

Business Monthly

Message from Executive Director, Rhonda Jordal

July 31st I became an official Albert Lea'n along with my husband Dale and our 14 year old April. My husband previously lived in Albert Lea, he bought his first home here and now we have bought our last home in Albert Lea. Our home previously had a population of 2 so we have increased the population by 1. This is our forever home, our retirement home and we are looking forward to living in this wonderful, beautiful community!



The Chamber has a number of new members and we are very thankful for all of our members! Some of you have been with the Chamber for many years and some for a short few years. No matter how long, I want to make sure that you know that we are here for you. If you have an event going on, please contact the Chamber so we can help publicize it. Running an ad on your Facebook page? Then send it to us so we can share it on the Chamber Facebook page. Big events we may be able to have an Ambassador visit to help you with more visibility. Remember to use your Chamber benefits and get involved! We want you to be involved in whatever way you can with the Chamber including on a Chamber committee. Give us a call today and let us know what committee you want to serve on and we will get you connected so you can network with others just like you!

Special points of interest:

- Number of referrals.
- Big Island Barbaque
- Thursdays on Fountation

It is that time of year again when we will be looking for recommendations for Business of the Year. Be sure to send us your nomination for small, medium and large business of the year!

Chamber once again delivers property tax relief

By Doug Loon

Minnesota businesses will see another reduction in their statewide property tax, thanks to the efforts of the Minnesota Chamber and our local chamber partners in concert with the Senate majority. For the second time in two years, the Minnesota Chamber Federation helped lower the statewide business property tax.

This fixed cost is paid by all businesses whether they own or lease property, regardless of whether they are profitable. Minnesota business property taxes are among the highest in the nation, and second highest for some properties. The state levy represents about 27% of a total property tax bill. The state business property tax levy will be reduced from \$784 million to \$737 million for taxes payable in 2020. Businesses will see this reduction on their tax statements this fall.

Health insurance premiums: The Minnesota Chamber scored another success – curtailing the growth in health insurance costs – that will be felt in the pocketbooks of many employers and employees. Reinsurance will be extended two years, continuing to stabilize the individual health insurance market. Since its enactment in 2017, the program has done exactly what it was designed to do. It brought down premiums in the individual market by roughly 20% in 2018 and another 20% this year. The relief provided will be a factor once again as health insurance policies are renewed for 2020.

Three other noteworthy state laws take effect this summer.

Hands-free cell phones: Effective Aug. 1, drivers may use their cell phone to make calls, text, listen to music or podcasts and get directions, but only by voice commands or single-touch activation without holding the phone. Drivers may not hold their phone in their hand. The Minnesota Chamber was among a broad coalition advocating the law change in the interest of promoting safety on Minnesota roads.

No one intends to seriously injure or kill someone by driving distracted. But good intentions don't prevent crashes — smart choices do. We encourage motorists to make the right choice. Put the cell phone down, turn it off, or place it out of reach. Hand-held phone use is allowed to obtain emergency assistance, if there is an immediate threat to life and safety, or when in an authorized emergency vehicle while performing official duties.

Transparency in health care costs: Health care costs continue to rise, forcing Minnesotans to become better consumers when shopping for medical treatment. Even when individuals take time to research costs, they can be rebuffed in their efforts. Effective Aug. 1, hospital-based clinics will be required to disclose any facility fees that may be charged for nonemergency services before treatment. These fees can add significant cost to a patient's bill, and they can often be avoided by seeking care at a freestanding clinic that isn't connected to a hospital.

This legislation follows up on our work at the 2018 Legislature where a bill was passed to require health care providers and health insurers to provide a “good faith” estimate— within 10 days – of the cost of medical procedures at the request of a patient or prospective patient.

Wage Theft Act: A new law addresses what is commonly referred to as “wage theft”: shortchanging employee paychecks. We worked hard to ensure the new state law will help protect employers who inadvertently find themselves in violation of certain wage laws. The law also increases penalties for employers who intentionally shortchange paychecks. The new law's increased notice and record-keeping requirements went into effect July 1, 2019. Criminal sanctions take effect Aug. 1, 2019. [Click here to watch a prerecorded webinar providing you with all of the details to comply with this law.](#)

These laws are proof positive of the Minnesota Chamber Federation's focus on strengthening the statewide business climate to improve the lives of all Minnesotans.

Summer 2019
ALBERT LEA, MN
THURSDAYS ON FOUNTAIN

FREE CONCERT SERIES ON THE LAKE!
MAY - AUGUST

MAY	JUNE	AUGUST
30-MAY-19 CHLOE HOPE/ COMMUNITY BAND	27-JUN-19 CASI JOY	8-AUG-19 LOS REBELDES
6-JUN-19 RICHIE LEE (EDDIE COCHRAN WKD.)	11-JUL-19 SIX MILE GROVE	15-AUG-19 WHALEN AND THE WILLOWS
13-JUN-19 FLASHBACK	18-JUL-19 EMERSON AVENUE BAND	22-AUG-19 BRETT FEIST
20-JUN-19 PATCHOULI	25-JUL-19 RIPDOOZERS	29-AUG-19 WAYWARD

FOUNTAIN LAKE GAZEBO
ALBERT LEA • @ 5:30PM
BRING YOUR LAWN CHAIR OR PULL UP YOUR BOAT!

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL!
#EXPLOREALBERTLEA
#THURSDAYSONFOUNTAIN

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

Big Island Barbeque

The Annual Big Island Barbeque, a Kansas City sanctioned barbeque contest on August 23-24. Cooks throughout the Midwest and as far away as Texas will be competing for the best overall cook as well as categories of ribs, pork shoulder or butt, and chicken or beef brisket! Come out and taste and meet some of the best barbeque cooks in the country!

Thank You

The following members renewed their memberships in July:

- Albert Lea Electric
- Albert Lea Seed House
- Americana Insurance Group, Inc.
- China Restaurant
- Comfort Inn
- Country Inn & Suites
- Grace Lutheran Church of Albert Lea (ELCA)
- Master Plumbing LLC

- Collins Auto Repair
- The INTERCHANGE Wine & Coffee Bistro
- Simplified Technology Solutions LLC
- Hubbard Agency
- Hearing Associates, P.C.



Committee Updates

CHAMBER BOARD – met on July 24. Speed networking event was discussed. The Outlet is hosting and Riverland will provide the refreshments.

AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE- Didn't meet the month of July.

AMBASSADOR'S – Didn't meet the month of July.

GREEN COMMITTEE – Didn't meet the month of July.

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE – met on July 11. 'Housing' will be the next event. The date will be adjusted as Sue Loch had to step down from the Govt Affairs Committee due to her new job.

WORKSITE WELLNESS COMMITTEE – met on July 19. SHIP Grant deadline is Oct. 31st for 2019. And next year's SHIP program has been approved for funding. The next Gallop Poll for 8/1/19-8/1/20 will be going out via the mail with a \$1 bill included in surveys to thank and encourage people for their participation. Discussed the possibility of a Lunch & Learn for Businesses to discuss Workers Comp, Occupational Health, and what services are available in our community.

BUSINESS EDUCATION COMMUNITY - Didn't meet the month of July.

Welcome to our New Chamber Members



North Bridge Auto Plaza
Oil Changes, Tires, Wheel Alignment,
Suspension and Duramax Diesel Repair



Pizza Ranch
Buffet features signature dishes to satisfy any appetite: any pizza at your request, the Country's Best Chicken, Cactus Bread, and more.



Qdoba Mexican Eats
You can customize your order. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. They do catering. Enjoy sitting out on their patio.

Board of Directors

Patricia Dahl, Board Chair
Mayo Clinic Health System
Albert Lea and Austin
373-2384

George Gonzalez, 1st Chair
Dave Syverson Auto
373-1438

Kim Nelson, Past Chair
Riverland Community College
433-0607

Catherine Buboltz
Thorne Crest Senior
Living Community
373-2311

Angie Kolker
Freeborn-Mower
Cooperatives Services
373-6421

Dr. Mike Funk
Albert Lea Area Schools
379-4802

Beau Hartman
Hartman Law Office
507-200-0301

Kevin Miland
Mrs. Gerry's
373-6384

Angie Eggum
Edward Jones
373-2000

Mike Chandler
Renewable Energy Group, Inc.
507-448-0124

Kathy Sabinish
Dave's Phone
Booth/Frames-R-Us
377-0848

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