



February 2018

A Publication of the Elgin Area Chamber of Commerce

www.elginchamber.com

Chamber Awards High Fives at 110th Annual Meeting

In the spirit of the Winter Games, the Elgin Area Chamber awarded some much deserved hardware to several deserving individuals, businesses and initiatives at our *110th Annual Meeting and High Five Awards* presented by **Northwestern Medicine** and **Grand Victoria Casino** on **Thursday, January 25**.

The afternoon's award recipients included:

Leadership Award: **Jaci Kator** of **AT&T** for her leadership on the Elgin Area Chamber's Board of Directors this past year and for AT&T's generous support of Chamber programming including the on-going Legislative Brew series, annual ChamberFest Golf Classic and Mayor Kaptain's State of the City address.

Community Partner Award: **Linda Siete** of **Reflejos Publications** for constantly looking to connect the Chamber to new businesses, her service on the Elgin Area Chamber's Board of Directors and for her continued support of the annual Hablamos Espanol Expo, including securing premium concert tickets for the event's grand prize raffle.

Membership Award: **Jim Galvin** of **Galvin and Associates** for having one of the longest continuous tenures as a member of the Chamber's Ambassador Committee. He regularly attends EAC Social Network after hours events and has represented the Chamber at countless ribbon cuttings and

other functions over the years.

Small Business Award: **Aaroco Software** and owner **Aaron Bowgren** have been shining examples for how a small business should leverage their Chamber membership thru consistent participation in all varieties of Chamber programming. Aaron is a graduate of the Chamber's Elgin Area Small Business Academy and now serves on the planning committee.

Large Business Award: **Elgin State Bank/Wintrust Bank** has been offering innovative financial services to the Elgin community for decades. Devoted Elgin Area Chamber members since 1972, Elgin State Bank not only provided generous sponsorships of Chamber events this past year but offered

members periodic after-hours networking opportunities and skills building events at their branch.

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Photo by James Harvey

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2018 Economic Growth Forecast for Elgin

The global GDP growth forecast for 2018 is 4%, while the U.S. growth forecast is predicted to be 2.8% according to The Conference Board. The strength in global and domestic growth is broad-based across the most advanced economies and sectors. They also reported that their measurement of CEO Confidence had gone up at the end of the 4th quarter and is a good indicator for what the overall economy has in store for 2018.

Financial real estate services firms, such as Real Estate Investment Trusts, are maintaining an optimistic outlook for the U.S. economy, although many are also recommending a cautious approach. Various area real estate developers (retail, office and industrial), despite record low unemployment, increased consumer confidence and a strong stock market, see slower growth ahead for things such as rent increases, property prices and demand for commercial space.

However, some Elgin based industries such as SureWerx are expecting a decent year as many are planning on reinvesting in their businesses and hiring workers. "With the global economy continuing to grow at a modest pace, SureWerx sees another good year ahead for our business. We see the year ahead being driven both by organic growth and through strategic acquisitions. Our vision remains laser-focused on being the global leader in worker safety and productivity by delivering exceptional tools, safety products and services to the workers around the world.

We intend to continue to invest in our people, technologies and infrastructure to help us develop the ideal customer experience with our distribution partners and the users of our products," says Chris Baby, CEO of SureWerx.

Elgin industrial property owners and developers are predicting a good year but are also somewhat cautious. "There is an abundance of big box space available for absorption. The user market has continued to buy and lease small to medium size properties in Elgin," according to Bruce Granger of NAI Hiffman.

In specific sectors such as retail, 2.5% growth in 2018 is being predicted by the International Council of Shopping Centers. 89% of all retail spending is still being done in brick-and-mortar stores, while the remaining 11% in internet sales is split among brick-and-mortar stores and on-line retailers like Amazon. The headlines on the impact of internet sales are grossly oversimplified, are scaring some capital providers to the sidelines and creating opportunities for developers that intend on buying assets at attractive prices for the long run.

In tandem with rising household wealth, income, and employment, most housing developers are predicting stable homebuying this year. According to Susan Angell-Case of Baird & Warner, "Due to the shortage of inventory, home prices will continue to rise. Millennials will continue to enter the real estate market as first time homeowners. It is generally felt that they are the key to the 2018 real estate market."



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Grand Victoria Casino

Michael Wong
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Chris Zannis
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Elgin's Five FABULOUS Facts for February

This is an exciting time to be in Elgin! Our Enhancing Elgin Committee works to provide information about the many positive things about our city that are solidifying our reputation as The City in the Suburbs. Visit our website at ElginChamber.com/Fab5 or follow Enhancing Elgin on Facebook and Twitter (@EnhancingElgin) or search the hashtag #ElginIL to learn more about what makes Elgin the place to live, work, learn, do business, get involved, visit and enjoy.



reported in Elgin for 2017 was down 10 from the previous year, from 1,814 to 1,804. "As Elgin is growing, becoming more diverse, becoming larger than it has ever been with more square miles, we are safer than we have ever been. This isn't just great police work but a big part is community involvement," Police Chief Jeff Swoboda said.

Elgin's crime stats at 46-year low: The Elgin Police Department recently released the 2017 crime statistics that affirmed that Elgin's crime is at a 46-year low. Overall, the number of more serious crimes



study findings, according to an analysis published by The New York Times. In five years, U46 student performance grew by about 5.4 grade levels. The study looked at the 200 largest school districts in the United States, according to the data.

U-46 ranks in top 10 percent nationwide: School District U-46 ranks in the top 10 percent, among the nation's largest school districts, in a Stanford University study that looks at how students improve over years. U-46 ranked 20th in student growth over five academic years based on the Stanford



Dream Hall at 51: Two Elgin food entrepreneurs, Kevin Echevarria of Dream Hub and Jeff Turner of In the Neighborhood Deli are collaborating on a new business called Dream Foods. Turner will oversee all food service at the new Dream Hall at 51 at 51 S. Grove Ave. set to open this spring. While Turner has

closed his ITN Deli operation at Edison Avenue in preparation for the new venture, Dream Foods will incorporate a new ITN Dream Deli and Cafe at Gail Borden Public Library.



Centro finds new home: Centro de Información will soon be moving its offices to the former nunnery building at 1885 Lin Lor Lane on the campus of Presence St. Joseph Hospital. The new

7,200-square-foot building is larger than their current space in downtown Elgin. The move-in date is February 26 and an open house is planned for sometime in March in conjunction with their 46th Anniversary celebration.



Elgin Tower Luxury Lofts now leasing: After more than a year of work, the renovation of the historic Elgin Tower Building is complete and the new Elgin Tower Luxury Lofts are now leasing one and two-bedroom apartments starting at \$915. Built-in amenities include a state-of-the-art gym and a beautifully

renovated lobby. For more details, visit ElginTower.com.

EAC Social Network: Getting Social with S.E.E.D.

Our first EAC Social Network of 2018 gives you two events for the price of one (which, in case you were wondering, are both FREE).

On **Thursday, February 8** beginning at **4:30 p.m.** we invite you first to join us so we can welcome our newest Chamber member, C'era Una Volta, 558 Randall Road in South Elgin, with a ribbon cutting. We will then mix and mingle with our friends from S.E.E.D. (South Elgin Economic Development) from **5:00 until 7:00 p.m.**



Guests will enjoy networking with other Chamber members as well as free food and wine and have the opportunity to meet the board of S.E.E.D. Commemorative stemless wine glasses will be available to attendees on a first come first serve basis courtesy of S.E.E.D.

Don't miss this!

To register for our *Ribbon Cutting and EAC Social Network: Getting Social with S.E.E.D.*, please visit our website at ElginChamber.com or call the Chamber office today at **847-741-5660**.

Chamber Action Calendar

Thursday, February 1, 15

7:30 to 9:00 a.m.
EARN I Leads Group
Elgin Area Referral Network

Thursday, February 1

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Multi-Chamber Women in Business
Progressive Luncheon
The Haight, 166 Symphony Way

Thursday, February 1

5:30 to 8:00 p.m.
Elgin Area Small Business Academy
Session Two: Creating Demand
Location: T.B.D.

Wednesday, February 7, 21

12:00 to 1:15 p.m.
EARN Too Leads Group
Elgin Area Referral Network

Thursday, February 8, 22

7:30 to 9:00 a.m.
EARN III Leads Group
Elgin Area Referral Network

Thursday, February 8

5:00 to 7:00 p.m. - Event
Ribbon Cutting & EAC Social Network:
Getting Social with S.E.E.D.
C'era Una Volta, 558 Randall Road

Wednesday, February 13

8:30 to 10:00 a.m.
Cybersecurity for the Modern Office
Elgin Area Chamber, 31 S. Grove Ave.

Thursday, February 15

5:30 to 8:00 p.m.
Elgin Area Small Business Academy
Session Three: Sales
Location: T.B.D.

Friday, February 16

8:30 to 9:30 a.m.
Legislative Brew with Elgin Township
Supervisor Franklin Ramirez
Elgin Area Chamber, 31 S. Grove Ave.

Tuesday, February 20

10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Free One-on-One Website Analysis with
Prairie Web Internet Marketing
Elgin Area Chamber, 31 S. Grove Ave.

Friday, February 23

11:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Ribbon Cutting at Staffing Network
965 N. Randall Road

Tuesday, February 27

8:00 to 9:00 a.m.
Chamber Chat Radio Program
WRMN-AM 1410

To make your reservation for an event, please visit www.elginchamber.com

Free One-on-One Website Analysis with Prairie Web

On **Tuesday, February 20** from **10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.**, **Brian Lewis** of **Prairie Web Internet Marketing** will be in our office offering FREE, personalized, one-on-one 30-minute consultations about your business website. Brian will review your Google analytics, site optimization and will make recommendations on how you can maximize your site's effectiveness to convert more sales, impact engagement with potential customers and grow your business.

These exclusive consultations are only

for Elgin Area Chamber members and are by appointment only. Please register and let us know your preferred time slot between 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. If you do business through your website or are looking to increase online business, we encourage you to take advantage of this unique opportunity for our Chamber members.

Register now at ElginChamber.com.



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Elgin Area Chamber of Commerce (EAC)
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Member Anniversaries

Thank you to these businesses for renewing their investments

Celebrating 40+ years

Gail Borden Public Library
A to Z Rentals

Celebrating 20 - 29 years

Gordon Flesch Company
Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Starck Real Estate-
Elgin
Hy-Tech CARSTAR Auto Body
First Federal Savings Bank

Celebrating 10 - 19 years

Allen+Pepa Architects
Darwin Realty and Development Corporation
Fabric Images Inc.
Edward Jones - Michael McKay, Financial Advisor
Elgin Youth Symphony Orchestra
Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation
John B. Sanfilippo & Son, Inc.
The Atrium at Oak Crest
Century Print & Graphics
Your Front eOffice, Inc.

Celebrating 5 - 9 years

The Davey Tree Expert Company
Kool Technologies, Inc.
Future Link IT
Illinois Wholesale Cash Register Inc.
Primrose School of South Elgin
Associates in Orthopedic Surgery, S.C. (AOS)
Rauschenberger Financial Advisors
TLC Pregnancy Services
Wells Fargo Bank N.A.
PNC Bank
Eaton's Redwood Inn

Celebrating 1 - 4 years

Baird & Warner - Michael Simpson
Central School District #301
Sentry Energy
Signs By Tomorrow
Batteries Plus Bulbs
Edward Jones - Taylor Garner
Spring View Dental
Kairos Counseling Center INC
Motorola Solutions
Prairie Community Bank
Elgin Industries

Welcome New Members

For more information, visit www.ElginChamber.com

79 Ratio, Inc. - Steven Kroiss

146 River Walk Ct., Elgin, IL 60120
(630) 394-2700 www.79Ratio.com

Computer & Electronics, Technology Sales & Services

Avondale Estates of Elgin - Stephanie Henneken

1760 Capital St., Elgin, IL 60124
(847) 531-6004 www.addisonrlc.com

Healthcare, Home Health Services

Bii Hair Salon - Adam Swanlund

1955 Huntley Rd., West Dundee, IL 60118
847-428-8821 www.biihairsalon.com

Wellness & Beauty, Salons

Bumblebee Play Cafe - Brian Chung

1015 N. Randall Road, Elgin, IL 60123
(847) 742-3000 www.bumblebeeplaycafe.com

Derek La Rosa's Handyman Services - Derek La Rosa

2456 Emily Lane, Elgin, IL 60124
(815) 861-8826 derekclarosashandyman.com

Contractors, General Contractors

Illinois Small Business Development Center at Harper College - Tom Cassell

650 E. Higgins Rd., Suite 18 N, Schaumburg, IL 60173
(847) 925-6570 www.harpercollege.biz

LSI - Thomas Zak

2200 Point Blvd., Elgin, IL 60123
847-844-2200 www.BeLiveLSI.com

Financial Services, Service Providers

Milescraft, Inc. - Mark Vernsten

1331 Davis Road, Elgin, IL 60123
(224) 227-6930 www.Milescraft.com

Consultants, Business

Profile Food Ingredients LLC - Stephanie Benic

1151 Timber Drive, Elgin, IL 60123
(847) 622-1700 www.profilefoodingredients.com

Manufacturing, Manufacturers

Staffing Network - Sharlene Frick

965 N. Randall Road, Elgin, IL 60123
847-250-4953 www.staffingnetwork.com

**Employment Agencies & Services, Employment
Agencies**

Chamber Awards High Fives at 110th Annual Meeting (cont.)

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Showcase Business Award: The Bear Family McDonalds unveiled their newly remodeled, state-of-the-art restaurant in South Elgin this past October with a gala grand opening ceremony. The restaurant is one of just 30 McDonald's in the world that enjoy this new, open kitchen layout.

Elgin Development Group Workforce Award: MKD Electric's Apprenticeship Program has enabled the company to hire entry-level apprentice workers to train first in the classroom's "boot camp" to learn the necessary skills, tools, parts and safety habits and then on the job work with MKD's journeyman coupled with additional ongoing training. They currently have 48 individuals actively participating in the program.

Elgin Development Group Business Development Award: Fabricators and Manufacturers Association opened their beautiful new corporate headquarters at 2135 Point Boulevard in Elgin this past May. The new facility features a state-of-the-art conference center to hold member events; the latest technology for training, video conferencing, and webcasts; plus comfortable one-on-one meeting areas.

Elgin Development Group Transportation Award: Pace's brand new I-90/IL 25 Park-n-Ride Station opened to the public in December. This facility, boasting nearly 200 parking spaces, will further connect Elgin to the Northwest Suburbs, O'Hare Airport and downtown Chicago.

Enhancing Elgin Award: The Enhancing Elgin Committee, consisting of marketing, com-

munication and events professionals representing more than a dozen Elgin organizations, collaborated on a free, public self-guided architectural tour of unique Elgin spaces and places called Open Elgin. The tour brought nearly 400 visitors from more than 40 different zip codes across five different states to discover Elgin's picturesque beauty. The encore edition of Open Elgin drops on Saturday, April 21 from 1-5pm.

Partnership Award: The City of Elgin for the myriad successful partnerships developed between the City and the Elgin Area Chamber, which have resulted in marked economic development success for Elgin. From the Mayor and City Councilmembers generously donating their time at Chamber events and on EDG committees to City Manager Rick Kozal, who has been on the front lines with us as our consistent conduit, advocate, resource and partner in all of our economic development efforts.

School District U-46 recognized **KCT Credit Union** with their **Business Partner of the Year Award**.

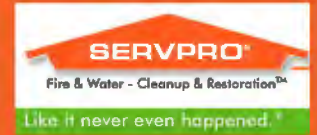
The Chamber also officially installed seven board members for a three-year term, including **Linda Deering Dean, Yvonne Irving, Yaneth Medina, Keith Rauschenberger, Mike Warren, Chris Zannis** and **Jim Thomason**.

We thank former **Fox Valley Broadcasting President Rick Jakle** who served as the event's emcee as well as the Grand Victoria Casino staff for their gracious hospitality. Congratulations and "high fives" to all of this year's award recipients.



Photos by James Harvey Photography

PREMIER MEMBERS:



ENHANCED MEMBERS:

Andresen Active
Healthcare

Daxam, Inc.

Edward Jones Investments
Michael McKay

Premier Veterinary Group

Willow Lake Estates

Windy City Bulls

Legislative Brew with Elgin Township Supervisor Franklin Ramirez

Our next **Legislative Brew**, sponsored by AT&T, features **Elgin Township Supervisor Franklin Ramirez** on **Friday, February 16** from **8:30 to 9:30 a.m.** at the Chamber office, 31 S. Grove. You will have a chance to catch up over coffee with Franklin, ask your questions and mix and mingle with other Chamber members all in an informal setting. Seating is limited so reservations are recommended.

Franklin Ramirez was elected Elgin Township Supervisor in 2017. Statutorily defined as the chief executive officer of the township, an Illinois township supervisor is positioned to ful-



fill a key leadership role on the township team as the manager of financial affairs in the township, coordinator of the township programs, and administrator of day-to-day activities in the office.

Franklin earned a Master of Arts Degree in Organizational Leadership from Judson University and a Bachelor of Business Administration (B.B.A.) in Human Resources Management/Personnel Administration from Loyola University.

To reserve your cup of coffee at our *Legislative Brew with Elgin Township Supervisor Franklin Ramirez*, please register online on our website at ElginChamber.com

or give us a call at **847-741-5660**.

EAC, SCORE Present Cyber Security for the Modern Office

In conjunction with SCORE, the Elgin Area Chamber invites you to an informative seminar on **Wednesday, February 13** from **8:30 to 10:00 a.m.** that covers best practices to keep your company secure. We'll talk about how firewalls have expanded to become UTM (Unified Threat Management) security appliances that intercept viruses and filter web content. But also how, as security systems have become harder to penetrate, the real payoff for cyber-criminals is coming through social engineering. Finding ways to trick people into giving up information or access can have a high

payoff, and is often easier than trying to "hack" your way into a company's security system.



Topics we'll cover include how does the cloud keep my data secure, why identity is central to the concept of security, why firewalls and anti-virus are needed, but aren't enough, social engineering is the next hacking frontier, crypto-locker and other "Ransomware" and more.

To register for *Cyber Security for the Modern Office* co-presented by SCORE and the EAC, please visit our website at ElginChamber.com or call **847-741-5660**.



CHAMBER HAPPENINGS: A huge crowd turned out to listen to Elgin City Councilman Corey Dixon at our first *Legislative Brew presented by AT&T* of the new year. An even bigger crowd joined us for our first *Chamber Member Orientation presented by Napleton's Elgin Kia* of 2018.



Elgin Area Chamber
BUSINESS

CONNECTION

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We encourage you to pass this issue along to your colleagues. You will always find the newsletter on our website www.elginchamber.com in the section "In the News." Every issue is available in a .pdf format that is easy to read online or print out.

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