



Business Monthly

November 2019

Message from Past Board Chair, Tricia Dahl

It has been another exciting month for The Chamber. Staff continue to settle into the new space (132 North Broadway) downtown. While this is the third location for the Chamber since I have been a Board Director, it is part of the long-term goal of the Chamber -- to relocate to the downtown area. We have already found that our new location being co-located with ALEDA and across the street from the CVB has increased visibility and improved collaboration. (Our team also enjoyed getting to be a part of the Halloween Spooktacular activities this year!)

The Chamber received word this month that Albert Lea has been approved as designated "Main Street Community." The Main Street program is designed to focus on further developing the downtown as an asset for the residents of the community. This is beneficial not only for those that have business in the downtown area but for everyone that lives in the community. We expect it will be a recruitment tool for both business and residents. We look forward to building on the great work that has been done using the time-tested framework and resources that the Main Street program offers. The timing of our recent move to the Main Street designated area will greatly enhance our ability to move this effort forward.

The Chamber, along with other community partners, is working closely with ALEDA on a joint economic development strategic plan. After stopping by the annual Hy-Vee Business After Hours (Edgewater Bay Pavilion) on Tuesday, November 12, please join us at the Community Forum (Wedgewood Cove) to review the initial findings of our work so far. This is an excellent time to get involved before the goals and visioning session takes place. The evening will end with an overview on how the rest of the project will proceed and the remaining phases and timelines.

Lastly, as we all prepare for the holiday season, we hope you will join us on Small Business Saturday to shop local. Another collaborative effort with ALEDA, this campaign will kick off on November 30th. Passports will be available for pickup at the Chamber/ALEDA office from 9 AM – Noon and refreshments will be served. Each page of the passport has the names of four businesses and space to have their passport "stamped". Participants can take their passport to as many businesses as they'd like between November 30th and December 12th – the day of the Holiday Bazaar in Downtown Albert Lea. Each stamp received will count towards an entry in the grand prize drawing of \$100 in Chamber Bucks! There will also be a \$75.00 and \$50.00 prize of Chamber Bucks.

November is a great time of year to reflect on things we are thankful for... like our members and valued partners. There are also many things to be excited about in our community... please join me this month in looking for those positives and share them with others. Thanks again for your ongoing support of our efforts to promote and develop a healthy and positive business climate.

MN Job Match – a new kind of dating service

By Doug Loon

Workforce needs easily rank as the No. 1 concerns facing Minnesota employers. Hiring the right people is more critical than ever for companies of all sizes and types across the state.

Finding the right fit can be equally frustrating for the jobseekers.

Enter MN Job Match – a new online system for connecting employers and candidates. Launched earlier this year, this service is a joint effort by the Minnesota Chamber and Real-time Talent. Our local chamber partners are integral to spreading the word by either hosting a job matching site themselves or linking to MN Job Match.

Job listing services are not new. MN Job Match, however, uses a distinctive system to match employers and potential employees.

Traditional recruiting methods often require employers to sort through stacks of resumes or settle for less than ideal candidates. The process can be costly and time consuming, often without the payoff of an excellent hire.

MN Job Match revolutionizes the recruiting process, connecting employers with quality candidates distinctively matched to the role being filled. Its data-driven technology sorts and stack-ranks matched candidates based on alignment with job characteristics, not on how many times a keyword appears in a resume.

The platform works similar to an online dating service. And, an important point, businesses and candidates enter information on a secure https site.

Candidates set up their own accounts. They create profiles, fill out drop-down files with the basics such as name, location and contact information. They can upload resumes, post their work and education history, and select the jobs or internships that align best with their skills. They have an opportunity to answer questions about their preferences, interests and desired work environment. Each job title asks a different set of questions.

Profiles can be set up quickly. Candidates are ready to start their search and apply for jobs with the touch of a button.

Employers set up individual accounts, too, and answer correlated questions about available positions. Posting a job costs just \$39 for 30 days of scoring, screening and stack-ranking candidates.

The exchange is real time and current. Applicants are matched with new opportunities as they are posted. Positions are listed for only 30 days to ensure candidates are connected only with employers who are actively looking to hire.

The old-school job exchanges simply upload applicants' resumes. Search engines filtered the candidates for employers based on keywords and filters. Such processes focus on select elements in a resume and don't give employers a broader understanding of candidates.

MN Job Match is different and distinctive. The platform factors out some of the assumptions inherent in that process. Those kinds of arbitrary things that might prevent a candidate from moving on in the hiring process get de-emphasized. They still might be considered, but later in the process. Candidates are evaluated on skills and interests rather than just the words on their resume.

Finding the right employees is at the foundation of growing a successful business. Yet employers typically view resumes in a whirlwind of time. MN Job Match goes beyond the basic resume and increases the likelihood of a strong match. That's a win-win for employers and employees alike.

MN Job Match is not your average job board, and for good reason. Our blind-match technology prescreens candidates to find companies the right fit – faster. We invite readers to visit the site to post a job or complete an applicant profile and let the job matching begin.

Doug Loon is president of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce – www.mnchamber.com.

October Ambassador Visits

Home Solutions



Dairy Queen



Albert Lea MCHS Radiology Department



Committee Updates

CHAMBER BOARD – Met on October 23rd. We were accepted into the Main Street Program. Speed Networking survey results were very positive. Board Member applications were reviewed. Staff transition plans were discussed, and Elaine Wallace will be joining staff through the end of the year. Bylaws will be reviewed for processes in the absence of an Executive Director.

AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE – Didn't meet the month of October.

AMBASSADORS – Met on October 16th. Discussions were had about Small Business Saturday and hosting an event to promote shopping local. Their webpage on the Chamber website needs to be updated. New website material will be created – each ambassador will have their photo and bio available. Website will also show recent visits and happenings. The ambassadors will also be reviewing their bylaws.

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

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE – Didn't meet the month of October.

WORKSITE WELLNESS COMMITTEE – Met on October 18th. Year 4 of the SHIP Grants is wrapping up on 10/31. Year 5 will start on 11/1 and be fully funded. Blue Zones will be fully funded for 2020. Both Real Age Test & Gallup Wellbeing Index surveys were completed by Mid-September. Results are due in November and will be shared with the committee. May 9th we will host a walk on the Blue Zones Walking Trail around Fountain Lake. We will set up tents at the Boathouse and Fountain Lake Gazebo Park to hand out water and healthy snacks. They also discussed mental health ideas for employers and schools.

BUSINESS EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE COMMITTEE – The Chamber Business Education Collaborative met on Friday, Oct. 4 at the Chamber offices. Meeting Highlights: ALEDA Business Resource for Job Seekers: John Double sent a web link for an innovative, magazine style careers booklet from another resource. It may be something we want to look at for a resource. Business Education Workshop: Noelle Hagen and Shawn Cheesman are working on a Business Succession workshop-targeting late fall. The focus would be to present an overview of what businesses need to look at as they make succession plans for their futures. This would be 1-1/2 hr. overview. We would survey those in attendance to see what additional content would be valuable at future presentations. Our goal is to make this a short but meaningful first presentation to help generate attendance at future meetings. Child Care Needs: a regional group continues to work on funding and ideas to help build the childcare options for the area, which impacts the workforce issues. Employee Leadership Training: Area businesses have indicated a need for some leadership training for employees. A business survey will be developed and sent to the community to identify specific needs. Possible trainings will be pursued following results. The next meeting is Friday, Nov. 1, 8:30 am in the new Chamber office.

**Albert Lea-Freeborn County
Chamber of Commerce**

**Business After Hours
Tuesday, November 12, 2019
5:30 to 6:30 p.m.**

Hosted By:



**Edgewater Bay Pavilion
1940 Edgewater Drive
Albert Lea, MN 56007**

****Remember to bring business cards****

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact Noelle Hagen for more information at 507-373-3930 or
noellehagen@growalbertlea.com

October 22, 2019

Community Invited to Participate in Interim Report and Discussion Event

Albert Lea, MN – The economic development strategic plan process is underway with our partners; the City of Albert Lea, Freeborn County, Albert Lea – Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce, and the Albert Lea Convention and Visitors Bureau. The plan will bring together a broad group of stakeholders to create five-year economic development strategic plan. The process is led by Ady Advantage, a specialized economic development and site selection consultancy that serves the needs of economic development organizations (EDOs) and relocating and expanding companies. Ady Advantage uses their in-depth knowledge of what businesses need to help EDOs craft effective business and talent recruitment, retention and expansion strategies and initiatives.

We invite the community to attend the Economic Development Strategic Plan Interim Report Presentation and Discussion on November 12th from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. at Wedgewood Cove. Staff from ALEDA will present the interim report findings followed by small group breakout sessions where attendees will discuss findings and record their thoughts to be shared with the consultants. The evening will end with an overview on how the rest of the project will proceed and the remaining phases and their timeline.

This is a public event for the community to join us in this review and opportunity for feedback on initial findings. This is an excellent time for the community to get involved before the goals and visioning session takes place with representatives of the five agencies to determine the strategies the plan will focus on.

ALEDA is the local economic development organization made up of two separate entities – the Albert Lea Port Authority and Greater Jobs, Inc. If you are a new or expanding business looking for assistance, please contact ALEDA at 507-373-3930 or visit www.growalbertlea.com.

★ ★ ★
SMALL
B U S I N E S S
SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 30

PASSPORT TOUR

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
YOUR DECISION TO
SHOP LOCAL
CAN CHANGE OUR CITY.

**FILL YOUR PASSPORT FOR
A CHANCE TO WIN \$100,
\$75, OR \$50 IN CHAMBER
BUCKS!**

Passport Pick-up Day

Saturday Nov 30, 9 a.m. - Noon
@ the new Chamber Headquarters
132 N Broadway, Albert Lea

*If there are left over passports, they will be available for pick-up at the Chamber office until Dec. 12. Challenge yourself to check out new places. Get as many stamps as you can and turn in your passport the Holiday Bazaar on Broadway on Thursday Dec. 12.




Purchase a #SHOPALBERTLEA shirt!
Celebrate our community! Hurry, limited supply!



See the latest local promotions & specials in our new Facebook Group!
Shop Albert Lea Group - Local Events, Promos & Specials



Albert Lea-Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce 132 N Broadway Ave. Albert Lea, MN | 507-373-3938 | shopalbertlea.org  

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