

Business Monthly

Message from Executive Director, Rhonda Jordal

The Chamber is continuously striving to meet the changing needs of our membership. We are here to help every business and our community flourish. The Chamber is an effective, collaborative and influential community partner. Our mission is to “Promote and develop a healthy and positive business climate to improve the quality of life in the Albert Lea Freeborn County area.” Two of the Albert Lea Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce goals this year were adding two new committees: The Main Street program and a Chamber Concierge program.



The Albert Lea Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce and the City of Albert Lea have been working together on the Main Street Program. The Chamber is also partnering with ALEDA in preparation for becoming a Designated Main Street Community. This program is based on 4 pillars; Economic Vitality, Organization, Design and Promotion. The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is part of the Design/Historic committee for Main Street while The CVB is involved with the Promotion committee. The Main Street program focuses on our downtown area creating vibrancy, social gathering areas, events, art, a concentration on retail, historic design of buildings as well as consistency of esthetics in the downtown. This program is to bring new businesses to Albert Lea and fill empty store fronts. On Monday, September 23rd, Rethos (formerly Preservation Alliance of Minnesota) will be at The Outlet from 5pm-7pm presenting on the Main Street program and answering questions. Anyone interested in learning about or getting involved with the Main Street program is welcome to attend. Albert Lea Main Street will help to promote and build our community in Albert Lea!



Special points of interest:

- Speed Networking & Main Street Presentation
- Number of referrals.

Keep watching for information on the Chamber Concierge! This program will be great for newcomers, businesses and community!

The Chamber continues to grow with many new businesses! Some of you have been with the Chamber for many years and some for a short few. No matter how long, we want to make sure you know 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? Send it to us so we can share it on the Chamber Facebook page. Remember to use your Chamber benefits and get involved! We want you to be involved in whichever way you can with the Chamber including serving on a Chamber committee. These committees include the Agriculture committee, Ambassadors Committee, Business Education Collaborative Committee, Governmental Affairs Committee, Green Initiative Committee, Main Street Committees; Design, Promotion, Organization & Economic Vitality, and Worksite Wellness committee. Give us a call today and let us know which committee you want to serve on. We will get you connected so you can network with other businesses being a part of a Chamber Committee!

We are still taking nominations for Business of the Year. Be sure to send us your nomination for small, medium and large business of the year by going to our website and filling out the form, drop it off or email it to the Chamber!

Chamber network steps up private-sector efforts on workforce development

By Doug Loon

It's back to school for students of all ages as they hone their skills for productive working careers. Rest assured, the Minnesota Chamber network has a keen interest in ensuring students are prepared for jobs in our changing economy.

The Center for Workforce Solutions was launched in 2018 with a goal of tackling Minnesota's workforce shortage. Through leadership, collaboration and key partnerships, it offers programs to confront the state's worker shortage, helping the state's economy to change and grow.

Business Education Networks is among our hallmark programs – a proactive, data-driven approach to preserve and grow the local economy led by local chambers across the state. Informed by local employers and fueled by the engagement and partnership of students and educators, BEN programs connect employers with middle, high school and college students to make them aware of and prepare them for career opportunities in their own region. Each BEN program is locally created and distinctly designed to address workforce needs within their community.

Our local chamber partnerships extend across the state with programs thriving in Brainerd, Burnsville, Lakeville, Mankato, Marshall, Metro North, New Ulm, Rochester, Owatonna, St. Cloud, TwinWest, Waconia, White Bear, Winona and Willmar.

Our efforts to grow all our private-sector workforce initiatives were bolstered this summer with the hiring of Deb McMillan as director of the Center for Workforce Solutions. She can be reached at dmcmillan@mnchamber.com.

Business Education Networks offer a multipronged approach to address the worker shortage. Here are some examples of local programs:

- **CEO in the classroom:** Business owners talk with eighth-graders about what jobs are like at their companies and the classes students should take in order to be ready for certain jobs.
- **Career expos:** Local employers host high school students in a trade show-like environment, allowing them to explore jobs and careers that are available in their communities.
- **Teacher in the workplace:** High school teachers experience training and exposure to specific industries by working at companies in those industries for a period during the summer. They use what they have learned to develop or revise curriculum to reflect the needs of the economy.
- **Career academies.** Cohorts of high school juniors are provided mentoring, specialized dual-credit coursework for college, communications and “soft skills” preparation and development. Employers participate in multiple aspects of this program. Following the first year of the two-year program, qualified students are provided internships with local companies. After the second year, students are offered jobs with local employers, or are ready to begin college with credits in the bank.

Since 2016, our Business Education Networks have shown 8,000-plus students real-world experience in their communities. We have worked with 15 high school teachers, helping to make their curriculum reflect fast-changing skills and practices used in the workplace. We have connected with more than 200 employers in the vast Minnesota Chamber network, building a talented workforce now that will help them continue to thrive in their communities.

We look forward to expanding programs like Business Education Networks that offer tangible, flexible solutions at the local level to address our workforce needs for today and tomorrow.

Main Street Information Presentation

September 23, 2019
5:00 pm to 7:00 pm
at the Outlet

Rethos, (formerly Preservation Alliance of Minnesota) will be in Albert Lea on Monday, September 23rd, 2019 to provide a Main Street Information Presentation. The Designated Main Street Community Program presentation is open to everyone. What is Main Street? What does it do? Why Albert Lea? Still have questions after hearing the presentation? There will be time to get your questions answered about Main Street. It is a great opportunity for businesses and the community to learn about the Main Street program and hear about other designated Main Street communities in Minnesota. Mark your calendar for The Main Street Information Presentation on Monday, September 23rd.



Your fast track to Business success

SPEED NETWORKING

September 24, 2019

5:00 to 7:00 pm

at The Outlet

137 S. Broadway Ave

Bring 50 business cards to share

Please register by September 20th by calling 507-373-3938
or email geri@albertlea.org



Refreshments

Speed network
followed by social
hour

This is a great opportunity to
network with other Albert Lea &
Freeborn County businesses.
Have your business cards &
elevator speech prepared to
share with others.

*Thank you to
our sponsors*

The Outlet



Thank You

The following members renewed their memberships in August:

Albert Lea Family Y

Cinema Entertainment Corp.

Master Plumbing LLC

Southeast MN Workforce
Development, Inc.

Advanced Family Dental

Shoe Sensation Inc

The INTERCHANGE Wine &
Coffee Bistro

Fountain Lake Pointe Condo Assn

EZ Seal



Referrals

We had 108 referrals during the month of August.

Committee Updates

CHAMBER BOARD – met on Aug 28. Speed Networking flyer went out, hoping for 50 to sign up. Annual meeting is October 3rd at Wedgewood Cove. The speaker is Mike Krutzke. The Chamber is moving to a new location in October.

AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE- met on August 22. Starting to prepare for the 3rd Grade Farm Tours.

AMBASSADORS - Didn't meet the month of August.

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

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE met on Aug. 8. Discussion took place on housing being the next event. There is a new Rain Garden at Shell Rock River Watershed District office on S St Mary Ave. Anyone can apply to have a rain garden at their home. 75% is reimbursed by the Watershed up to \$2500. The SRRWD newsletter has great information about the rain gardens.

WORKSITE WELLNESS COMMITTEE – met on Aug 16. Ellen was in Nashville to accept an award from the 2019 Connectivity Summit on Rural Aging. Ellen has delivered most of the materials to community organizations and some worksites. Encourage them to take the test and also share the information with family members and friends to take the test. The link is only good thru Aug. 31st so it is imperative for Albert Lea residents to register as soon as possible – we need 350 participants for a valid summary.

BUSINESS EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE COMMITTEE – The Chamber Business Education Collaborative (CBEC) met on Friday, August 2, 2019 at the 8:30 in the Chamber offices. The group welcomed Shawn Cheesman from Lou-Rich to the team. Updates are in the works on the ALEDA webpage (www.growalbertlea.com) to improve the content and make it easier to navigate. The CBEC is working on several topics for upcoming quarterly workshops including: Business Succession, E-Commerce and Website Revitalization. Another topic we are exploring is the need for some internal leadership training within our local businesses. Will look at surveying local businesses, identifying specific needs and researching resources. The CBEC meets monthly at the Chamber office.

Welcome to our New Chamber Members



KCQ, Inc., SEP
The mission of KCQ, Inc. is advocacy for individuals who have disabilities and to provide the necessary services for potential for integration in the community.

The 33rd Annual Big Island Rendezvous and Festival Albert Lea, Minnesota on October 5-6, 2019.

This event was declared one of the "Top 100 Festivals in North America" by the American Bus Association in Washington, DC.

Over 1,000 re-enactors from Canada and the United States create a 45 acre community that celebrates life from 1670 to 1870 in early America. There will be woodland Indian camps as well as a PIONEER TOWN including a chuck wagon, stagecoach, jail and a gold panning demo.

A live round cannon fires three times each day by the New Ulm Battery witnessed by President Lincoln. Benjamin Franklin and his wife Deborah are also in attendance.

Blacksmiths, woodworkers, candle makers, clothiers, silversmiths, potters and other merchants sell their wares during both days of the festival.

Sustenance options available will be smoked bbq ribs, gyro sandwiches, pulled pork sandwiches, pork chops on a stick, kettle korn, and funnel cakes as well as Indian Tacos and fry bread.

Demonstrations of colonial crafts, Native American skills and pioneer skills are showcased throughout the festival.

For discount tickets and more information call 1.800.658.2526 or email pvining@smig.net and keep the first Saturday and Sunday in October open to experience "life in another century".

October 5-6, 2019 - Opens at 9 a.m. each day

Stage Entertainment

Alan Munde Trio

Roe Family Singers

Howard Rains & Tricia Spencer

Wild Goose Chase Cloggers – (Sun only)

Sister Tree

Strangebyrds

DD & Rosco

Kimmel/Coyle

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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