

Waconia Area Chamber of Commerce
& Visitors Bureau

MEMBER GUIDE

2024



a 501c6 non-profit organization
DestinationWaconia.org

WELCOME



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WHO WE ARE



Thank you for doing business in the Waconia community!



Thank you for choosing to do business in the Waconia area, part of the fastest growing county in the state of Minnesota! We're grateful for your contribution to our local economy and the role you play in building connections within our community. Local businesses create job opportunities and are an integral part of growth and development. Your involvement in events, community initiatives, and strong commitment create a meaningful impact. Because of you, our business community continues to grow and thrive.

We'd like to take this time to express our sincere appreciation for your membership. Your partnership allows us to support the mission of promoting a positive business environment and enhancing the quality of life in the Waconia community. Your financial investment makes it possible and we're committed to work for your return on investment (ROI) through 4 key initiatives and strategic priorities.

Community Connection: *Promoting, expanding, and contributing to meaningful partnerships and collaboration through growth and retention; as well as establishing strong internal processes and procedures.*

Waconia Prosperity: *Contributing to shared community prosperity by expanding our networking and connecting opportunities.*

Talent Forward: *Driving Workforce and Economic Development for the betterment of the area by growing local partnerships. Watch for details on the Career Exploration Fair & Community EXPO!*

Destination Waconia: *Showcasing the Waconia area as a destination to live, work, and play by enhancing marketing and communications.*

The work you do is valuable; we want to continue to preserve our historical roots while also working together to build a thriving and supportive local environment. Again, thank you for choosing to do business here and for your continued support of the Waconia Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau.

Wishing you continued success and prosperity!

Christine Fenner

President

Waconia Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau



WHAT WE DO



MISSION

The Waconia Chamber of Commerce is a nonprofit, member-driven organization with a mission to promote a positive business environment and to enhance the quality of life in the Waconia community.

VISION

To be a thriving community where people love where they work, live, and play.

KEY INITIATIVES



QUICK FACTS

Original Articles of Incorporation were filed on March 9, 1962 by Paul Melchert.

The Board of Directors, representing a variety of industries, are the governing and policy-making body of the organization.

The Waconia Convention & Visitors Bureau was established in 2000 and is also governed by a separate board of directors.

NETWORKING EVENTS



Coffee Connection 1st Thursday of month

Join us each month at a different business location. Connect with business and organization professionals and community leaders, build new partnerships, make new friends, and exchange ideas in a casual setting. No rsvp required, stay for as long as your schedule allows.



Chamber Luncheon typically 4th Thursday of month

Provides members with networking and educational topics, including: Annual Waconia Chamber of Commerce Meeting, State of the City, State of the County, Candidate Forum, Economic Development & Workforce, Impact of Nonprofits, Manufacturing Tours, Public Speaking, Health & Wellness, and more!



Waconia Young Professionals monthly

Young professionals looking to enhance their skills and grow their network through community involvement and educational opportunities.



NEW! **Women's Connect** quarterly

A focused network designed to encourage, support, and create resources for professional women entrepreneurs and leaders.



Chamber 101 semi-annually

Learn about the programs, benefits and services that are available to chamber members. Whether you are a new member, a longtime member, or just want to learn more about membership this is an event for you.



Business After Hours dates vary

Networking for members, guests, and colleagues in an informal setting. Build relationships and share what's new with you and your organization.



Events Calendar

Details on the above programs or more fun events in the Waconia community.

COMMITTEES



Ambassadors **monthly**

Welcomes new members, as well as promotes membership and attendance at chamber events and programs.

Grow! Minnesota **dates vary**

Works on economic development by visiting businesses every year under the Grow! Minnesota program through the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce.

Retail Committee **monthly**

Promote the businesses of Waconia in downtown and on the Hwy 5 corridor. This group is active in event planning and advertising and is an excellent place to network with other business owners.

Tourism Committee **every other month**

Develops an overall tourism plan that incorporates marketing strategies in order to increase the economic impact to Waconia.

Business Education Network – Manufacturing & Trades **monthly**

Develops partnerships and builds future workforce connections through program development, skills, and real-world, hands-on learning experience. In collaboration with Waconia Public Schools Industrial Technology & Engineering teachers, administration, area business leaders, and the Waconia Chamber of Commerce.



SPECIAL EVENT COMMITTEES

Career Exploration Fair

Plan and execute the 2024 Career Exploration Fair for Waconia High School students to gain exposure to post-high school career paths.

Community Expo

Plan and execute the 2024 Community Expo to encompass business, home and family services.

Nickle Dickle Day

Plan and execute Nickle Dickle Day.

Golf Tournament

Plan and implement the Chamber Golf Tournament.

Lake Waconia Fireworks

Raise funds for and promote the 4th of July Fireworks display.

Interested in joining a committee?
Reach out to Christine!

NEW!

Public Policy Committee **ongoing**

Keeps members informed of public policy issues that affect local and member businesses. Committed to providing member businesses access and a voice in city, county, and state governments.



GET INVOLVED



The Waconia Chamber hosts a number of programs for members and the community. Involvement in the Waconia Chamber is a great way to further your professional network and grow your business.



MAKE CONNECTIONS

The chamber provides quality networking programs and events for members. The events and programs help members showcase and promote their businesses. Drop in to a Coffee Connection or register for a Chamber Luncheon. Share what's new with you and your business.



SERVE ON A COMMITTEE

Committees are a great way to network with other business people while sharing your expertise with the chamber. Committee membership is not limited to the chamber contact person representing the business but is open to all employees of the business.

VOLUNTEER

Get in front of the community throughout the year by volunteering at a special event. Volunteering opportunities are available during the Carver County Fair, Nickle Dickle Day, Chamber Golf Tournament and more.



HOST AN EVENT

One of the many chamber-member benefits is the exposure that your business gets from being involved in events that the chamber promotes. Host a Coffee Connection or a Business After Hours to increase your business name recognition and develop relationships within the community.





ANNUAL CHAMBER & VISITORS BUREAU SNAPSHOT

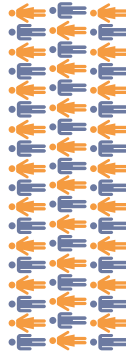
2023

DESTINATIONWACONIA.ORG

#DESTINATIONWACONIA

MEMBERSHIP

292
MEMBERS



26
NEW MEMBERS
IN 2023

93%

MEMBER
RETENTION RATE

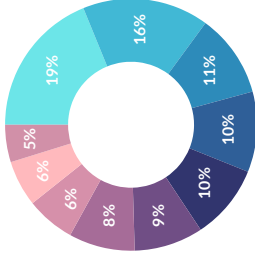
74%

OF MEMBERS ARE 10
OR LESS EMPLOYEES

BUSINESS TYPE

Retail, Dining, Libations
Professional Services
Finance & Insurance
Manufacturing & Trades
Other
Healthcare

Non-profits, Churches &
Civic Organizations
Fitness & Wellness
Government & Education
Real Estate Services



COMMUNITY CONNECTION

The Waconia Chamber's reach on social media gives your business increased visibility through added social media presence.



16K+ FOLLOWERS
@DESTINATIONWACONIA
@WACONIAEVENTS



30K PAGE VISITS
TO SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES



131K PAGE REACH
USERS WHO SAW ANY CHAMBER
SOCIAL CONTENT



100K PAGE VISITS
DESTINATIONWACONIA.ORG

DESTINATION WACONIA

3,000

WACONIA MAPS
DISTRIBUTED

1,200

TOURISM PACKETS
MAILED / EMAILED



COMMUNICATIONS

52

WEEKLY
EMAILS



52%
AVERAGE
OPEN RATE

WACONIA PROSPERITY



37
RIBBON CUTTINGS &
AMBASSADOR VISITS



\$75k
WACONIA
BUCKS ISSUED

CHAMBER-LED COMMUNITY EVENTS

shop hop

Sister Saturday

CAREER EXPLORATION FAIR
WACONIA
COMMUNITY EXPO

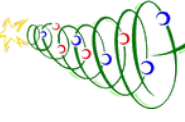
WACONIA
JULY 4TH
FIREWORKS

WACONIA
OPEN GOLF
SCRAMBLE

NICKLE DICKLE EVE
STREET DANCE

WACONIA
Scarecrow Tour

Nickle Dickle Day



SHOP LOCAL
Homespun
HOLIDAY
WACONIA

TALENT FORWARD

3
STUDENTS
COMMITTED ON
SIGNING DAY

3
\$1,000
SCHOLARSHIPS
AWARDED

81
BUSINESSES
FEATURED AT
EXPO / CAREER
FAIR IN 2022

100+
JOBS POSTED
WEBSITE, SOCIAL MEDIA,
OR FRIDAY FACTS

WHAT MEMBERS ARE SAYING



Joining the Waconia Chamber was one of the best decisions we made for our new business. Staff and fellow members of the chamber are very welcoming and supportive from day one. The connections and knowledge gained from chamber events greatly impacted the growth of our business.



MATT DOSTAL

Owner, Dostal CPA & Tax Consulting

We have been a Waconia Chamber member ever since the beginning. With each and every year, I see our chamber getting stronger and stronger. Even through the tough years, the chamber has adapted to help us all.



KIM MACKENTHUN

Owner, Mackenthun's Fine Foods

Being a member of the Waconia Chamber is one of the best investments of both time and money. We appreciate networking opportunities with local businesses that become vendors, customers or friends. Also, the opportunities available to serve which thereby contribute to the amazing community that is Waconia.



CATHY NIELSEN

Owner, CD Products

The chamber's dedication to supporting local businesses through advocacy has been invaluable. The support and camaraderie among members creates a collaborative environment that fosters growth and success. We are proud to be part of the Chamber and highly recommend it to any business looking to thrive in the community.



ANDY STRONG

Owner, Waconia Dodge

Waconia is an amazing place to work, live, visit, raise a family and be in business. I very much appreciate the leadership of our area chamber, advocating for our communities and businesses at large.



SARAH URTEL

VP, Ridgeview
Owner, Waconia Apparel

TOP 10 REASONS TO JOIN

1. Visibility
2. Networking
3. Advocacy / Gov't Relations
4. Economic Workforce
5. Education & Professional Development
6. Promotion & Publicity
7. Community Involvement
8. Tourism
9. Information
10. Get Involved!





Thank you
for your continued
membership!

MEMBER BENEFITS

- ☒ Enhanced online membership listing & links
- ☒ Member window decal for business
- ☒ Subscription to weekly membership communication, including monthly newsletter
- ☒ Free advertising in weekly communication
- ☒ Increased visibility through added social media presence
- ☒ Advocate for business-friendly legislation
- ☒ Networking opportunities
- ☒ Join committees & special event committees
- ☒ Ribbon Cuttings & 1st Dollar Ambassador Visits
- ☒ Job postings on the chamber member website
- ☒ Event postings on the chamber member website
- ☒ Participation in chamber-led events
- ☒ Volunteer opportunities
- ☒ Opportunity to sponsor chamber events
- ☒ Accept Chamber Bucks at your business

connect
support
grow

The Real Value of Joining the Chamber

- > If a company is highly involved in its local chamber, consumers are **12%** more likely to think that its products stack up better against its competition.
- > When consumers find out a company is involved with a local chamber, they are **19%** more likely to think favorably of that company.

*The Real Value of Joining a Local Chamber
of Commerce: A Research Study
The Schapiro Group*

MAXIMIZE YOUR MEMBERSHIP



As a new or longtime member, you can maximize your membership and get engaged immediately by taking advantage of chamber events, committees, programs, and benefits that will impact your business.

✓ MEMBER PROFILE

DestinationWaconia.org had 100k views last year. Take a minute to update your business directory listing on our website. Add a logo, contact information, photos, videos, and more.

✓ ADVERTISE IN FRIDAY COMMUNICATIONS

Submit announcements, job openings, events, deals and more in weekly Friday communications sent to all members. Submissions run for two weeks and you can submit 10 times each year as part of your membership.

✓ DISPLAY WINDOW DECAL

Promote your membership by displaying a window decal on your front door or other high visibility spot. Studies show consumers say they are more likely to buy from a chamber member.

✓ ATTEND CHAMBER 101

Learn about the programs, benefits and services that are available to chamber members. Whether you are a new member, a longtime member, or just want to learn more about membership this is an event for you.

✓ ACCEPT WACONIA BUCKS

Waconia Bucks can be accepted at any chamber member business. Just like a personal check, Waconia Bucks spend like cash. Display a “Waconia Bucks Accepted Here” sticker on your front door.

✓ POST EVENTS & JOBS

Submit upcoming events or job postings to DestinationWaconia.org. You can also post in the Facebook groups or submit a 50-70 word blurb to the weekly Friday Facts email to members.

✓ MAKE CONNECTIONS

The chamber’s networking events and programs help members showcase and promote their businesses. Drop in to a Coffee Connection or register for a Chamber Luncheon. We’d love to hear what’s new with you and your business.

✓ GET SOCIAL

Follow us on social to stay up to date on all that’s happening. Post your events or get featured in a #MemberSpotlight. Tag @DestinationWaconia in your posts and stories so we can share it to help spread the word.



CHAMBER-LED EVENTS



Friday, April 5, 2024
Saturday, April 6, 2024
 Waconia High School

CAREER EXPLORATION FAIR
WACONIA
 COMMUNITY EXPO

Saturday, May 11, 2024
 MN Walleye Fishing Opener
 A shopping and dining day

Sister Saturday

Monday, July 15, 2024
 Island View Golf Club
 Golf, network, or volunteer

WACONIA
 OPEN GOLF
 SCRAMBLE

Monday, July 4, 2024
 Lake Waconia Regional Park
 Dusk

WACONIA
JULY 4TH
 FIREWORKS

Saturday, September 14, 2024
 Downtown Waconia
 Car show, arts and crafts fair,
 library book sale, duck races,
 3-on-3 basketball tournament, more!

**Nickle
 Dickle
 Day**

October 10-20, 2024
 40+ scarecrows
 Tour them all and vote

WACONIA
Scarecrow Tour

Saturday, November 9, 2024
 MN Deer Rifle Opener
 A shopping and dining day



Friday, November 28, 2024
 City Square Park, Waconia
 Christmas carols, hot chocolate,
 holiday characters, and Santa Claus!



Saturday, November 29, 2024
 'Tis the season to shop local
 (and all year!)



SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



Plan your year and reserve optional sponsorships now or invest your time by volunteering at one of the many chamber-led events.

COFFEE CONNECTIONS

1st Thursday of the month

One available each month. Your business promoted with the event and on the website. Brings 40-50 chamber members to your business, plus an opportunity to speak about your business.

\$100 + coffee

CHAMBER LUNCHEONS

4th Thursday of the month (except July and December)

One available each month. Your business promoted with the event. Includes a three-minute timeslot to speak about your business, a free lunch, and extra marketing on the website and program.

\$100

CAREER EXPLORATION FAIR AND COMMUNITY EXPO

Every other year

Two events for one price. Educate students about your industry on Friday, then promote your business to the community on Saturday.

\$200

4TH OF JULY FIREWORKS

Annually on July 4

You'll get a bang for your buck!

Goal: To raise \$35k for annual fireworks display

CHAMBER GOLF SCRAMBLE

July 15, 2024

Accomplished, amateur, and wanna-be golfers welcome.

Sponsorship opportunities \$200+

NICKLE DICKLE DAY

Annually the second Saturday after Labor Day

Variety of levels available to support this community event.

Sponsorship opportunities \$200+

CO-OP MARKETING EVENTS

Join these annual co-op marketing events to help your advertising dollars go further.

WACONIA SCARECROW TOUR

10 days in October

Create a scarecrow outside your business and drive the community to your door during the tour! Winning scarecrows win prizes.

Scarecrow Participation \$50+

RETAIL EVENTS

Sister Saturday - May, MN Walley Fishing Opener

D.E.A.R. - November, MN Deer Rifle Opener

Co-op Marketing & Participation \$100+ / event

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

CARVER COUNTY FAIR BOOTH

August 7-11, 2024

2-3 hour shifts to promote your business

NICKLE DICKLE POP BOOTH

September 14, 2024

2-3 hour timeslots to engage with the community.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Ways to get involved throughout the year!
Reach out for opportunities.

NICKLE DICKLE DAY BY THE NUMBERS

THOUSANDS of dollars spent locally
in Waconia shops, restaurants, & bars

30,000 people attending

1,000 Runners
ISD 110 Community Education Runs

HUNDREDS of books sold
Friends of the Waconia Public Library

460 Classic cars

380 Basketball Players
St. Joe's 3-on-3

140 Craft & Food Vendors
in City Square Park

80 Ducks
Rotary Duck Races

3 live bands
in two days

ONE NICKLE DICKLE DAY

DestinationWaconia.org/NickleDickleDay

STAY CONNECTED



OUR TEAM



Christine Fenner
President



Chelsey Koubsky
Communications &
Event Coordinator



Gretchen Hoxie
Business Development
Coordinator



Laura Hann
Administrative
Coordinator

952-442-5812

cfenner@destinationwaconia.org

DestinationWaconia.org

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209 S Vine Street
Waconia, MN 55387



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Proud Members:



U.S. Chamber of Commerce

**MINNESOTA
CHAMBER of
COMMERCE**





Stay
connected!



a 501c6 non-profit organization
DestinationWaconia.org