

## FIRST DOLLAR



### The Hydro Hutt

Congratulations to Mason Burgess, owner of The Hydro Hutt in Atwater on his First Dollar with the Chamber Ambassadors! Celebrating alongside him are his mother Stefanie Burgess and girlfriend and business associate Ava Grace Venstad. Mason discovered his passion for hydroponics in Michigan and turned his hobby into a business after returning to Minnesota, where the growing season is even shorter. The Hydro Hutt offers hydroponic equipment for indoor and outdoor cultivation, plus expert consultations to help you grow fresh produce, plants, or veggies year-round. Pictured representing the Chamber: Kami Anez (Anez Consulting), Amber Barber (320 Real Estate Co), Chamber President James Miller, Jesse Hulscher (TerWisscha Construction, Inc.), Dave Feist (TPI Hospitality), Fernando Alvarado (FIAFOTO), Renee Nolting (West Central Industries), and Amanda Erickson (Lake Region Bank).

## RIBBON CUTTING



### PWELC Nature Preschool

Congratulations to Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center on the ribbon cutting of their Nature Preschool located in the Westby Observatory! The preschool offers a nature-based outdoor playspace, an engaging indoor classroom, and hands-on learning experiences that inspire children to love and respect nature. Celebrating with the Preschool Director Hannah Stelley and teachers are City of Spicer Mayor Robin de Cathelineau, Chamber Ambassadors or Board members Caroline Chan (Kandiyohi County), Brittany VanDerBill (B. VanDerBill Consulting), Amber Barber (320 Real Estate Co), Jesse Hulscher (TerWisscha Construction, Inc.), Chamber President James Miller, Dave Feist (TPI Hospitality), Alana Ziehl (Kandiyohi County Food Shelf), and Amanda Erickson (Lake Region Bank).

## CHAMBER CHAT

THURSDAY MORNINGS @ 10:00AM  
With Chamber President James Miller



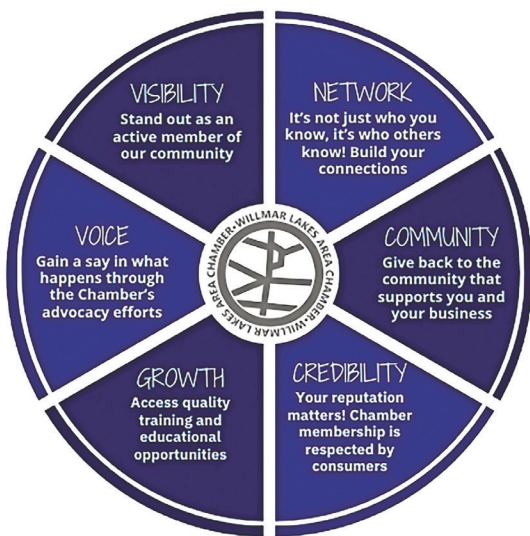
Thursday mornings on Open Mic, Chamber President James Miller hosts Chamber Chat. Recordings are available on KWLM's website or on Spotify. Representatives from Furniture Plus Décor and More, United Way, and North Risk Partners were featured in February.

## BUSINESS EDUCATION NETWORK



The Willmar Senior High School welcomed the Business Education Network Advisory Board, Willmar Community Education, Ridgewater College Customized Training and Continuing Education, and PACT for Families during Zero Hour last month. Students explored career opportunities, picked up a few juggling tips while learning about Community Education programs, and drove remote control semis through an obstacle course while learning about the CDL classes offered in partnership with Ridgewater and WPS. Zero Hour is the first hour every Wednesday for students to catch up on tests or missing work. Those that do not have work to catch up on are in the commons area until classes start. This provides the opportunity to showcase all the fantastic businesses in the Willmar Lakes Area.

## WHY INVEST IN THE CHAMBER?



## CHAMBER WELCOMES KCEO



The Willmar Lakes Area Chamber was thrilled to host KCEO students, offering insights into how we connect businesses, build community, and advocate for success. Key takeaways for these future entrepreneurs: Know your "why" in business, be persistent and follow through on your promises, keep learning and accept challenges as opportunities for growth.

## MEMBERSHIP MILESTONE



20 YEARS

### Country Inn & Suites by Radisson and TPI Hospitality

Congratulations and thank you to the team at Country Inn & Suites by Radisson and TPI Hospitality on 20 years of membership! Looking for a comfortable stay in the Willmar Lakes Area? Country Inn & Suites is perfect for both business and leisure! Enjoy a peaceful work environment, indoor pool with a waterslide, and family-friendly fun. Need a venue for a special event? Reserve the pool and waterslide for kids' parties! Pictured representing the Country Inn Team and the Chamber Board and/or Diplomats Committee: Randy Johnson, Tracy Lundy (Lake Region Bank), Kelly Schley, Jessica Hanson (Willmar Hypnosis), Jeff Martinka (United Prairie), Carla Kahle-Miller (Design West Ltd), Jesse Chavez, Allen Hjelle, Amber Sturges, Lisa Oatley, Paula Jones, Caryl Paulsen, Jonna Zeiner, Andrew Kveene (Edward Jones), Kevin McGraw, Chamber President James Miller, Terri Wood (Woody's Trucking Inc.), Nick Baker, Greg Blasius, Lexi Kopacek (Christianson PLLP), Suzanne Hass (Allstate Insurance), and David Feist.

## NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

**Equine Inspired Soul**  
Tanya Dingmann  
(320) 492-7802  
Belgrade, MN

**Perry Custom Designs LLC**  
Demetrius Perry  
(901) 350-3078  
Willmar, MN

**Door Pro**  
Tige Sluka  
(320) 354-3667  
New London, MN