

Chamber of commerce opens satellite office in Whitney



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By Nate Smelle

For many years now, the Bancroft and District Chamber of Commerce has supported businesses in 14 municipalities within six counties. Three years ago, the chamber's general manager Greg Webb began looking for ways to expand the services they offer beyond their corporate headquarters in downtown Bancroft by opening a series of satellite offices. In 2017 Webb said the Chamber opened its first satellite office – a shared space with Re/Max in downtown Coe Hill.

Recently, the Chamber of Commerce opened a second satellite office in downtown Whitney. On Thursday, June 26 members of the local business community including many long-time Chamber members, along with members of DNSSAB, local municipal staff of council, businesses owners and friends converged on the new office at 9 Post Street for its official Grand Opening. Webb said the event was also a celebration of the new partnership between the Chamber of Commerce and the District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board, that they will be sharing the space with. With his sight set on the future, he is excited by the many opportunities the new office and partnership will foster throughout the local business community.

“We have a number of members in Bancroft, but we have equally as many members in the district,” said Webb.

“We have established this very unique and exciting partnership, and being able to share this beautiful building is going to be a really great opportunity. Not only for the area, but also for us and the businesses we bring to the table.”

Situated on the edge of Algonquin Park, the satellite office is also home to the South Algonquin Welcome Centre. As a tourism operator, member of South Algonquin Township council, and one of the main organizers of the annual Black Fly Festival, Councillor “Bongo” Mike Kalimin recognizes the value of the Chamber's presence in the community. Before singing a song he wrote titled “I never want to leave South Algonquin,” he told the group about why he and his wife decided to move to the township and live their dream.

“We have been here four years now and we couldn't be happier,” said Kalimin.

“This is our rural dream. With the Chamber of Commerce here now and the business association I think the message is getting out that South Algonquin is a great place to do business.”

Before the ribbon cutting ceremony to officially open the new space, Webb thanked those in attendance for their contribution to the Chamber and the local business community. He said he is thrilled to have opened the new location and is looking forward to many years of welcoming visitors to South Algonquin along with supporting the success of the local businesses and Chamber members. He also indicated that the Chamber and municipality are applying for various support resources in hope to bring on and hire local members of the community to work in the Welcome Centre. Webb said there are always opportunities for members of the business community and the public to get involved with the Chamber by volunteering helping out at the Welcome Centre.

For further information about the Bancroft and District Chamber of Commerce, or to become a member, contact general manager Greg Webb at gregwebb@bancroftdistrict.com.