 Lake Shore Drive West**

Please join us for good food and a great time!!

*If you are unable to attend, we encourage
you to extend this invitation to another
representative of your business.*