



Representatives of the Perham Area Chamber of Commerce met at Thumper Pond April 15, and toured the resort, much of which is under construction. Thumper owner Verle Blaha is in the process of assembling his management team, which to date includes a marketing director, food-beverage manager, and golf director Tom Beaudry, at left.

Perham Chamber members tour Thumper Pond

continued from front

Ottertail lake country doesn't market itself with an area strategy, tourists will choose other vacation spots – Duluth, Brainerd lakes area or Disneyland.

Thumper Pond will be doing its part to bring visitors to the area, said Blaha. It will be an absolute necessity for Thumper Pond to market regionally because Blaha will need to have the 78 rooms filled 50 percent of the time to break even.

"This isn't just Ottertail or just Thumper Pond, this is a destination area," said Blaha. When his rooms are filled, retail and restaurant business throughout the area will benefit.

"My hope is that this endeavor widens our retail corridor," said Perham retailer Sarah Hayden.

A regional "identity," a "brand name," for Otter Tail County's 1,200 lakes will be a priority

for marketing, noted Thorup.

Within a month, Perham and Ottertail will be notified whether or not the communities won the bid for the 2006 Minnesota Governor's Fishing Opener, noted Blaha. Hosting a Governor's Opener is a major undertaking that will require combined resources, unity and collaboration between both communities.

Ottertail and Perham are already working cooperatively to promote golf, said Tom Beaudry, Thumper's director of golf. He and Perham Lakeside's golf director, Nick Anderson are discussing dual promotions and golf-lodging packages.

"We're committed to building better relationships with surrounding communities," said Thorup.