Chamber Holds Annual Luncheon Meeting, Election & Awards

The LaGrange County Chamber of Commerce held its 2019 Annual Luncheon Meeting, Election and Awards on January 15th at the Blue Gate Performing Arts Center. Beth Sherman, Executive Director of the Chamber welcomed attendees and acknowledged sponsors, staff and volunteers.

Bill Konyha, President and CEO of the Regional Chamber of Northeast Indiana, gave the keynote address. Konyha focused on the importance of collaboration, early child education, broadband and advocating polices that strengthen the business environment of NE Indiana.

After the keynote speech, Sherman announced the winners of local Chamber awards. Director of the Year Award went to Mike Patka, Ambassador of the Year to Laurie Eash, Chamber Member of the Year to Interra Credit Union and the Teacher of the Year to Westview Teacher, Krystal Booth. Outgoing Director, Jordi Disler along with Sheldon Shrock and Anu Sahni were given awards for their service to the Board. LaGwana was the Showcase winner.

Elected to serve on the Board of Directors were: Sabrina Penick, Horizon Bank; Keith James, Indigo Web Services and Ben Stuckey, LaGrange First Church of God. Re-elected to serve on the board was Ervin Miller, E&S Wood Creations.

February Luncheon to be held at Fireside Burgers & Brews

Sponsored by Glen Oaks Community College

The monthly luncheon of the LaGrange County Chamber of Commerce, sponsored by Glen Oaks Community College will take place on February 13th at Fireside Burgers & Brew in LaGrange, Indiana.

The guest speaker will be Kristi Smith, founder and CEO of Evolvable. Kristi is passionate about inspiring others to learn the proven steps to finding balance in an unbalanced world.

Fireside Burgers & Brew will be serving "Moo & Oink" Burger Bar featuring Fresh Beef Burger Patties with Bacon & House-Smoked Pulled Pork, House Mac & Cheese, Signature Broccoli Salad, House Cheesecake Bites and drinks

For reservations, phone the Chamber at 260-463-2443 or email info@lagrangechamber.org.
Cost of the luncheon is $12.00 for members and guests, $17.00 for non-members.

Monthly Luncheon
Sponsored by: Glen Oaks Community College

February 13th
Fireside Burgers & Brews
101 S. Detroit St. LaGrange, IN 46761

Registration begins at 11:15 a.m.
Luncheon begins at 12:00 p.m.
Reservations due by February 10th
The Chamber News is a member publication and is distributed free of charge to businesses in LaGrange County and surrounding areas. Advertising in the Chamber News is available only to Chamber members who invest in the business community by supporting the Chamber.
New Members

Bender Automotive Inc.
Ryan Bender
(260) 336-0562
1960 S 600 W
Topeka, IN 46571
benderautomotiveinc@gmail.com

Highfield Manor Bed & Breakfast
Christina Lehman
(260) 585-0235
2265 W 175 N
LaGrange, IN 46761
hmanorbnb@gmail.com

Empire Electrical & Heating
Christine Warner
260-214-0728
102 Lovette St
Wolcottville, IN 46795
Www.empireelectricandheating

Engage Business Solutions
Scott Kerchner
260-383-4084
www.engagesolutions.biz

Shetler Roofing & Construction
James Shetler
0820 S 200 E
LaGrange, IN 46761
260-336-0735
www.shetlerroofingandconstruction.com

Welcome to the Chamber

Glen Oaks Community College
16 Associate Degrees/18 Certificate Degrees
On-Campus Housing
Online/Evening Programs
Open-Entry/Open-Exit Program
Dual Enrollment/Early Middle College/CTE
Glen Oaks Community College is a quality provider of education programs serving the needs of residents and businesses of St. Joseph County and beyond. The College, established in 1965, sits on 320 acres of land in rural Centreville, Michigan. GOCC offers 16 associate degree programs and 18 certificate programs. The student-to-faculty ratio of 20:1 affords students personal attention and provides opportunities to for them to accomplish their goals and grow and succeed in a supportive, ethical and academic environment.
More Value in the Long Run

Your Dollars Go Further with PHP
As the only not-for-profit health insurance company in Northern Indiana, PHP knows Indiana’s business environment. Our 1,500+ business clients include various industries such as restaurants, law firms, family businesses, and construction companies; large to small—across the state. We understand local economics and can work in partnership with you to bring value to your bottom line. And, through the PHP Foundation, we invest any profit back into the communities we serve.

More value in the long run—consider PHP. Learn more at phni.com/considerPHP
LaGrange County Community Foundation Purchases New Headquarters

The LaGrange County Community Foundation acquired property on December 30 which, by the end of 2020, will become the new headquarters for the Foundation.

“We are thrilled to be able to increase the visibility and accessibility of the Community Foundation,” said Neal Wolheter, Board President. “We had been setting aside funds for several years, which allowed us to purchase the property using available cash – no mortgage was required.”

A portion of the cost of the building was funded using a gift the Foundation received at the beginning of 2019. The remainder of the cost was funded using cash that had been set aside several years for this purpose.

The property, located at the intersection of US 20 and 250 W, contains over 4,000 square feet of space along with a parking lot of 6,000 square feet. The Community Foundation expects to move into the new property sometime in the second half of 2020.

In addition to reduced operating costs, the new building will be more accessible to elderly and disabled patrons. While the current Community Foundation headquarters is on the third floor of a building, at the new location all of the office space is on the same level and easily accessible using a ramp.

“Greater visibility, lower costs and enhanced accessibility were the deciding factors,” said Octavia Yoder, Executive Director of the Community Foundation. “Plus, the fact that we could finance the purchase without debt meant that this will be a great step forward and help the Community Foundation grow and prosper in the coming years.”

The Community Foundation plans to sell their existing property, located at 109 E. Central Avenue. They hope that the sale of that property could be part of larger downtown development efforts in LaGrange.
Ambassadors Welcome Engage Business Solutions To Chamber

The LaGrange County Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors welcomed Engage Business Solutions to the Chamber with a greeting at the Chamber office.

Business owners, Scott and Ann Kerchner explained their twenty year technology experience and how they have now taken that knowledge to start their own business.

Engage Business Solutions does more than just solve computer problems; they combine technology and small business consulting to develop technology solutions to fit your business needs.

Printing, Security, Video Conferencing, Network Performance and Security, E-mail Issues, Storage Solutions, Backups, Archives, Business Continuity Planning, WiFi issues are just a partial list of the services Engage Business Solutions can provide your business technology needs.

Engage Business Solutions, LLC has the knowledge, the expertise, and the willingness to help your small business through challenging times. Give them a call today at (260) 383-4084 to schedule a FREE initial consultation.

Highfield Manor Bed & Breakfast Joins Chamber Membership

A home away from home, Highfield Manor Bed & Breakfast joined the LaGrange County Chamber of Commerce. Ambassadors recently welcomed them to the Chamber and were given a tour of the beautiful five bedroom home.

Owners Clarence & Christina Lehman always enjoyed being hosts and so they have taken it to the next level by completely remodeling their farm house that sits in the midst of Amish country, only a few miles from Shipshewana.

Highfield Manor is furnished with comfortable furniture and cozy pillows and throws. In the winter, you can enjoy a peaceful retreat reading a book or sitting by the fireplace in the sunroom. Summer brings many more options as you can take in the splendor of an evening sunset on the open porch, enjoy the backyard gardens, the waterfall and fire pit or stroll down the private country lane next to the manor.

For more information on Highfield Manor Bed & Breakfast, visit their website at highfieldmanor.com or give them a call at 260-585-0235. Highfield Manor is located at 2265 West 175 North, LaGrange, Indiana 46761.

Pictured front row left to right: Ann & Scott Kerchner, Engage Business Solutions; Beth Sherman, Chamber. Back Row left to right: Mareen Barton, Lake City Bank; Joy Sharp, Lewis & Lambright; Lauri Eash, Farmers State Bank; Mike Patka, Grogg Martin Auctioneers & Realty; Deb Sills, Miller’s Merry Manor; Mary Lee Mitchell, Insurance & Financial Services; Laura & Keith James, Indigo Web Services.

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Interra Presents Years of Service Awards

At a recent corporate event, Interra Credit Union, Goshen, honored employees with years of service milestone awards, ranging from five to 25 years.

Those honored include, first row, from left, Brittany Kehr, 10 years; Melena Long, 10 years; Haley Schmidt, five years; Eva Parcell, 25 years; Frida Ferrera Velasco, five years; Kenzie Helper, five years; Danielle Coburn, five years; and Amy Sink, five years. Back row, from left, includes, Andy Marshall, five years; Candace Gleason, five years; Candi Monahan, five years; Amelia Brubaker, five years; Nina Williams, five years; Tyler Roth, 25 years; Shannon Schrock, five years; Carla Oplinger, 25 years; Ashley Hargelans, five years; Lori Bolyard, five years; Jordan Adams, 10 years; Angie Pletcher, 20 years; and Kyle Revel, five years.

Those not present for the photo included Liz Borntrager, 20 years; Dave Dekker, 15 years; Jennifer Abney, 10 years; Jennifer Roush, 10 years; Kim Hostetler, 10 years; Karen Patrick, five years; and Ashley White, five years.

Interra, headquartered in Goshen, Indiana, has assets of more than $1.2 billion. The credit union serves more than 82,000 members at 15 offices in Elkhart, Kosciusko,

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Ripcord Media Production Joins Chamber Membership

Ripcord Media Production joined the Chamber Membership but not without hesitation.

Nathan Rasbaugh, owner and camera crew at Ripcord Media Production was only doing photography and videos as a hobby, that was until he was approached by the Chamber. The Chamber staff had seen a couple videos that Nathan had done for the Lakeland Athletic program and decided to take a chance and have him make a couple testimonial videos for the organization. After seeing the talent and how good they turned out, Beth Sherman, Director of the Chamber told him he could be a full time business with his talent. After thinking on it for a while he is now a member of the Chamber and getting busier by the day.

For more information on Ripcord Media Productions, phone Nathan at (269) 832-1681 or email him at ripcordmediaproduction@gmail.com.

Oh and check out Chamber videos at www.lagrangechamber.org

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Chamber Announces Seminar on How Interns Can Benefit Your Business

Employers, need an intern? Indiana INTERNnet has more than 5,300 Indiana students looking for internships. Indiana INTERNnet matches your requirements with those of a student looking for an internship in your region.

The current business climate presents very high demand for skilled labor and qualified applicants, giving internship programs more opportunity than ever. Companies need workers that fit their business model and internships enable them to mold individuals into the types of candidates they’re seeking.

Receive Reimbursement for your Interns. Indiana INTERNnet partners with the Indiana Commission for Higher Education (CHE) to facilitate its Employment Aid Readiness Network (EARN) Indiana program. EARN Indiana reimburses employers with an approved internship up to 50 percent of each eligible intern’s wage.

This program is presented by Indiana Intern.net and will take place on February 27th at the Lagrange County Library from 1:30 to 2:30. Cost of the program is free but reservations are needed as space is limited.

For Reservations phone 260-463-2443 or e-mail info@lagrangechamber.org