



The Link

Volume 6, Issue 1 January-March 2015

The link to your Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce

Annual dinner to honor Judy Stinemetz, Riverside Rentals

On Tuesday, 31 March, One-Eyed Jack's in downtown Winamac will play host to the Chamber's 2015 banquet. Chamber Executive Director Angie Anspach will provide a year-in-review report, and the Chamber will have the great honor of recognizing local resident Judy Stinemetz, latest worthy recipient of the H.J. Halleck Community Service Award, and Dave and Connie Scott of Riverside Rentals, Organization of the Year.

Established in 1979 to honor beloved physician and civic leader Dr. H.J. Halleck, the award is presented annually to a citizen, nominated by a member of the community and selected by a Chamber committee featuring a member of the Halleck family, who exemplifies Dr. Halleck's model of putting service before self.

Mrs. Stinemetz, a well-known face in the courthouse in

the run-up to elections, worked for nearly three decades at Pulaski Memorial Hospital before retiring. She continues to support the hospital, Pulaski County Human Services, and numerous other organizations.

Riverside Rentals, a business that every year brings nearly as many persons into Pulaski County as reside here, plays a significant role in our tourism economy, and in so doing exposes this fair community to numerous visitors who otherwise may never experience the many charms of Pulaski County life.

Congratulations to Judy, and to Dave and Connie!

Contact Director Anspach at 574-270-0016, 574-946-6123, or anspaca@epulaski.k12.in.us for more information or to order tickets, which cost \$22. We hope to see you there!

Board reorganizes; other changes underway

The Chamber Board reorganized for the year in January. Judy Heater, who last year served as co-vice-president, and then as interim president, accepted the nod to chair the board; her second-in-command is Sharon McKinley. Nathan P. Origer and Amy Jo Cantu continue as secretary and treasurer, respectively. Mashell Roudebush has stepped up to fill the new role of membership liaison.

Over the last couple of months, a few new faces have come on board. Lisa Brady of Alliance Bank, Kasi Decker, Laurie Henry of Good Oil Co., and Mike Kasten of One-Eyed Jack's join the five officers mentioned above, as well as Becky Bischoff, Chris Ford, Gavin Ford, Aaron Paulsen, Robin Scott, and Lisa Traylor-Wolff.

In order to align membership terms and dues with budgeting, the Chamber year has been switched from March-February to the calendar year. Nomination and election of new board members will occur electronically, with officer positions to be filled at the January meeting. A committee has been established to review and to update the organization's bylaws.

Board meetings, **which are open to all Chamber members**, have been moved, on a trial basis, to noon ET on the third Wednesday of each month. We hope to see you!

Rep. Walorski staff hours

Have a concern about a piece of federal legislation? Do you know someone who is struggling to receive, or even to apply for, benefits earned in the military, through disability, or by some other manner? Want to make your voice heard? Well, there's an easy way!

Jackie Walorski (R-Jimtown), U.S. Representative from Indiana's Second District, has staff office hours every month in Winamac. Walk-ins are always welcome, but appointments can be scheduled in advance.

Brian Spaulding, General Counsel and Field Representative for Rep. Walorski, sets up shop in the Winamac Municipal Utilities Complex, 623 West Eleventh Street, on the last Monday of every month from 1:00p.m. until 4:00p.m. ET. Upcoming dates include 30 March, 27 April, 18 May, and 29 June; Mr. Spaulding can be reached at 574-780-1330 or Brian.Spaulding@mail.house.gov.

News You Can Use

Small-business help is just up the road

Have a great idea for a new business, but not sure if you're ready to take the plunge? Prepared to get moving, but not sure where to start? Maybe you want to take your existing venture to the next level. Whatever the case, the Northwest Indiana Small Business Development Center (ISBDC) is here to help — usually at no cost.

Though headquartered in Crown Point, ISBDC has a business advisor located next door in Knox. Ron Gifford, who manages special projects for the Starke County Economic Development Foundation and oversees the SCILL Center, also provides one-on-one services to entrepreneurs in Pulaski and Starke Counties — and if he lacks the specific expertise that you need, then he'll find a colleague who can help you.

To utilize Mr. Gifford's services, simply visit <http://www.isbdc.org/> and click the "Apply to be a Client" tab to the left of the screen. Once you've completed a short assessment, Mr. Gifford will be apprised of your interest and contact you. He's usually able to meet you in Winamac to save you a trip, too!

In addition to one-on-one services, ISBDC hosts business-development workshops; those held in Pulaski County are typically sponsored by the Pulaski County Community Development Commission (CDC) as a service to the community. Last fall, a "Launch Your Own Business" workshop took place at the Pulaski County Public Library in Winamac. An interactive business-plan workshop is tentatively scheduled for late April in the Purdue Extension - Pulaski County computer lab, and plans are underway for a business-marketing workshop after that.

For more information, check out the ISBDC Website or contact CDC Executive Director Nathan P. Origer at nporiger@pulaskionline.org or 574-946-3869.

How Loyalty Programs Can Attract New Customers

Excerpted from American Express OPEN

by Phaedra Hise, American Express OPEN contributor

Restaurants have more than doubled their loyalty program membership over the last two years, according to the 2015 Colloquy Loyalty Census. Small-business owner Mehul Patel joined the trend by experimenting with program options for his Austin, Texas-based coffee shop, Dominican Joe. [...]

Today the shop has 15 employees and is nearing \$1 million in annual revenues. [...] Patel could see that the key to success was attracting, and then retaining, new customers. But what is the most effective way for small businesses to use a loyalty program?

The Challenge

Patel knew that low customer turnover is more cost-effective than constantly investing in attracting new ones. "The problem with [daily deal website] programs is that people come in once, but there's no way for us to know if they ever come in again," he says. [...]

Dominican Joe tried paper punch cards[...] "Customers liked them," he says. "But they didn't get a lot of usage and it was a hassle for employees." Patel had no objective way to track repeat business. The punch cards also limited Dominican Joe to offering a single reward—10 punches for a free drink, for example. Patel wanted more options and personalization.

Next, he experimented with a custom loyalty app designed by a local entrepreneur. "Customers had zero interest in that," Patel says. [...]

Ideally, Patel wanted a program to attract new customers and convert them into steady clientele. "If we have the choice of getting one new customer who comes every week, we would rather have that than 20 new customers who only come once," he says.

The Solution

In the summer of 2012, Patel was approached by [Belly](#), which specializes in small-

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News You Can Use

Could the right loyalty program be right for your business?

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business digital loyalty initiatives. Patel planned to use the free trial period, but he found that Belly answered most of his needs.

To use it, customers tap their phones on a Belly-provided iPad in-store to sign up and earn credits for visiting the store. If a customer has earned a reward, it appears on the iPad for customers to select and redeem.

[...]

The Results

Patel estimates he pays about \$50 per month, then additional per-redemption fees for Belly Bites promotions. “That makes it manageable,” he says. “So in slower months we target more customers, and in busier months we do less.”

Over the past two and a half years, Belly Bites promotions have earned Dominican Joe 56,000 “impressions” from people viewing the offers, with 1,062 of those marking an offer for later redemption. Of those, 138 actually redeemed the Bites promotions, and those new customers returned for a total of 165 more visits.

[...]

To read the whole article, visit <https://www.americanexpress.com/us/small-business/openforum/articles/loyalty-programs-can-attract-new-customers-small-business/>.

Member Updates

Ancilla College announces new residence hall

DONALDSON – With beds for approximately 100 students, Ancilla College is delighted to announce a state-of-the-art residence hall will be ready for students beginning the 2015-16 school year.

“This project will help us reach students from a wider area, previously unavailable for a commuter campus,” said Dr. Ken Zirkle, president. “We are proud to bring our mission of empowering lifelong learners to our new programs, expanded athletic teams and safe campus.”

Preliminary plans for the building include housing for 100 new students and a live-in dean and student services director, Zirkle said. Floor plans are being drawn now to possibly include a teaching kitchen for a new hospitality/culinary program.

“From parent and student feedback we know that Ancilla College’s mission-driven environment is exactly what many students and parents want,” said Vice President of Enrollment Management Eric Wignall. “Ancilla’s student-teacher ratio of 10-to-1 is the best in Indiana. We don’t have impersonal lecture halls or teaching assistants. At Ancilla instructors lead small,

personal classes where you get face-to-face feedback and help,” he said.

Ancilla is Indiana’s only two-year private college. It is dedicated to hands-on assistance to help each student graduate, Zirkle said. The safe, rural campus provides just the environment to really learn and graduate with an associate’s degree that will transfer students to a four-year institution with ease or ready them for the workplace, giving them an edge over their coworkers.

“These dorms are not only going to help more students find Ancilla as a home, they will also bring jobs to the area,” said Mike Brown, chief financial officer. “It’s a win-win for the college and surrounding communities.”

The Ancilla College campus is part of the Center at Donaldson. The Center includes: MoonTree Studios, the Catherine Kasper Life Center, Lindenwood Retreat and Conference Center, the Ancilla Beef and Grain Farm and Earthworks Environmental Education – all ministries are sponsored by the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ.

“We pride ourselves on hiring top notch

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Member Updates

Ancilla College growing for the better of all

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instructors who want to work here because they believe every person can be educated,” said Dr. Joanna F. Blount, vice president of academic and student affairs. “Our faculty and staff go the extra step to help a student learn.”

Zirkle said he is particularly proud of the school’s nursing program with a 90 percent NCLEX pass rate and is encouraged by the addition in 2015 of women’s golf and soccer teams.

Francis Ellert, chairman of the Ancilla Board of Trustees said, “I believe this is a history

day for Ancilla College to allow us to move forward in higher education. This is a huge decision and a really exciting one for our little world in Donaldson.”

Look for more information on groundbreaking in March with artist’s renderings to come as early as the end of December.

Ancilla College (<http://www.ancilla.edu>) is a Catholic, liberal arts, Associate’s Degree college in Donaldson, Indiana, sponsored by the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ.

Local Landscaping Businesses Partner to form Proscapes!

WINAMAC, IN - JP Lawncare and Indiana Outdoor Living recently announced the merger of their individual landscaping and lawn care businesses to form a new entity: Proscapes Unlimited LLC. The partnership evolved from co-owners Jason Potthoff and Reese Shidler’s desire to combine complementary professional services and provide a premium customer experience.

Specializing in landscape and hardscape construction for residential and commercial property owners, Proscapes creates attractive, custom design solutions that enhance outdoor spaces. Additionally, Proscapes are fully-licensed irrigation system installers, exterior lighting

designers, and complete lawn care specialists.

Potthoff noted, “Reese and I are very focused on providing innovative solutions and exceptional customer care. We’re very excited about everything Proscapes can offer.” Shidler concurred, “It’s an ideal match. We’re blending two talented teams with a reputation in the area for innovation and excellence.”

For more information, or to schedule Proscapes services, stop by their 200 North Monticello Street, Winamac office, or call 574-946-5530.

Media Contact: Concepts Marketing
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Historical Society Annual Meeting

Learn about William Polke, an early northwestern-Indiana leader who helped to birth Winamac; start the celebration of Indiana’s bicentennial and hear from René Stanley from the Bicentennial Commission; and enjoy hot drinks, cookies, and great conversation at the annual meeting of the Pulaski County Historical Society at 6:00p.m. on Thursday, 19 March, at the Vurpillat Opera House in downtown Winamac.

Winter Wonderland thanks

In early December, the Chamber sponsored another wonder-filled Winter Wonderland, with musical acts, arts and crafts, a visit from the Clauses, a parade, and more. None of this could have happened without the many financial supporters and great volunteers who gave time, talent, and treasure to this great event. Director Anspach, on behalf of the Chamber board, Chamber members, and community offers her deep gratitude to all of our wonderful supporters!

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