

Chamber of Commerce helping put Bancroft on the map



By Nate Smelle

General manager of the Bancroft and District Chamber of Commerce (BDCC) Greg Webb, said there is a lot to look forward to in 2015 for those in the business community. Now in his second year in the position he is excited to continue helping business thrive in the district.

"My mandate as a general manager is to help any business that's out there," said Webb.

"Now of course, with us being member-centric obviously I want you to be a member of ours because we can even help you further with offering you some benefits that can help your business."

Webb was recently elected to the board of directors of the Chamber Executives of Ontario (CEO). The CEO is a professional development association for the senior management and membership development/sales staff of Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade in Ontario. Speaking with his fellow association members about their business communities he said he realizes how much of an opportunity there is for business in the Bancroft area. He has also realized how many businesses face the same challenges in other communities. In his time as general manager at the BDCC Webb said that one of the challenges he has faced is educating people about how the chamber can help them do business.

"People really need to understand what a chamber is," he said.

"We are here to be your voice, so if you're having any challenges with your business, whether it's with advocacy, or government or anything, we want them to feel that they can come to us. We might not necessarily have the answer or the resolution, but I can certainly point them in the direction to where they can go to find some answers."

Membership at the BDCC comes with benefits, says Webb. He has initiated three new projects in 2015 aiming to improve business for chamber members. The first of these Webb calls Biz After Biz. These are a series of member-centred networking events held at various locations in the community. Designed to bring members together, these events help build a stronger and better connected business community. The next project to hit the road in 2015 courtesy of the BDCC is its Mobile Chamber of Commerce. Webb plans to tour the retrofitted motorhome/travelling office/marketing campaign/parade float throughout the district stopping at members' businesses, special events and attractions. It will also be serving as a coffee truck hosting the chamber's Thursday morning coffee club at a different location in the district each month. He has even covered these trucks with [motorhome breakdown insurance policies](#) so that members and their activities are not affected in cases of adversities such as a breakdown.

"I want our members to know that if they have something going on-a fair, a market or an call the chamber and book the Mobile Chamber of Commerce," Webb said.

"We will bring it out and park it at your event; we will set up the awning and have our information out, have a pot of coffee or a jug of lemonade on the go. It's just our presence."

Also new at the BDCC is the Artisan's Junction. The Artisans' Junction will be a permanent store for artisans to promote and sell their creations. Through this initiative the BDCC intends to help make the area's resident artisans more successful and profitable. The Artisans' Junction will provide a centralized art space at The Old Train Station in Bancroft showcasing a diverse collection of artisans for shoppers seeking unique, quality artisan items to choose from.

The BDCC again plans to liven up the downtown with the 52nd annual Rockhound Gemboree. In early May the chamber will also launch its visitor information guide entitled, Destinations. The 100 page guide will feature information regarding tourist attractions in the Bancroft area, as well as a members' directory and a new accommodations directory. The Nature Discovery Tours will also be returning again in 2015 beginning on April 4 with the Elk Tour. For Information contact the Bancroft and District Chamber of Commerce at 613-332-1513 or visit bancroftdistrict.com.