



Mission Statement

“Committed to the success of the Big Lake business community through information, communication, cooperation and support for all.”

Board of Directors

Chair: Tim Trueebenbach
Big Lake Schools 763-262-5218

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Options, Inc. 763-263-3684

Secretary: Becky Jacobs
Northstar Technology Solutions
763-262-0729

Treasurer: Scott Driscoll
Driscoll Accounting
763-221-2803

Ryan Benjamin, Edina Realty
763-339-7119

Oscar Cooper, El Teca Barber Shop
763-207-8822

Marissa McKee, Sherburne State Bank
763-271-7182

Yvonne Olderbak, Minnco Credit Union
763-552-7309

Stacey Stanley, Real Broker, LLC
763-443-1943

Executive Director: Gloria Vande Brake

info@biglakechamber.com
160 Lake Street N
P.O. Box 241, Big Lake, MN 55309
763-263-7800

Office Hours

Monday - Thursday 8:30 am - 2:30 pm
Or by appointment

GLORIA’S GEMS:

One of the more popular booths at our Community Fairs is Liberty Bank. Thanks to their postcard mailing to citizens in Big Lake and Big Lake Township, people were waiting in line to get a free large tote bag. After 300 tote bags were given away, 300 Liberty water bottles were also given away. We truly appreciate all the work and effort of our sponsors and exhibitors!



BUSINESS OF THE MONTH:

Liberty Bank Minnesota is the oldest name in banking in St. Cloud, beginning in 1933. It is also the oldest name in banking in Monticello at 32+ years. CEO Mark Bragelman noted, “while our physical location in Big Lake has only been opened for 1-1/2 years, we have been serving Big Lake residents for decades out of our Monticello and St. Cloud locations.”



“Starting in the 1930’s,” Bragelman continued, “the company was conceived as a means to finance chicken broiler barns for individuals who supplied chickens to our sister-subsiary Jack Frost, which subsequently became Gold n’ Plump Chicken. The companies became separate decades ago. People deposit money in checking and savings and those funds have always been used to provide Consumer Credit. Liberty has been one of the largest providers of mortgage credit for many decades. Over the last 20 years, for example, we provided over \$5 billion in home loans, all of them in the central part of the state.”

Big Lake Branch Manager Parker Friedman grew up with 10 siblings in Becker and graduated with an associate degree from St. Cloud State University. He has worked at Liberty Bank for 4.5 years. Big Lake has 4 full-time and 1 part-time staff. He and President Robin Gohman enjoyed giving away items to area citizens at the Community Fair in the photo above right provided by Carol Hanson of PATRIOT News.



Liberty Bank sponsors the band, Rockin Hollywoods at the first week of City of Big Lake’s Music in the Park scheduled for June 1st. Bragelman is in the blue shirt “strumming” along with the band last year in the photo taken by Corrie Scott of the City.



(continues on page 2)

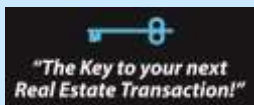
NEW MEMBERS



Real Broker LLC-Stacey Stanley knows that buying and/or selling a home is more than just the closing....it's a journey! Stacey is a long time resident of Big Lake, living and raising her family here since 1996. She has been a part of the Real Estate industry in both Mortgage and Sales for over 20 years and recently obtained her Minnesota Real Estate Broker's License.

Over the years, she has been an active volunteer and recently became a new Chamber Board member and volunteering on several Chamber committees.

Stacey's experience includes Residential New Construction Sales as well as representing both Buyers and Sellers in Residential Real Estate transactions in and around the north metro areas. From Cabins up north, to acreage and city homes she has shown over 1,000 properties in her career. She prides herself on her ability to connect with her clients...many of which become longtime friends. In addition, she feels that having excellent listening skills, a dedication to providing an exceptional customer experience, being transparent and providing full communication are all imperative essentials for a smooth transaction. She promises to work hard to be the Key to your next Real Estate transaction! You can call her at 763-443-1943 or [email her here!](#) Check out her [website here.](#)



T&J Construction is a full service licensed general contractor serving the Twin Cities Metro. We are based out of Rogers, with many members of our team living close to the Big Lake area. We are one of the few local contractors that specializes in both storm damage restoration and water mitigation. T&J has been in operation since 2017 and is co-owned by lifelong friends Nathan France and Levi Anderson. When choosing to work with us, you get an entire crew of dedicated, like-minded professionals (mostly family, ALL friends), that take a team approach to deliver a 5-STAR experience.

ROOFING
SIDING
GUTTERS
WINDOWS
WIND & HAIL DAMAGE
320-286-8528
www.TJconstructionMN.com
LIC# BC726602



Member of the Month: (continued from page 1)

Bragelman advises, "Big Lake has an exciting future because of its geography and its positive nature. People here work hard, share positive values and have pride in their community. The Big Lake Chamber represents a focal point for the variety of municipal, for-profit, and non-profit entities. It represents its own unique communication platform. Get involved. Don't be passive. If you see a need, try to fill it. Use your own experiences, skills and resources to make things the best they can be."



For Such a Time as This **FUNDRAISING BANQUET**

Furniture & Things Community Event Center
1000 School St., Elk River, MN
Thursday, May 11, 2023

5:30 pm Social Hour
6:30 pm Dinner &
Program

Private Event, Adult Only (21+)

Reservation Required
Limited Seating
No Cost to Attend

Consider Sponsoring a Table

Half Table (4 People) \$400 | Full Table (8 People) \$800

Not only is Matt Birk a Super Bowl Champion,
he is also a **Champion for Life!**

He is a 15-year veteran of the National Football
League. A former candidate for Lieutenant
Governor, Matt will **inspire, educate,** and
encourage us in these ever-changing times.

MATT BIRK
Keynote Speaker



RSVP by April 14, 2023

Online: elevier.org/rsvp

Email: event@elevier.org





BLOCK PARTY SPONSORS, VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Big Lake Block Party is scheduled for Saturday, August 19th from 10-1:30 pm at McPete's Sports Bar and Lanes. This is a great family event! For a reasonable fee, children and adults can enjoy mini-golf, bowling and many games with prizes by our sponsors. Bikes will be given away to youth who attend the event.



The Block Party Planning Committee is meeting Wednesday, April 19th at noon at McPete's to begin planning for this event and more volunteers are needed for the Committee and at the event.

Sponsors are also needed as this is one of the Chamber's largest fundraiser. Liberty Bank has already committed to being a Gold Sponsor. More information on sponsorship will be available in the next few weeks!



Big Lake
★ **FREEDOM ROCK** ★
Citizens for the Big Lake Freedom Rock

Invite you to the
FREEDOM ROCKIN' BENEFIT

Proceeds go to the canopy project



DEUCES WILD DUELING PIANOS
will provide a rockin' good time.
Enjoy music, laughter and entertainment that will take you through the decades!

Don't miss this wild and crazy event at:
The Buff in Big Lake
16722 198th Ave.
Saturday, April 22
7:30-9:30 p.m.
Limited seating - order today!



Please go online BigLakeChamber.com, scan the code or call for tickets
763 216-1630 or **763 234-0369**

Questions: kmispaulson@ids.net or blak0778@gmail.com

Buy Tickets (\$45) • Sponsor a Table • Invite Your Friends
Give "Thank You" Tickets to a Veteran • Take a Souvenir Picture in the Photo Booth

OPEN HOUSE

Monday, April 17th
4:00 - 7:00pm

WRIGHT TECHNICAL CENTER
1405 3rd Ave. NE
Buffalo, MN 55313
www.wtc.k12.mn.us





Celebrating **50 YEARS** of Career & Technical Education

Events









- Student Program Demonstrations
- Tour Student Built House
- Raffle Prizes include:
Bean Bag Boards, Fire Pit, Fishing Prize Pack & More
- Food Provided:
Hamburgers, Hot Dogs & Ice Cream

Programs at WTC

Welding • Automotive • Law Enforcement
Graphic Communications • Construction
Cosmetology • Health Science
Early Childhood & Elementary Careers
CEO • On-the-Job Training
Youth Apprenticeship

The WTC services eight member school districts in both Wright and Sherburne counties. The eight local districts include:

Turn dreary into **dreamy.**



The price of homes may have returned to earth, but with mortgage rates double what they were a year ago, buying a new home remains difficult. Stop looking for the “perfect” house and remake your current home into what you need. A **Home Equity Loan** or **Home Equity Line of Credit** from Minnco are great ways to transform your home from drab to fab. **Talk to one of our lenders, or apply online at minnco.com!**

Minnco
CREDIT UNION

613 Rose Drive
Big Lake, MN 55309
763-552-7370

Loans are subject to approval. Rates and terms are based on an evaluation of your credit and other factors. Minnco membership required. See a lender for more information.



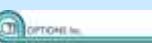
Minnesota Chamber reports businesses and employers can expect higher costs with proposed bills at the legislature:

- **\$1 billion annual payroll tax** on employers to pay for the 24-week paid leave mandate.
- Increased costs and time to comply with up to **80 hours** of fully paid sick and safe time paid leave.
- New proposed top **capital gains rate of 13.85%** would put Minnesota at the highest rate in the country.
- **Motor vehicle tab increase** from the governor by increasing the first year to 160% of the manufacturer's suggested retail price.
- **Ten new health insurance mandate** proposals in addition to the roughly 60 that are already in state statute. This list is already the second-longest in the country.
- **Utility customers would see increased costs** to pay for proposals such as EV infrastructure and rebates for electric cars, boats and planes and Electric school buses.

Chamber Mid-Session Day at the Capitol is Thursday, April 13th . Join J.Brian Calva from Beaudry Oil, Becky Jacobs from Northstar Technology Solutions and Chamber Executive Director Gloria Vande Brake as we share our concerns on bills proposed in the State House and Senate. [Email Gloria here for more information.](#)

MPR News reports that the MN Legislative Salary Panel has approved legislators receiving 7.25% higher wages starting this summer, its first increase since 2021. [Read about it here!](#)

Governor Walz's revised budget released a couple weeks ago is 25% MORE than the current two-year budget. [Read Duluth News Tribune's article here!](#)

 **Options Inc's March Newsletter encourages supporters to contact legislators** to approve Senate File 1015, known as the Best Life Alliance bill, which was heard in committee a couple weeks ago. Additional investments are needed in the Disability Waiver Rate System (DWRS). The bill addresses the shortage of staff in disability services and proposes adjustments to the state-set reimbursement rates that determine staff wages, which currently are disproportionately similar to those of our local fast-food wages. This bill will help restore community employment for persons with disabilities with staff oversight.

American Experiment reports that Shark Tank's Kevin O'Leary, aka Mr. Wonderful, and his team have partnered with North Dakota to invest \$45 million into early-stage companies. He says he isn't investing in MN or neighboring Moorhead because of MN's business policies. [Read more about it here!](#)

City of Big Lake is hosting 10 weeks of Music in the Park on Thursdays evenings from 7-8:30 pm at Lakeside Park with free parking. [Check out the bands here!](#)

SAVE THE DATE: 5th ANNUAL GOLF SCRAMBLE on Sept. 14

Dr. Scott Schulz, Chair of the Chamber's Golf Scramble Planning Committee requests "every member consider being a part of our 5th Annual Golf Scramble Sept 14th at Monticello Country Club. They can golf, sponsor a hole, donate live auction items or volunteer for the day!" More information will be coming out soon.

MARCH'S COMMUNITY FAIR HAD RECORD ATTENDANCE!

The 2023 Big Lake Community Fair's attendance of 1274 people was a 37% increase over last year and a record attendance since 2017 when 1234 area citizens attended.

The Fair also had 53 exhibitors, a 26% increase over last year. Photo at right is the Big Lake Schools booth with cosponsor Community Education Director Stephanie Hillman on left and Youth Development Coordinator Heidi Dehmer in blue.



Area citizens and families were able to watch entertainers while they enjoyed free food from Coborn's in the cafeteria. BLHS Jazz Band, Folklorico Rosa Quetzal, Evolution Tae Kwon Do and Starz Dance shared their skills.



A dozen exhibitors shared job opportunities with attendees. 10 bikes and scooter/skateboard combos were given away to excited children! Farmers Market also had 24 vendors in the atrium and hallways.

Big Lake High School Robotics students demonstrated their latest robot. Big Lake Lions provided 40

vision screenings to babies and children. Community Education provided a fun Bingo

game. Big Lake Ambassadors offered face or wrist painting. People waited

in line to get a caricatures by artist Bill Morgan, who was sponsored by Real

Broker LLC-Stacey Stanley. Citizens received massages from Great River



Spine & Sport and HealthSource Chiropractic of Elk River.

Gold and Bike Sponsors of the Fair include Big Lake Spud Fest, Insurance Specialists Team, Kwik Trip and Liberty Bank. Silver Sponsors include Casey's, Custom Doors, Edina Realty—Ryan Benjamin, FedEx Ground, HealthSource Chiropractic of Elk River, Minnco Credit Union, Realty Group-Brad & Carla Swanson, T & J Construction and Wruck Sewer & Portable Rentals. Additional Bike Sponsors include DATASuccess, Driscoll Accounting, Edina Realty-Ryan Benjamin, Premier Pontoon and T & J Construction.

Edward Jones > edwardjones.com | Member ADP



We'll help you put your financial goals at the top of your list.

To find out how to get your financial strategy on track for your family's future, contact us for a complimentary review.



Tim Suchy, AAMSSM, CRPCSM
Financial Advisor

690 Humboldt Drive Suite D
Big Lake, MN 55309
763-262-9988



July Welding Training

Train to get your welding certification in three convenient weeks! Ridgewater College is partnering with Wright Technical Center and Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services to bring you this 120-hour Welding program designed to provide entry level welding skills. We will train students to American Welding Society 1G Stick and 2F MIG certification standards.

DETAILS

Dates: July 11-29, 2022, Mon-Fri

Time: 8:00 am-5:00 pm

Location: Wright Technical Center,
1405 3rd Ave NE, Buffalo, MN 55313

Cost: \$3,450 per student

Equipment: Each student will receive a helmet, gloves, safety glasses, welding jacket, and chipping hammer/brush

REGISTER TODAY:

https://www.schoolstoday.com/public/petclass/category_id/316/program_id/34
More Info: 320-234-8538

In partnership with Central MN
Jobs & Training
Services

320-234-8538
www.ridgewater.edu/customized

TRAINING TOPICS

- Blueprint reading
- Welder set-up
- Welding equipment use and safety
- Stick welding skills
- MIG welding skills
- Welding codes
- Testing procedures
- Hands-on practice time

AWS Certification exams for 1G and 2F included - data to be determined with participants.



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Non-Profit Big Lake Women of Today's Annual Easter Egg Hunt
Saturday, April 1st 2023
Located at Lake Side Park
Suggested to arrive prior to 10:30am
Whistle is blown at 11:00 am SHARP
Suggested ages 0-10
Join us in watching children search for eggs.
Easter Bunny will also be there.
No charge for the hunt.
Monetary donations accepted to continue this fun filled day in the future years.



CITY OF BIG LAKE PRESENTS:
Movie IN THE PARK(ING) LOT
FRIDAY, MAY 19, 2023
LAKESIDE PARK
FREE ADMISSION | FIRST COME FIRST SERVED
DRIVE-IN PARKING FROM 8:00PM-9:00PM
MOVIE STARTS AT DUSK! APPROX 9:00PM
(IF INCLEMENT WEATHER, MOVIE WILL BE RESCHEDULED FOR FRIDAY, MAY 26)
CONCESSIONS ON-SITE:
SMOKIN' J'S BBQ, MISTER LEMONADE, GRAMPA STEVE'S KETTLE CORN, AND THE BIG LAKE AMBASSADORS
THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:
SHERBURNE WRIGHT CABLE COMMISSION AND BIG LAKE SPUD FEST
MORE INFO AT BIGLAKEMN.ORG



BIG LAKE GRADUATION RATES INCREASED IN 2021!



The Minnesota Department of Education has released the class of 2021's graduation rate data. The statewide graduation rate fell to 83.3%, which is a 0.5% decrease compared to the four-year graduation rate of 2020. At Big Lake Schools, the 2021 graduation rate increased to 95.3% from 90.3% in 2020.

“Our district has made tremendous progress supporting and improving education services for all students,” says Superintendent Tim Truebenbach. “The hard work and dedication of our staff and students throughout the pandemic shows with the exceptional improvements in our graduation data.”

Congratulations Big Lake Schools!



[Learn more about The Wave's building project or donate here!](#)

The graphic below was in their March newsletter. Businesses can share their story at Trade Tuesdays!



Hours: Mon 1-6p; Tues 10a-5p; Wed 1-7p; Thur 1-5p; Fri 10a-5p; Sat 10a-1p.

Join the Friends of Big Lake Library. Friends are seeking new members of any age who want to support the library. They meet the first Monday of each month at the library at 5:30 pm.

Check out our events at [here!](#)

CHILDREN EVENTS

Let's Build A Kite 4/18/2023 10:30 - noon
What's that in the sky?! Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No! It is a kite you built! Join Great River Children's Museum staff for a fun day of crafty engineering while you test out materials and build a kite you can fly! We encourage adults to join their child(ren) in all Great River Children's Museum programming to strengthen bonds and encourage the joy of play together. For ages 4 and up. Reg. required. Limit 15.

TEENS & ADULT EVENTS

Uncovering and Saving History 4/4/2023 5:30 pm
Travel with Minnesota historian Doug Ohman as he chronicles lost relics and history. With the use of simple tools (a metal detector and camera), Doug has respectfully recovered and photographed artifacts that help us reconnect to our past. He will share his experiences, photos, stories and actual relics that will bring local history to life. This program was made possible with Arts & Cultural Heritage Funds from Minnesota's Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment. Reg. Req.

Tech Tuesday for Seniors 4/4/2023 11-noon
Want to read an eBook on a tablet or take a practice driving test? Stop in and learn how to use the digital library or other online library resources. Staff will have three 20-minute sessions available. Call the library to register for your timeslot. For ages 55 and up.




Due to circumstances out of our control, we are postponing CLIMB Programming at this time. We are excited to have them back in April and May. Mark your calendars for April 20th and 27th, May 4th, 11th, 17th, 25th and 31st. This hour-long interactive, arts-integrated program will strengthen and exercise students' accountability, resiliency, empathy, advocacy, and self-regulation skills. CLIMB's programming allows participants to explore real-life situations delivered and facilitated by CLIMB Resident Artists.








Several Chamber Members have been nominated in *Minnesota's Best Winners Magazine* : Ace Solid Waste (under Services and then Waste Disposal/Recycling), Edina Realty, Great River Library Service (under Services and Public Libraries), Jeddelloh Snyder Stommes (under Defense Lawyer, Family Law and Law Firm), Minnco Credit Union (under Services and then Credit Unions and Real Estate and then Home Mortgage), RE/MAX Results, RE/MAX Results-Liz Fagen (under Real Estate and then Residential RE agent), Riverwood Bank (under Real Estate and then Home Mortgage, Services and then Ag Banking and Services and then Banks), and The Wave Youth Center (under Services and Non-Profits). You can vote daily for your favorite in a variety of categories through April 5th. Winners will be featured in the magazine inserted in the Sunday, Aug 13th Star Tribune. [Vote here!](#)


 **Wright Tech Construction Trades** is accepting the highest offer on their student-built house. Call 763-682-4112 for more information.

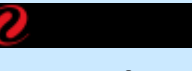
 **Big Lake Ambassadors' fundraiser** with silent auction and pancake breakfast is April 15th from 9-1 pm at Pizza Ranch Monticello.

 **Carefree Country Club** invites local businesses, non-profits and governmental units to join their 4th of July parade on July 1st with lineup at 11:30 and parade starting time at noon. The Sherburne County Sheriff's Department horse patrol heads up the parade. The Big Lake American Legion and Auxiliary march. The route is about 3/4 mile long and the spectators and kids are excited to see everything! Some of the entrants drive their cars or decorated golf carts; others walk the route holding signs or a banner. They may throw candy or prizes. Everyone is met with great enthusiasm at Carefree. To register call Activity Director Ruthie Neuman at 715-441-4883.

 **Sovran is hosting** a seminar on "Experience the Future of Networking with Cisco Meraki & Sovran" at their office in Eagan on April 27 from 11:30-1 pm. For more information and to register, [check it out here!](#)

 **Sherburne County Economic Development** is offering a seminar for startup and small businesses on available resources May 10 from 10-1 pm in the Maple Room of the Sherburne County Government Center in Elk River. Presenters include an attorney, banker and other finance options. Email Jessica [here](#) to register or for more information .

 **City of Big Lake is seeking sponsors** for its Summer Farmers Market. [Email Corrie here](#) for more information.

 **Stay informed on Xcel Energy 's shutdown on its nuclear plant** in Monticello to fix its tritium leak [here!](#)

It's time to get **real** About Real Estate

If you're thinking of BUYING or SELLING, let ME be the "Key to your next Real Estate transaction"!

763-443-1943
 Isellwithstacey@gmail.com
 www.realadvisers.net

 STACEY Stanley REALTOR ASSOCIATE









April's Business After Hours

April's Business after Hours is scheduled for 5 pm on Thursday, Apr. 13th at a location to be determined. Please [register here](#) by 3 pm on the 9th to save enough room! Members who attend can win prizes from the Network Box.

Attend our Meetings to Win Prizes!

At every Business after Hours and Membership Meeting, 2 names are drawn from our Network Box containing all of our members. At our February membership meeting, Primo Pizza Owner David won the prizes at the February membership meeting. All who are present while their name is called will win prizes valued at over \$400 which include:

- \$10 Gift Certificate
- 
- FREE Drink
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

Lunch Cooler and more

\$30 Gift Card

More prizes are welcome!

April 25th Membership Meeting

Our **April Membership Meeting** will be held Tuesday, April 25th at Lupulin Brewing at 11:30 am. Attorney Lukas Belflower from Smith, Paulson, O'Donnell & Erickson will speak on noncompete agreements.

[Please register here](#) by 3 pm Thursday, April 20th.

Photo below includes some of the City of Big Lake staff who spoke at a packed room at our March 28th Membership Meeting. At left is City Engineer Layne Otteson, Recreation and Communications Coordinator


Corrie Scott, Planner Lucinda Spanier and Big Lake Police Department Chief John Kaczmarek.



Newsletter Tidbits Due

Want to include something in the Chamber Newsletter? Send us a 1/4 page ad or a few sentences to include in the next bimonthly's newsletter by May 5th. Full page ads can be added for only \$25 per month. Are you a new member? Ask the Chamber how to redeem your free full page ad!

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

			March 1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9 Community Fair Mtg 11:30 Business after Hours 5 pm McPete's	10	11
12	13	14 Board Mtg 12:30 Willy's and virtually	15	16	17	18 Community Fair. 10-1 BLHS
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28 Membership Mtg 11:30 BLPD	29 Golf Scramble Mtg noon Trail's	30	31	APRIL 1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 Board Meeting 12:30 TBD & virtu- ally	12	13 Chamber Day at Capitol Business after Hours 5 pm. Regis- ter here!	14	15
16	17	18	19 Block Party Mtg noon McPete's	20	21	22 Freedom Rockin Benefit. Buy tickets here!
23	24	25 Membership Meeting 11:30. Register here	26	27	28	29
30	May 1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 Board Meeting 12:30 Wil- ly's and virtually	10 Sherburne Co Econ. Dev. Re- sources. 10-1	11 Ambassadors noon Willy's Business after Hours 5 pm	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29 	30 Legislative Membership Meet- ing 11:30 Style Ca- tering. Register here!				

Mark Your Calendar!

August 19 from 10-1:30 Block Party



Sept 14 starting at 10 am Golf Scramble

