From The Director’s Doorway

Well, here it is...the 2019 Very Merrill Christmas Card and print featuring two Merrill icons! “It’s a Wonderful Life in Merrill”.

And we had some very surprised winners this year! We will profile each of them over the next few months in our newsletter.

Once again, the artist is our resident artist Ted Nicholson. He agreed to do at least 10 years worth, so we have him at least one more year!

Prints and cards should be available now (as of this writing, it was still being color-matched).

And as long as we are talking Christmas...you can now register for our Annual Lighted Christmas Parade on December 7. This year’s Headline Sponsor is Weinbrenner Shoe Company! They will be leading the parade from the west to the east. Say thank you when you see someone from Weinbrenner’s!

And our Ambassador of the Year was awarded to Sarah Sturm from Park City Credit Union!

And don’t forget, it is Time to Fall Back—the clocks that is...on Sunday, November 3 at 2 AM.

2019 Large Business of the Year was awarded to Weinbrenner Shoe Company! President Jeff Burns accepted.

2019 Mid-sized Business of the Year was awarded to Merrill Tool & Water Jet! Owner Lee Opsahl accepted.

2019 Small Business of the Year was awarded to Merrill Community Bank! President Mark Zulliger accepted.

2019 Hometown Business of the Year was awarded to Geiss Meat Service! Co-owner Andy Geiss accepted.

And how about a big hand-clap for our dedicated Board of Directors and staff! Most of these folks serve up to six years, just for you.

Hunting season is upon us! Good luck to all the hunters out there, be safe and return home with some stories!

And welcome to all the Eagles members who will be in Merrill this weekend from all over the state. I will be there to welcome them to Merrill!

The next two months will be a blur for most of us with so much happening. But take the time to be present with your friends and family and remember those who no longer have family to visit.

From my doorway to yours, step inside from the cold! And warm up with the love of friends and family and your favorite warm beverage.

Debbie Kinsey
Chief Executive Officer
Business After Hours

Business After Hours
Date: Nov. 7
Place: Pieper Power—Hwy G
Time: 5:00 to 7:00 pm
Sponsor: Pieper Power

How to Contact Your Chamber Staff

Debbe Kinsey
Chief Executive Officer & Corporate Secretary
director@merrillchamber.org

Cheryl Skoug
Programs Manager
manager@merrillchamber.org

Ken Neff
Member Services Rep.
info@merrillchamber.org

Merrill Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Inc.
News

Friends of Normal Park

Bricks make great gifts for any occasion!

There are 4 sizes of bricks to choose from & each brick can be engraved with names, dates or special messages. The bricks make wonderful gifts for birthdays, anniversaries, holiday gifts or simply to honor someone in a permanent way.

All profits from the brick purchases are earmarked for future improvements to Normal Park. So purchasing a brick for the walkway is just the beginning, you will also be supporting ongoing improvements now & into the future.

The bricks have not only paid for the memorial walkway, but also the garden surrounding the gazebo.

New this year are the bathrooms, concession stand/kitchen, warming house building & curbing around the gazebo & new parking lot thanks to our partners City of Merrill & the Merrill City Band.

A new partner in our Normal Park venture is the Merrill Optimist Club. The accessible playground is installed and we will decide where the new pathways should be installed followed by historic lighting next year.

3 ways to support Normal Park! Tax-deductible.

So...What's New?

'Member Moments' do it yourself style! Tape a 1-minute video about what is happening at your business and send it to us. We will post it on our Facebook page. Something new? Sale? New staff? Whatever it is, let's get the word out! Email them to Ken at info@merrillchamber.org

Circle of Influence Advocacy Groups in 2018 were a success so we will continue them! The Circle of Influence groups will include Chairman’s Circle for CEO’s and Owners; Manufacturing Matters for General Managers and HR Directors; Retail Roundtable for Retail Owners; Working Women Wednesday’s for Leadership; Service Providers and Merrill Events for Event Organizers.

2019 Economic Development Plan. We are so excited to be working with the Wausau Chamber on this important document for Merrill’s future. As we proceed into the new year, more business leaders will be called upon to take part in the exciting planning process.

Back to Basics—Back to the Future. Everything old is new again...we want to meet with you & learn about your goals & objectives for the new year & tell you how our programs can help you achieve your goals! It serves a couple of purposes, it updates your company profile so it’s up-to-date, it helps us align our programs to what you need & let’s you know what you may be missing at the chamber!

Our 2019 Educational/Workshops with the UWSP Small Business Center have been announced. Check them out on Page 4 and register today!

We will also continue the following: Inspire, MHS Community Connections Program, Supply Chain Market Place Sign-up your business at www.wisupplymarketplace.com and connect with Interns through a skilled talent pipeline with www.InternshipWisconsin.com

Our next Chamber Trip will be a domestic trip a Southern Charm's Tour. March 21-28 to Savannah, Jekyll Island, Charleston, Myrtle Beach, and Georgetown. Includes airfare, bus transportation, top hotels, 13 meals, entertainment and tours. Our next international trip will be in March 2021. Where in the world will the Chamber be...? Keep watching, we will announce that trip in the fall!
Weinbrenner Shoe Company received the 2019 Large Business of the Year! Debbe and the new president of Weinbrenner’s Jeff Burns, re-presented their award the next morning to all the Weinbrenner employers.

Weinbrenner’s originated in Milwaukee in 1892 by a German immigrant Albert Weinbrenner. He designed and made “jobber” boots for workers who climbed lines installing electricity.

By 1908, he had five distributing plants. In the 1930’s, Weinbrenner Shoes arrived in Merrill and became the company headquarters. They also have a manufacturing plant in Marshfield.

Weinbrenner’s in an employee-owned company and has been union made since 1943. They currently employ more than 300 employees.

Under new directorship, the new President/CEO is Jeff Burns who has been with the company since 2011. He said that they are working from the inside out to upgrade their current building and potentially adding on.

Weinbrenner’s was an active participant in the strategic planning efforts that the chamber conducted in 2018-19. They also sponsored a Movie in the Park last summer and will be the Headline Sponsor for this year’s Annual Lighted Christmas Parade.

Just one more long-time Merrill business that has employed generations of families in Merrill and selling their goods worldwide.

Congratulations to the entire Weinbrenner employee family!
Member-to-Member Club
Join Today & Save

The Chamber’s Member to Member Club, is a product discount program for Chamber members only. If your business is willing to offer a discount to other Chamber members contact us now! Gain marketing exposure & potential new business customers. Be a part of the Club!

As a Chamber member you will receive a discount at the following businesses:

**Put Your Business Name Here!**
*Ye Old Sweet Shoppe—10% off purchase*
*SUPER LUBE—15% off purchase*
*VIP On-line Member Discounts— to join email them at VIP@dwave.net for complete details on discounts.*
*NORTHWOOD’S EVERGREEN & WIRE CO. —20% off purchase*

**Ziesemer Photography - 15% off on business portrait purchase**
**Lincoln Wood Products —factory direct—10% off purchase**
**Fully Promoted—Buy 12 pieces (anything) & get FREE decoration (embroidery, heat press, garment print, transfer) & FREE set-up & digitizing of logo**.

Just mention the Member-to-Member Club at any of these businesses & start saving today!

*As a Merrill Chamber member, you are eligible for group plan insurances through WMC. Contact us for details. This includes medical, dental, life, etc.*

Spotlight on Business—November

Riverside Athletic Club

The Spotlight on Business for November is Riverside Athletic Club located at 500 South Center Avenue. Telephone is 715-536-2481. It is a family owned business started by Paul Kienitz 38 years ago.

“The Fitness Force” was opened in 1981 by a young 25-year old Paul Kienitz in an old tire garage on the corner of Center Avenue and First Street. Paul’s Fitness was the first to offer tanning and massage therapy in Merrill. In 1989, Paul purchased a 3-acre lot at the corner of Center and Riverside Avenues and constructed from scratch what is now Riverside Athletic Club. That same year Paul opened a fitness center within Church Mutual Insurance Company. In 1994, Studio 500 Hair and Nail Salon came into the building and is still a successful business 25 years later. In 1997 the initial 11,000 sq. foot building was updated to add a multi-use gymnasium and again in 2002 to add their pool and hot tub facility bringing the buildings square footage to over 30,000 sq. ft. In 2016, when Church Mutual opened their second facility, Paul fully equipped yet another fitness center staffing the centers with Joan Peterson, a group fitness instructor who been at the center for 17 years.

Paul is helping to build a healthy community by designing and equipping many local businesses, schools and hospitals with needed ‘lite fitness’ equipment. Park City Credit Union and River Valley Bank (Wausau) are just two examples of companies who have benefitted from having in-house fitness centers designed and fully equipped by Paul.

Riverside Athletic Club hosts many fundraisers throughout the year including: United Way, local food pantries and once a year he boosts a large number of toys locally donated for the Toys For Tots initiative. Paul is also looking forward with the possibility of a new partnership within the building.

Riverside Athletic Club invites you to come check out some of their newest additions (transverse rock wall, fully equipped open gym) along with amenities like turf lined gym, basketball courts, fully stocked free weight and machine lifting space, racket-ball, men’s and women’s saunas, heated pool, hot tub and tanning. They also offer 24-hour access and smiles of their staff at the most friendly rates around.

Riverside Athletic Club, one more reason we say, ‘homegrown and locally owned, "For the Love of Merrill!"’
**Very Merrill Christmas!**

It’s just around the corner folks! Our 2019 Very Merrill Christmas cards & prints are now available aptly called: “It’s a Wonderful Life Merrill”.

**Pocket Park Tree**

Thanks to The Bierman Family Foundation and few local businesses, we will have an 18 foot commercial grade Christmas Tree beginning this year at Banker’s Square (pocket park) on East Main. The tree will be decorated and have multi-colored lights! Santa will light the tree at the end of the Christmas Parade on Dec 7.

**Christmas Wreath**

We are looking for volunteers to help put the 20 foot high Mitchell Metal Wreath up at the Lincoln County Courthouse on...watch for details.

**Annual Lighted Christmas Parade**

This year’s parade is being sponsored by Weinbrenner Shoe Company, who will kick-off the parade at 5pm on Saturday, Dec. 7. You can now register your float for the parade by contacting the Chamber at 715-536-9474.

**Christmas Decorations Fund**

The Chamber Foundation has reopened their decorations fund but needs your help. We have the tree, but want to continue to add decorations to the courthouse lawn and the entry ways to downtown. The Foundation is now taking TAX-DEDUCTIBLE donations for this fund in any amount. Send your donations to the Merrill Chamber Foundation, 705 N. Center Avenue, Merrill, WI 54452.

**Final 2019 Workshop**

Our final workshop of the year is November 7 at the Chamber office from 8-9:30am. Topic is Increasing the likelihood of getting you Business Funded. You must preregister by calling 715-536-9474.

**Christmas Window Contest**

We are gearing up for our 2nd Annual Decorated Window Contest in downtown Merrill. If you own a business on East Main or First Streets in downtown Merrill, you are eligible for this contest. Windows must be completed and lit up beginning Saturday, Dec. 7 (the day of parade). A committee will view the windows the following week and select a winner! Last year’s award went to NAPA Auto Parts! Businesses can register at the Chamber.

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**Taking Notes.....**

**Tourism Commission**

We just set the largest budget in our history...$63,480.00! We could do this because we have had such a great couple of years...with great events, lots of visitors, lots of hotel stays. And our visitor spending jumped to over 8% in 2018. We are expecting a similar jump when we complete 2019. Who says there is nothing to do in Merrill? Boy are they wrong! Just Park It in Merrill!

**2020 Membership/Investment**

Cheryl is gearing up this month to get our 2020 membership invoices ready to mailout. These are due by January 31 unless payment arrangements are made in advance. Let’s have a record year and have all our investments paid by the deadline. Mark your calendars now!

If you need a membership plaque or a new door/window sticker, please let Ken know and he will get it to you!

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**Extra Nuts & Bolts**

Requests for Merrill information only during the month of October:

- Phone calls: 144
- Emails: 152
- Walk-ins: 98
- Info mailed out: 52
- Website Visits: 6397
- Restock Center: 48
- Business Referrals: 34

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**“Positive Possibilities”**

Thanks to our members, sponsors & numerous partnerships, the Chamber supports dozens of community programs & is actively involved in many initiatives that you may not be aware of.

Look for this symbol to learn more about our history & our future & the community programs we are involved in.
Mark Your Calendar

Nov. 2—Make a Difference Day
Sign-up by calling Linda Becker at 715-873-4564. Check-in at PRMS at 8:30 am.

Nov. 2—Trivia Night
At the Merrill Historical Society. Register your team at 715-536-5652.

Nov. 7—Workshop
Join Merrill Chamber and UW Stevens Point for ‘Increasing the likelihood of getting you Business Funded’ from 8:00-9:30am. Register by calling 715-536-9474.

Nov. 9—Holiday Craft Shows
Check the Chamber’s website for locations & times at www.merrillchamber.org Bell Tower, Ascension Good Sam, St. Francis, Merrill High School, New Testament Church, Lincoln Lanes and Church Mutual.

Nov. 9—Poker Run
Annual Poker Run at participating businesses thru 2 pm. The locations will be posted on website www.merrillchamber.org

Nov. 19—Time to Relax Girl Nite Out
Learn how to make perfect bow & decorate your wreath, while enjoying wine & hors d’oeuvres ay Ascension Good Sam—Menard Center! $30/pp includes materials & refreshments. Contact Romana at 715-539-3720.

Nov. 21—Presidio Brass
Merrill Area Concert Association presents this new generation brass band. 7pm at the Merrill High School.

Nov. 22—Holiday Cookie Dough Sale
Get your unbaked Christmas sugar cut outs from 9am to 1pm at Ascension Good Sam.

Dec. 7—Christmas kick-off
• O’Tannenbaum Tour 10am-7pm
• Annual Lighted Christmas Parade kicks-off at 5 pm. Santa will light the new Christmas Tree at Banker’s Square!
• Live Nativity 4-7 pm at Trinity Church
• Park Lane Manor Luminaria at Bell Tower/neighborhood. Visit with Santa.

For a complete listing of area events & activities check out the Chamber of Commerce website www.merrillchamber.org or the digital sign at the Chamber office for event info.

Listen to us on WJJQ 92.5FM and on Bluejay 730AM.

Catch What’s Up Wednesday every Wednesday on our Face Book page at merrillchamber1. Be sure to Like us!

Comments, Questions & Concerns

The Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce wants you to read about area businesses and other information that we feel is important to our members. If there are any topics you think we should cover, please let us know. Call the office (715-536-9474), fax us (715-539-2043) or stop in at our office (705 N. Center Ave).

Our individual emails are:
Debbe Kinsey—Chief Executive Officer director@merrillchamber.org
Cheryl Skoug—Program Manager manager@merrillchamber.org
Ken Neff—Member Services Rep. info@merrillchamber.org
Website - www.merrillchamber.org
Face Book merrillchamber1

November 3
Come enjoy Business After Hours and friends of the Merrill Chamber of Commerce!

**November 7th at Pieper Electric!**

We give a big thank you to this month’s sponsor, Pieper Electric (System Technologies) for inviting us. This is a great chance to network with other Chamber business members, which you might not have the opportunity to see. Relax, unwind, and socialize with old and new acquaintances.

Members are invited to bring a spouse, friend, or business associate. This is a Chamber mixer. At 6:00pm get ready for the raffles, and meeting Pieper Electric

**Mark this date on your calendar!** No RSVP required – just show up as soon as you are able after work.

**IMPORTANT DETAILS**

**WHEN:** November 7, 2019 (5pm-7pm)

**WHERE:** Pieper Electric, W4618 County Hwy G.

**COST:** $3.00

**WHAT:** Refreshments provided

**OPTIONAL:** Bring your business cards to give to new acquaintances. Put a card and $1 into the 50/50 drawing. One lucky winner will go home with half the pot.
Have a Very Merrill Christmas
29th Annual
Headline Sponsor is Weinhbrenner Shoe Company

Register now to take part in the lighted holiday parade. This is a high-spirited community event involving businesses, clubs, schools, church groups, choirs and organizations. The parade has no theme other than all entries must be holiday/Christmas related and light-up! The parade is not judged, it is has been created for enjoyment purposes and is done in the holiday spirit.

Date: Saturday, December 7, 2019

Register now! Each year, an estimated 5,000 people line the streets to watch the parade. To enter the parade, simply complete and return the form below to the Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce, 705 North Center Avenue, Merrill, WI 54452 or fax to 715-539-2043 or email manager@merrillchamber.org. Entry deadline is November 16. Entries after that date will not be given proper line-up coverage.

RULES

1. All parade units will be fully motorized, no walking is allowed.
2. All units will “light-up”.
3. There will only be one live Santa (the Chamber’s), so we do not confuse the young ones.
4. ABSOLUTELY NO candy or any other items can be thrown from moving entries along the route because of liability issues.
5. Entries with horses must provide a copy of liability insurance to the Chamber.
6. Parade entrants may identify their unit with their business name, but are asked not to commercialize them with sales, specials or discount signs.

SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Line-up</td>
<td>3:30 to 4:45 pm</td>
<td>S. Genesee Street (south of W. Main)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parade Start</td>
<td>5:00 pm</td>
<td>S. Genesee Street &amp; West Main Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parade Ends</td>
<td>6:00 pm</td>
<td>Lincoln County Court House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree Lighting</td>
<td></td>
<td>At Banker’s Square Pocket Park on East Main</td>
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Parade Registration Form

Organization: ____________________________________________
Contact Person: _________________________________________
Mailing Address: _______________________________________
City, Zip: ______________________________________________
Phone: _________________________________________________
Email: _________________________________________________

Entry Type: ☐ 1 Vehicle (Car/Truck) ☐ Vehicle Pulling Trailer ☐ Semi-Truck ☐ Other
Music will be used with our entry: ☐ Yes ☐ No
Horses will be used with our entry: ☐ Yes ☐ No

If known, please describe the general idea of your float:

For information contact the Chamber at (715) 536-9474 or by email at manager@merrillchamber.org

During the week of the parade, you will be sent detailed information about the parade, and a list of participants.
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