

NWT Chamber has 105 members

Fort Simpson chamber refocuses

NABA prints aboriginal business directory

by **Guy Quenneville**
Northern News Services
NWT

There are several chambers of commerce spread out among many regions of the NWT.

The largest and most active chamber, the NWT Chamber of Commerce, was founded in 1973 and currently represents 865 businesses and business-people through the various community chambers.

The chamber's website indicates it has 105 direct members.

Working with community chambers of commerce, the NWT Chamber spurs initiatives to fuel the economy and ensures entrepreneurs are involved in all levels of government.

In 2010, the chamber joined the chorus of opposition to the new occupational health and safety regulations proposed by a ministerially-appointed safety advisory committee.

The chamber also kept close watch over the ongoing regulatory process for the Mackenzie Gas Project.

In October 2010, the chamber teamed up with the Northern Aboriginal Business Association to put on the triennial Prospects North conference in Yellowknife.

In 2009, the NWT Chamber successfully pushed three key NWT infrastructure developments with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, which will now lobby for those projects – as well as reforming the NWT regulatory regime – with the federal government.

The first was a call to ensure the Mackenzie Gas Project is not placed at a competitive disadvantage to other large scale energy projects by utilizing direct investment, tax breaks and/or loan guarantees.

The second promoted the completion of an all-weather highway through the Mackenzie Valley from Wrigley to Tuktoyaktuk.

The third pushed the development of various hydro-electric projects in the territory. The NWT Chamber also obtained national support for reforming the NWT's regulatory regime, seen as a barrier to investment in the NWT.

Fort Simpson

The Fort Simpson Chamber of Commerce, which has seen its membership decline in recent years, saw several residents come forward to kick-start the chamber's operations earlier this year.

At a late February meeting that attracted 15 residents of the community, six people volunteered to serve on the chamber's board of directors, while Kirby Groat was reelected as president.

Together, they came up with a list of priorities to help focus the chamber in the coming months. Among them: creating new radio ads promoting Fort Simpson as a tourist destination; launching a new web site; and updating and reissuing the town's visitors guide.

Just a month after the chamber advocated for maintenance of Highway 7 – also known as the Liard Trail and a key access point for potential development – the GNWT announced its plans to spend \$4 million on the highway trail.

Yellowknife

Started more than 60 years ago, the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce had 271 members as of earlier this year, according to its website.

Besides hosting a number of business luncheons featuring guest speakers through-

out the year, the chamber also organizes Yellowknife's Greatest Indoor Trade Show, which takes place in May at the YK Multiplex.

Approximately 8,000 people stopped by the trade show this year. The show contains more than 100 exhibitor booths.

At the chamber's 2010 banquet and awards ceremony, Danmax Communications and Tlicho Landtran Transport Ltd. won the chamber's Business of the Year and Safety Business of the Year awards, respectively.

Norman Wells

The Norman Wells and District Chamber of Commerce represents 29 members.

The chamber launched a new website in 2010, complete with member list, photo gallery, blog and calendar of upcoming events.

The chamber held its annual general meeting on April 14, during which Premier Floyd Roland gave the keynote address.

The chamber has identified the impending loss of natural gas supply as a chief concern, supplying two representatives to a town committee formed to evaluate the issues.

Hay River

The Hay River Chamber of Commerce boasts approximately 100 members.

The chamber organizes four major events every year,



Warren McLeod, head of civil engineering with Yellowknife-based FSC Architects & Engineers, was sworn in as president of the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce by Mayor Gord Van Tighem in the fall of 2010.

including the annual gala awards dinner in February, where the Alfred Mansell Citizen of the Year Award and the Customer Service Excellence Award are handed out.

This year's customer service award went to Niada Readman, a pharmacy technician at Ring's Pharmacy.

Inuvik

After several years of dormancy, the Inuvik Chamber of Commerce came back to life in late 2009.

The chamber currently boasts approximately 45 members.

In 2010, Lee Smallwood

took over as chamber president from Larry Peckford, who restarted the chamber with four others.

Smallwood said the chamber's main priorities are upping its membership numbers by 40 per cent over the next year and ensuring a stable board of directors remains at the helm.

The chamber's first-ever annual general meeting was scheduled to take place May 5.

Northern Aboriginal Business Association

After a number of fits and starts, the first chamber of commerce principally aimed

at Aboriginal-owned businesses quietly began operating last year.

The association officially launched itself at the September 2010 Prospects North conference in Yellowknife, which it co-organized with the NWT Chamber of Commerce.

It entered Prospects North with 48 members, but during the course of the three-day conference, another 30 businesses either signed up or expressed interest in joining.

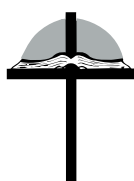
This April, the association printed the first edition of its NWT aboriginal business directory, which contains more than 300 listings.

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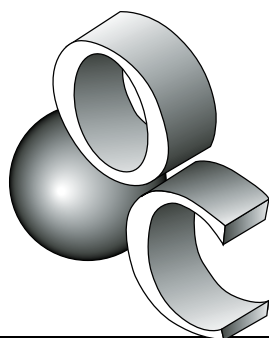
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Baffin chamber planning Northern Lights conference

Agnico-Eagle recognized by Kivalliq chamber

Kitikmeot group still finding its feet

The Baffin Regional Chamber of Commerce hosts the Nunavut Trade Show in Iqaluit every year.

by **Guy Quenneville**
Northern News Services
Nunavut

The most active chamber in Nunavut is the Baffin Regional Chamber of Com-

merce, based in Iqaluit.

It is the largest of the three regional chambers, with 130 members and an annual budget (including investments from such entities as the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency [CanNor]) ranging between \$1.2 million and \$2 million.

Earlier this year, CanNor announced just under \$94,000 in funding for the Baffin chamber.

The money is being used to market communities all across Nunavut to organizations that have yet to choose the setting for their next executive meeting, retreat or conference.

With Iqaluit already positioned as the annual mecca for the Nunavut Mining Symposium in the winter and the chamber's own Nunavut Trade Show in the fall, it's time planners consider other communities in the Kitikmeot, Kivalliq and Baffin regions, said Hal Timar, executive director of the Baffin chamber.

"If it can be done somewhere else, we'd rather see them hold it somewhere else, because somewhere else isn't getting as many as Iqaluit's already getting," said Timar.

The Baffin chamber hosts mini trade shows every two years in every Baffin community. The next one is scheduled for Igloolik this September.

In addition, every two years, the chamber partners with the Labrador North Chamber of Commerce to put on the Northern Lights Trade Show and Conference, which aims to promote the North as a land of opportunity.

The last conference, in Montreal, drew about 700 delegates and 150 exhibitors.

The next one is scheduled to take place in Ottawa on Feb. 1-4.

Kivalliq

The Kivalliq Chamber of Commerce is run by volunteers and held its last annual general meeting in March.

There, Agnico-Eagle Mines Ltd., owner of the Meadowbank gold mine, was named the Business of the Year.

The chamber's focus remains the maximization of opportunities associated with the region's robust mineral exploration industry. In addition to Meadowbank and Meliadine, the latter being a second gold project under development from Agnico-Eagle, Areva Resources Canada's Kiggavik uranium project, located 75 km west of the community, is currently undergoing an environmental assessment by the Nunavut Impact Review Board.

Kitikmeot

The Kitikmeot Chamber of Commerce was revived in 2008, but the last meeting of its members, who number approximately 25, was in 2009.

"It is active but it needs to develop and expand more," said president Wayne Solomon in mid-April. "I'm trying to get some action on that front ... I'm talking to the executives and trying to get them to pick a time and then get the funding for it and move forward."

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About 400 people attended last year's Nunavut Trade Show.