

Lake Norman Chamber of Commerce
2016 Annual Report
Through December 31, 2016

Business Growth & Regional Advancement

- Promoted BusinessWorks! seminars on Goal Setting; Social Media; Increasing Business Value; Mobile marketing; HR Issues; Small Biz Tips; Small Biz of the Year Panel – Biz Tips; Thinking outside of the box, Internet Security & Fraud; Website Marketing; Mac iOS X; Small Biz Trends.
- Other Business Seminars have included: Networking, Tech Talk: Twitter, Tech Talk – SEO; Keeping your identity; Finding your strengths; Media Strategies; First Impressions, Navigating NC Works; Online Marketing and Job Searching
- Hosted Quarterly Economic Forecast Lunch n’ Learns
- Promoted a Small Business Week kicked off by a lunch program – Lunch & Launch keynoted by Greg Wessling (Former Lowe’s exec) and a series of speakers and a Small Business Panel with 127 attending, and Small Business of the Year Reception.
- Hosted an Economic Development PowerLuncheon with the Charlotte Chamber, Lake Norman EDC, and Charlotte Regional Partnership.
- Helped facilitate a new group: Lake Norman e-Commerce with a mission to nurture and grow online commerce in the lake region.
- Chamber President made calls on businesses in the Towns of Cornelius and Huntersville with Town Board members (Mayor or Commissioner) with calls planned for Davidson in December.
- The Chamber continued its partnership with SCORE. SCORE Executives have been utilizing the Chamber counseling businesses in Lake Norman. The Chamber refers local businesses to SCORE for counseling. In 2016, the Chamber created a workplace (phone and computer available to SCORE staff) at the Chamber. SCORE also trained volunteers at the Chamber.
- Maintained an employee bulletin board for jobs postings with HOHT and assisted with two H.O.H.T. job fairs.
- The Chamber has assisted the Lake Norman Regional Economic Development Corporation which it helped create with the three North Mecklenburg towns. The Chamber's Chairman serves on the Board. The EDC's executive director is an ex-officio member of the Chamber Board and the Chamber's president is an ex-officio member of the EDC Board to improve communication and help facilitate economic development for the region. Also coordinated Two CEO Roundtables with the EDC: Legislative Wrap-up and Exit 23 DDI.
- Chamber President met with potential start-up businesses in regards to new business development in the Lake Norman region.
- Sponsored a Wage and Salary survey of area businesses with The Pines.

- Assisted a new Lake Norman HR organization, along with LKN EDC, with a wage and Benefit Survey.

Communication & Technology

- Coordinated weekly e-Blasts delivered to over 2,550 email addresses weekly with the purpose of keeping our membership informed on all of our upcoming events. Also distributed the Presidents e-Brief on an as needed basis to keep the membership informed on current topics effecting business in the area.
- Regularly posts events/programs to Face Book and Twitter.
- Redesigned Face Book landing page
- Hosted two Tech Talk seminars on Twitter and Search Engine Optimization.
- Distributed and mailed a printed calendar of chamber events called the Splash.
- Hosted BizNet monthly seminars to help members navigate the chamber website in a smaller one-to-one setting with Brett Zabek.
- Partnered with Lake Norman Currents Magazine on relocation magazine for the region called Great Lake Living.
- Continued promoting the Chamber's website.
- Researched and investigating new technology for Randy Marion Board Room.
- Monitored Website, Face Book, and social media statics monthly engaging in several targeted campaigns.
- Explored live streaming and producing videos of Chamber seminars.
- Began "Spotlighting" a Chamber Business and Nonprofit member weekly (beginning in November) on the website and distributing via social media.

Community Affairs

- Hosted the Eleventh Annual Public Safety Luncheon recognizing local law enforcement, firemen, and EMS workers from the three North Mecklenburg towns, and Crime Stopper of the Year.
- Hosted Tri-Chamber Healthcare Forum with panel of speakers with Statesville and Mooresville Chambers.
- Attended community breakfast hosted by Duke Energy.
- Recognized a Duke Energy Citizen of the Year and Community Service Award Winner.
- Promoted Davidson College athletics.
- Promoted Loch Norman Highland Games, Sheep Dog Trials, and Carolina Renaissance Festival, Kilwin's Angel Tree, Lotta Foundation.
- Sponsored and promoted events such as Big Day at the Lake, Big Brother/Big Sister Fundraiser, Celebrity Bartender at Alton's for Big Day at the Lake,
- Promoted and supported programming with: Lake Norman Lions, Kiwanis Club, Aktion Club, Rotary (North Mecklenburg, Davidson and Lake Norman Clubs), Toastmasters, Southenders Photo Club.

- Assisted Visit Lake Norman promoting events and programs supporting travel and tourism.
- Assisted the three North Mecklenburg Towns supporting community events such as the North Mecklenburg Christmas Parade, Parks and Recreation, Hello Huntersville, Christmas Tree Lighting, Veterans Day, Veteran Parade, Farmers Markets, etc.

Diversity Development Division

- Coordinated a Diversity Council comprised of minority business owners to examine issues in common with women and minority owned business owners and managers.
- Hosted fourth Annual Women's Conference "Breaking the Mold" keynoted by Cindi Bassenspiller with 106 in attendance.
- Hosted the Diversity PowerLuncheon with a panel discussion (Three panelists' representing Financial Independence Group, Time Warner, and The Employers Association) and a diversity recognition program for smaller business (Aquesta Bank) and larger corporate businesses (MSC Industrial Supply) which recognize businesses that practice outstanding diversity management and a Diversity Champion Charles Utz – (Merrill Lynch). The event was attended by approximately 60 people.
- Hosted the first Diversity Community Forum on Community Policing in August, followed by a Forum in November at the Union Bethel AME Zion Church – Smithfield Community.
- Held two Lunch n' Learns at CPCC Merancas Campus on Community Policing and HB2.

Lake Norman Education Collaborative

- Promoted the Lake Norman Education Collaborative with a mission to increase educational resources in North Mecklenburg.
- Coordinated in partnership with CMS officials a Speed Networking event at Hopewell High School, Career Day at Hough High School as well as Future Business Leaders of America Graduation.
- Co - Hosted the first North Mecklenburg Education Summit with Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools attended by over 100 people.
- Hosted a PowerLuncheon keynoted by CPCC President Tony Zeiss.
- Spearheaded a school supply drive with Aquesta Bank and the Lotta Foundation.
- Participated in Partners in Education program. During the 2015-2016 school year there were 10 established partnerships (9 with Blythe Elementary, 1 with Bradley Middle).
- Chamber President represents the Chamber on the Hopewell High School Hospitality and Tourism Academy Board.
- Collaborative Annual Book Drive -1,200 books were collected and distributed to schools in the area this past spring.

Finance & Operations

- Issued Statements of Financial Position and Statements of Financial Activity to the Board of Directors and continues to maintain a positive cash flow, building reserves.
- Revamped finance committee meetings to include all Chamber staff and detailed review of accounts receivable to include in-depth discussion on open balances.
- The Chamber is a member of and active in the North Carolina Chamber of Commerce and the Carolinas Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (CACCE).
- The Chamber's president is Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Hugh Torrance House & Store, ex-officio Board of Directors of the Ada Jenkins Center, Board of Directors of Visit Lake Norman, Board of Directors United Way of Central Carolinas - Lake Norman, Board of Directors of Our Towns Habitat, Board of Directors of the Academy of Hospitality and Tourism Hopewell High School, member of the North Mecklenburg Rotary Club, member of the Lake Norman Kiwanis Club, Aktion Club Advisor, and president of the Winthrop University Pi Kappa Phi Alumni Corporation.
- Promoted the Chamber's Office Depot program through communications and enclosing a program card in every 'Thank You' that was sent to new members and renewing members. The Office Depot program has generated \$5,386.89 through 11/15. Last year the program generated \$6,365 by year end.

Membership Programs and Services (as of Nov 30, 2016)

- Membership of 986 members.
- Membership Retention Rate 79.5%.
- 156 members joined the Chamber thru 11/16 vs. 186 by year end 2015.
- 5 orientations were held at the Chamber with attendance ranging from 10 to 30 people.
- New member decals and Office Depot cards were distributed to new and renewing members.
- New marketing materials were ordered including Lapel pins and Chamber Magnets for members and Name Badges for Board Members and Ambassadors.
- 5 New Ambassadors were trained and 12 to 14 have been active in attending Chamber events and assisting in programming opportunities.
- The Vice Chair of Membership Services approved all Ambassadors after an application process.
- Ambassadors are expected to maintain certain standards in representing the Chamber.
- Past due statements for 30, 60 and 90 days were delivered via email and US Mail. New past due letters and drop letters written and signed by President are mailed.
- Overdue members are contacted by telephone, email or in person by Chamber Staff.
- Held 23 Business AfterHours and Mixers with an average attendance 50+.
- Held 13 Business BeforeHours / Speed Networking Events averaging between 35 - 50 attendees.

- Celebrated 33 Ribbon Cuttings
- Held 7 Power Luncheons with an average attendance 80
- 2016 Annual Banquet at Peninsula Yacht Club had 195 attendees.
- 2016 Business Expo held at Davidson College had 170 exhibitors
- 2016 Annual Golf Tournament held at Northstone Country Club had 100 golfers.
- Hosted 4 regional Speed Networking monthly with Sam's Club which including the Mooresville, Statesville, and Lake Norman Chambers of Commerce with 40-60 attending.
- Conducted and graduated 23 individuals from the Chamber's 19th Leadership Lake Norman program. Class XX has 25 people enrolled.
- Continued to promote and encourage the Lake Norman Chamber Young Professionals who meet monthly for networking and business seminars and self-improvement programs. Close to 60 young professionals participate in the group.

Public Policy

- Chamber officers have attended government meetings to keep abreast of local issues and their impact to the Lake Norman business community.
- Attended and participated in North Carolina Legislative & Economic Development Summit in Washington DC meeting with Congressional and U.S. Senators Burr and Tillis.
- Legislative committee met to develop a legislative agenda approved by the Board of Directors and continually monitored potential positions on community issues.
- Held Candidate Forums in Cornelius and Huntersville for NC House District 98 and 92, County, and NC Judiciary races.
- Issued a letter of Support for Huntersville Medical Center CON Application to add 2nd MRI Scanner.
- Met regularly with members of the press and issued statements on behalf of the Chamber and business community.
- Focus Friday briefings have been held on a variety of topics including: Three Town Manager Reports; REBIC; Ramsey Creek Beach; Ocular Melanoma; HB2; Charlotte Mecklenburg Task Force on Eco Mobility & Access to Opportunity; Town Budgets' CATS; Overtime Regulations; Hwy 73 corridor; Pennies for Progress.
- An Elected Officials luncheon was held, keynoted by Former North Carolina Governor Jim Martin honoring our town boards, and recognizing outgoing elected officials.
- Chamber President represented the Chamber on WSIC 100.7 radio for both the primary and General Election Night Coverage.
- After nearly 20 years of lobbying by the Chamber, Ramsey Creek Beach was opened to the public on Memorial Day weekend.

Transportation

- The Chamber issued a resolution opposing toll lanes at Lake Norman in June 2015 and continued throughout 2016 holding weekly strategy meetings with key stakeholder

groups and elected/business officials opposing the lanes, held workshops and business briefings educating the membership and public on the issue, conducting numerous television, radio, and print interviews, and made several trips to Raleigh meeting with our state delegation on the issue.

- The Chamber has actively promoted and encouraged mass transit and other transportation alternatives for North Mecklenburg/Lake Norman through resolutions, press releases, newsletter articles, forums, hearings, and workshops.
- The Chamber has participated in the Regional Roads Committee.
- The Chamber has advocated road improvements and an access management study of NC Highway 73 since 1997 along with the Lincolnton-Lincoln County and Cabarrus Regional Chambers of Commerce. Since the conclusion of the study, the Chamber has appointed a past Chamber chairman as a member to the NC Hwy 73 Council of Planning.
- Chamber President was an ex-officio member of the Lake Norman Regional Transportation Commission and attended their monthly meetings focused on Road Improvements, Funding, Red Line, etc until Huntersville and Cornelius dropped their participation.
- Hosted a PowerLuncheon on Charlotte Douglas Airport Improvements.
- Hosted DOT Workshops on Huntersville exit 23 with Lake Norman EDC (Stakeholders and larger corporate members) and Exit 28 Torrence Chapel Rd improvements (Dec 14) as well as participate in community stakeholder groups on transportation projects.