



Annual Report

2009 was a year of growth, development and excitement for the De Pere Area Chamber of Commerce. The continued efforts of our members, staff, and businesses resulted in the efforts and successes continuing our mission statement reflecting our mission to support the success of our members and champion community prosperity by fostering economic development and serving as the voice of business.

In October 2008, the Chamber launched the first fifteen months of a 3 year, 3 month Plan of Action. The successes of 2009 are a direct reflection of the vision of both the document and process. Through the 8-month strategic planning process which resulted in the document, the De Pere Area Chamber honed in on four areas of focus around which all of our work is done: **Community Development, Economic Enhancement, Business Engagement and Personal Involvement**. Enjoy this look back with us and prepare for the blast-off of 2010!

Mission	Purpose
<i>To support the success of our members and champion community prosperity, by fostering economic development, and serving as the "Voice of Business."</i>	<i>To be a member-driven organization focusing on community development, economic enhancement, business engagement and personal involvement to enhance economic development and the life experience in the De Pere Area.</i>

Chamber Changes

New Member Management System, ChamberMaster

May gave us the launch of our new member management system. For no increase in costs, we are better able to service our members internally as well as more efficiently and effectively coordinate our many events and committees. Our members also benefit from incredible enhancements at no additional charge: own personal member information page, a business description, live link, key words, job listings, "Hot Deals," and event listings! Lodging members got even more!

Member Development Team

For the first time in recent memory, the De Pere Area Chamber has a dedicated Member Development team. Our area is replete with businesses who aren't members and, for most of them, because they haven't been asked. This also gives us the ability to work with and better assist our members with their development and success. Due to this addition, we added **67 new members in 2009** and so far in 2010, we have 2 more new members than were added in all of 2008!

Social Networking

Staying on the cutting edge of technology is of primary concern when your core business is communication and information: **Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn** are all venues where members, prospective members and interested parties can now find news, information and updates about the happenings in De Pere, at the DPACC and with our members. In 2010, we will add more to this repertoire of communication.

Main Street De Pere Program

In 2009, we returned the Main Street Community Ball and launched a specific fundraising appeal for Main Street to fund the operations of this long-standing yet under-funded program.

De Pere Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation

As a reflection of the growth of our organization, our footprints, the needs of our members and the community-at-large as well as an acknowledge of the changes within the Chamber, in December 2009, we restructured our non-profit 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charity to be able to operate programmatically outside the boundaries of the Main Street De Pere district.

Event & Program Highlights

Member Directory

For the first time since 2005, we published a Chamber Member Directory. This will now be compiled and published annually.

Fall Fest

Main Street De Pere hosted De Pere Fall Fest '09 in September along with St Norbert College's premier of SNC Day. This annual event is a community family-friendly celebration now planned for the second Saturday after Labor Day. With 100% growth from 2008 to 2009, we have big plans for 2010!

Taste of Wine & Beer

In October, we returned for the Fourth Annual **Taste of Wine & Beer** presented by Chamber Partner *M&I Bank* and due to the success and growth of this event, we moved it to Apple Creek Inn bringing Festival Foods in to the fold as a partner. Proceeds fund our Chamber mission.

☐ **Monthly Networking Events**

The Chamber continues with its monthly **De Pere at Dawn** and **De Pere at Dusk** events. *De Pere at Dawn* continues as the premier morning networking event allowing area business people to connect with each other to make those vital one-to-one business connections and *De Pere at Dusk* provides a relaxed evening networking environment at unique area businesses to get to know other business members while giving the host business and opportunity to showcase their business! We also introduced twice annual Legislative updates to connect our members with those elected to represent them.

A Peek at 2010

☐ **Web enhancements**

We will “paint the walls and move the furniture” by revamping the homepage of our website to better introduce individuals and businesses to the Chamber, our members and the community.

☐ **Master Plan Implementation**

Mid-May will give us the final document of the Downtown De Pere Master Plan. This document will guide the community and especially the Chamber and the business community in growth and development over the next 5 to 20 years. There are **BIG, BIG plans afoot** for downtown ... keep your eyes open!

☐ **Community Map**

During the third quarter of 2009, the Chamber will publish the first community map since 2001.

☐ **Ambassadors**

As our membership has grown, so has our Ambassadors Club. In mid-2010, we will have a volunteer to assist the Ambassadors develop this critical outreach area of the organization plus turn Ambassadorship into the benefit it should be for the Ambassadors!

☐ **Membership Growth**

Based on the success of our programs and Plan of Action, our Membership Development Team will grow our membership to 280 by year's end.

☐ **Manufacturing & Industrial Council**

To assist the prosperity and growth of our manufacturing & industrial members, the Chamber, in December 2009, formed a Manufacturing & Industrial Council and held a “Summit” to ascertain their needs & issues then to craft solutions as a business community and an organization. This Council will grow and help guide us to better serve this important constituency.

☐ **Workforce Development - Bridges to Business**

In response to member needs and suggestions, we will launch **Bridges to Business**, a program to develop the future workforce by preparing them to transition from student to contributing employee.

☐ **SEEDs for De Pere**

In 2009, SEEDs for De Pere, a group made up of individuals, teachers, business leaders, elected officials, and government employees, became part of the non-profit part of the Chamber. Sustainability is more than a buzzword or a movement – it is a focus for the present and the future all businesses and organizations will have. This group leads the way for our area and has great plans for 2010.

☐ **Buildings & Business Inventory**

We continue to keep this project up-to-date, but with all the changes inherent in business, it is, and will always be, a moving target. In 2010, this inventory will move online for ease in searching and updating.

☐ **Fall Fest expands to include *De Pere on the Fox: Venetian Boat Parade*, the *Best of the Midwest Rib Cook-off* and *Fall Fest After Dark***

The next steps in the growth and evolution of this event, 2010 will introduce three new aspects to *Fall Fest De Pere*: Rib cookers from both around the region as well as local favorites will show off their best-finger licking good rib recipes for attendees and our celebrity judges in the first *Best of the Midwest Rib Cook-off*; at dusk we will decorate the Fox River just south of the Claude Allouez Bridge with festively lit boats in the first *De Pere on the Fox: Venetian Boat Parade* and then, for the continued enjoyment of all, *Fall Fest After Dark*, will be one downtown-wide event at our food & drink establishments featuring specials, music and a great time for all. St Norbert College is, in addition to that being Family Weekend, also making it Alumni and Reunion weekend. De Pere will be THE PLACE!

☐ **“Chamber Chat”**

Keep the TV on so you don't miss *Chamber Chat* (or catch up on the DePereChamber YouTube channel)! Debuting on local access, public access and other PEG channels *through-out Wisconsin*, *Chamber Chat* each month will focus on one of our programs, projects or events, but also have guests featured to talk about an underlying principle or tenet that will give it both regional and statewide appeal!

Long story short? There is a lot happening in and around the De Pere Area Chamber of Commerce and our community!

Live. Work. Enjoy. Join **the De Pere Area Chamber of Commerce!**

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www.deperechamber.org