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The mission of the Chamber is to be the leading resource for making connections that foster collaboration which serves and promotes efforts to strengthen the Greater Elkhart business community.

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Relationships Matter



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Levon Johnson President/CEO Ijohnson@elkhart.org

I hope you don't mind but I would like to take this time to share some reflections with you.

By the time you receive this issue of Leading Business, I will have officially been leading your Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce for 5 years. While I strongly believe in, and practice daily reflection, it seems like a good time to look back and share what your Chamber has accomplished in my time here.

At the same time, the reality is that our work, like yours, is not a game with a designated finish line. Once you achieve goals you immediately move on to the next set of objectives. Which means the work never stops, the targets are always moving, and expectations for what is possible should be growing.

As many of you have heard me say or read from the Chamber, "We believe and operate from the premise that a strong business community is the foundation to a vibrant and healthy city."

I remember the next to last question I was asked, back in October 2017, as I was going through the final interview with the Chamber Board. "Levon, you have been in education as a teacher, coach, administrator for 25+ years. What makes you believe you will be effective moving into the work of a business organization?"

My answer was simple, and I believe it still holds true. I answered, "Whether the work is in business, education, health care, or not-for-profit work, it's all about relationships. Relationships matter most." I went into more depth after that, but that is the core of the answer. In five years, what makes us as an organization continue to grow and strengthen are the relationships. It's the relationships where people trust us in a way that they share information so we can advocate on our business community's behalf with local, state, and federal legislators. Our advocacy work applies to all business sectors and to businesses with one employee or thousands.

This includes engaging regularly with our town, city, and county officials, being asked to represent and speak for our communities at the Indiana Statehouse and on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. These relationships allow us to be a trusted ear and a trusted voice.

Over the past five years the Chamber has helped over 100 aspiring entrepreneurs receive education on operating a business, provided access to information, and helped them get connected to resources.

We have worked with partners to provide ongoing coaching, mentoring, and support for aspiring business owners as they graduate to the next phases of their business journey. The courage to become an entrepreneur is admirable. Asking for help on that road is important. Continuing to strengthen a trusted and valued relationship with the entrepreneurial community is central to your Chamber's work.

Through our What's Next program we have introduced nearly 200 college students to living and career opportunities in our region.

Most of these, now young professionals, didn't know much about life and careers in North Central Indiana before they were invited to spend a few days in our community meeting peers, employers, leaders, and residents of our region. Those that made the decision to make our home their home did so in part because of the job opportunities, but indicated the final decision was based on the relationships they made while they were here.

Of course, the visual change to the City of Elkhart and Bristol over the past five years is noticeable.

For our purposes we break the city into seven distinct areas. Understanding the vision for growth and development in each area is important. Engaging with local, regional, and national businesses, developers, and investors helps build relationships that move vision to reality.

In the past five years, your Chamber has played a role in 40+ collaborations that have led to new business investment and development within our community. Elkhart County has always been a place where relationships lead to growth.

Bringing people together to develop those relationships through shared experiences and collective problem solving has always been a strength of Chambers.

In the last five years we have had over 20,000 attendees at our networking events. During that same time period we have had over 6,700 engaged attendees join our council meetings to help identify challenges, develop action steps, provide accountability, and evaluate outcomes aimed at supporting and promoting the Greater Elkhart business community.

The things mentioned above are examples of what I said five years ago, "It's all about relationships."

Relationships matter.

Leadership also matters.

The Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce has been fortunate throughout its history to have excellent Board leadership. As we end 2022 and move into 2023 we will have our annual transfer of leadership to a new incoming Board Chair.



Mark Bagwell The Horton Group

Throughout 2022, Chair Mark Bagwell has led our Board through our postpandemic period. Overseeing the challenges of deliberation on when and how to resume our regular operations was not a small task. With his leadership and guidance, we were a leader in bringing people back together in our community. In 2022

a number of our events experienced record attendance.

In addition, Mark has been instrumental in developing the framework for the program development and accountability metrics which track and measure the outcomes of the Board Priorities. This work has led to increased action-oriented engagement by the Chamber Board of Directors as we continue to tackle the issues that slow our region's economic growth.

As Mark passes the gavel, we want to say thank you and that we appreciate the relationships he has helped foster and grow.



Beginning in January 2023, Kym Baker-Butler will take on the role of Board Chair of the Greater Elkhart Chamber.

Kym Baker-Butler Ruoff Mortgage

As a current member of our Executive Board, Kym has been a vocal and strong advocate for the Greater Elkhart business community.

Kym has committed to lead the Board, Staff, and Volunteers as we implement new programming to support entrepreneurs, increase our focus on the recruiting of talent to our area, and attack the housing issues in our region.

Experience has shown that we are in good hands as Kym takes over the leadership of the Chamber Board.

As one year closes and another begins my hope is that you continue to grow and strengthen your relationships in a way that brings positivity and productivity into your life both at work and home.

In addition, now or in the future, when the opportunity to flex your leadership muscle arises I hope you do so in a way that is engaging and impactful.

On behalf of the Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, Staff, and Volunteers thank you for choosing to be a part of our business community.

april S. John

Business Recognition Awards



Formco, Inc., located at 1100 W Beardsley Ave, Elkhart, has received a Business of the Month Award from the Greater Elkhart Chamber Business Recognition Council. Formco, Inc. was founded by Dave Slagel in 1986, and is now owned by Paul Slagel. Paul's son Matt is in Sales, and son-in-law Greg is the Controller. From their humble beginning as a small forming shop, they have grown to have complete CNC and mold making capabilities, 13 thermoforming machines, 6 CNC routers and trimmers and robotic capability. At their plant on Beardsley, they occupy 100,000 sq ft of manufacturing space, and serve customers in the HVAC, marine, industrial, military, electronics, transportation, and packaging industries. Formco is the original plastic hat can manufacturer with a unique stackable design and mechanical "tie-downs." They also make RV Sunroof panels. The company

reuse/recycle all of their plastic scrap so that nothing is sent to the landfill. The scrap is reprocessed and put right back into a usable product, saving customers money and respecting the environment. Formco has 50 employees, and the company supports employees' kids' baseball teams, fundraisers, etc. This past summer, they began hosting cookouts for the staff and their families. Formco, Inc. has been a member of the Greater Elkhart Chamber since 2005.



Martin Marketing Specialties Inc., located at 53905 CR 9 N, Elkhart, has received a Business of the Month Award from the Greater Elkhart Chamber Business Recognition Council. Brad Martin launched Martin Marketing in 1994. His vision was to offer more promotional products to more customers. In 2000, Brad built a facility so that all services provided would be in-house. This strategic move took out the middleman. Martin Marketing was now able create almost all promotional materials within their facility and ship directly. Since its founding, the organization has continued to see significant growth. Starting with five employees, Martin Marketing now employs twenty-four and is one of the premier promotional companies in Northern Indiana. The company offers a variety of promotional and marketing products to fit all of their clients' needs, including

in-house embroidery, screen printing, and also has a showroom for clients to browse the new products and clothing offered. Brad believes in treating his employees well, because they "are not just co-workers; most of them are like my family." Martin Marketing believes in giving back to the community and giving to worthy nonprofit organizations. Much of their philanthropic endeavors are through in-kind donations to events and organizations. Martin Marketing Specialties Inc. has been a member of the Greater Elkhart Chamber since 1995.







Celebrating Minority Business Excellence Award Winners

The Chamber's Business Diversity Initiative (BDI) hosted its annual award ceremony to honor the hard work, dedication and accomplishments of minority owned businesses in our community.

The Community Foundation of Elkhart County was the Presenting Sponsor for the event. and Chase was the Event Sponsor.

Members of BDI understand the unique challenges that minorities face when starting and growing a business. That's why they believe it is important to spotlight those who have overcome these obstacles and achieved success.



Communications La Raza accepted by Ignacio Zepeda



Community Impact Breanna Allen



Health Northern Indiana Hispanic Health Coalition accepted by Dara Marquez



Nonprofit Leadership Lisa Guedea Carreño



Restaurant Bill's Bar-B-Que accepted by Bill Lee



Service SCORE accepted by Steven Laureys





Happy Birthday to **Bail Home Services & Construction!** For 40 years their mission has been to provide people with top-quality projects, on-time completions and best value possible for their homes. *www.bailhome.com*



Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Northern Indiana welcomes friends to their new office. The larger space enables the expansion of their team to support people with business and residential real estate. *www.BHHSNI.com*



Corazón Sterling Silver from Taxco celebrates their downtown location at 224 S Main St, Elkhart, and introduces Spark permanent jewelry bar. Spark offers a unique semi-permanent jewelry experience. *www.corazonsterling.com*



The newly renovated, state-of-the-art **Elkhart Cancer Specialists at the Elkhart Clinic** will strengthen the community by fighting cancer and providing the best care for patients. *www.elkhartclinic.com*



Congratulations to **Ivy & Oak** on their Grand Opening! Ivy & Oak carries clothing, jewelry, accessories, and home décor. Opening soon will be an in-store café with a variety of coffees, beverages and snacks. *www.facebook.com/IvyandOakLLC*



Celebrating **McGee Medical Advocates** Grand Opening! McGee Medical Advocates educates our communities through equity to have equality for all, enabling people to make healthy choices to have wealthy outcomes. *www.mcgeemedical.com*





Congratulations to **Michiana Stone & Monument** as they celebrate their grand opening at 1632 Cassopolis St, Elkhart! Michiana Stone & Monument is a local family owned business serving the greater Michiana area. *www.michianastone.com*



OSMC honored Veterans with a Flag Ceremony at their location in Elkhart. The event featured Miller's Vets Color Guard, Elkhart High School Musicians and the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC). www.osmc.com



Nuway Construction celebrates the 800,000 SF headquarters for Way Interglobal on Innovation Drive in Elkhart. The facility includes warehouse, showroom and office spaces. *www.nuwayconstruction.com*



The Salvation Army lights the tree and kicks off the Christmas kettle campaign for 2022! All proceeds support year-round programs and emergency assistance benefiting those in need in the greater Elkhart area. *www.SAElkhart.org*



The **South Bend Orthopaedics** team celebrates the new location of Elkhart Physical and Occupational Therapy! The rehabilitation services in Elkhart County will serve people and employers at the new facility off Beck Drive and CR 17. *www.sbortho.com*



Congratulations **Ziker Cleaners** on your newest location at 2010 Cassopolis St in Elkhart! The 24/7 kiosk will be great for customers to pick up and drop off their dry cleaning and laundry on their schedule. *www.zikerfresh.com*

Business Education Partnership Awards



The **Elkhart Noon Kiwanis** has received a Business Education Partnership Award from the Education/Career Development Council of the Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce. Megan Hartman from Junior Achievement & Lemonade Day Serving Elkhart County nominated the Elkhart Noon Kiwanis.

"The Elkhart Noon Kiwanis sponsored the clock tower inside JA BizTown, including donating to our capital campaign which ensures kids of Elkhart County can enjoy this educational space."



The Elkhart County Board of Realtors has received a Business Education Partnership Award from the Education/Career Development Council of the Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce. Megan Hartman from Junior Achievement & Lemonade Day Serving Elkhart County nominated them.

"The Elkhart County Board of Realtors sponsored a storefront inside JA BizTown. This included a donation to our capital campaign which ensures kids of Elkhart County can enjoy this educational space."







Reschcor has received a Fairbanks Award from the Business Recognition Council of the Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce. The award was for their facility at 2123 Blakesley Pkwy, Bristol. The Fairbanks Award is given to recognize businesses that have made an outstanding contribution toward beautification of our community. Reschcor has been a member of the Greater Elkhart Chamber since 2010.

Third House Meetings Begin January 27

Discuss issues affecting you, your business and industry with State Legislators at the Third House Meeting on Friday, January 27 from 12 – 1:30 pm. Free to attend, in-person or virtual, by registering at www.elkhart.org.

Hear updates from legislators, then the floor is open to your questions. The opportunity to engage with our elected officials is paramount to insuring that the voices of Elkhart County are being echoed in the Statehouse during legislative sessions. Third House Meetings give the legislators and the voters a chance to communicate in an open forum.

Advocacy on behalf of members is at the core of the work the Chamber does on a daily basis. Being able to host our state lawmakers so they can meet face-to-face with their constituents is a privilege.

Indiana legislators invited to the Third House Meetings include Rep. David Abbott, Rep. Joanna King, Rep. Doug Miller, Rep. Timothy Wesco, Sen. Blake Doriot, Sen. Ryan Mishler, and Sen. Linda Rogers.

Additional Third House meetings will be held Friday, February 17 at noon and Saturday, March 11 at 10 am.



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NEW MEMBERS

Apex Placement & Consulting

www.apexstaffingco.com 905 W Maple Clawson, MI 48017 (269) 763-6200 Leeza Keshishian *Professional Recruiting Firm* Referred by Kathy Cardwell

Bimbo Bakeries USA

www.bimbobakeriesusa.com 2075 Frederic Dr Elkhart, IN 46514 (574) 206-8250 Fax: (574) 266-6217 Sheila K. Houser *Bakers: Commercial* Referred by Emma Jordan, Specialized Staffing

Bird in the Hand

www.birdinthehandelkhart.com 240 E Jackson Blvd Elkhart, IN 46516 (574) 359-5473 Kurt Janowsky *Restaurants*

Colonial Life

www.ColonialLife.com 123 Portage Rd Three Rivers, MI 49093 (269) 205-3814 Fax: (269) 257-5760 Melissa Marsh Employee Benefits

Global Building Products

www.globalbuildingproducts.us 4911 Green Ct Elkhart, IN 46516 (574) 296-6868 Fax: (574) 296-6878 Andrew Carpenter *Door/Window: Manufacturer*

Graphix Unlimited

www.graphixunlimited.com 3947 US 106 E Bremen, IN 46506 (574) 546-3770 Fax: (574) 546-5565 Melissa Vitali *Vinyl Striping & Graphics* Referred by Michelle Thomas Richardson, Industrial Safety & Environmental Services

The Grounds Guys of Elkhart and Goshen

www.groundsguys.com/elkhart-goshen 61236 CR 21 Goshen, IN 46528 (574) 406-8687 Glenn Friesen *Lawn Maintenance Snow Plowing*

Harmony at Elkhart

www.harmonyseniorservices.com 1129 Parkway Ave Elkhart, IN 46528 (574) 966-8800 Leana Sanders *Alzheimer's Care Assisted Living Facility*

Infinity UV

www.infinityuv.com 4240 Pine Creek Rd Elkhart, IN 46516 (574) 501-3888 Andrew Carpenter *Powder Coater*

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35 YEARS Elkhart County Government: Board of County Commissioners **30 YEARS** Alick's Home Medical, Inc.

25 YEARS

Big Brothers Big Sisters Southern Lake Michigan Region

20 YEARS Flags International Specialized Staffing Solutions, LLC

15 YEARS Network Solutions, Inc. Urology Associates

10 YEARS

Enerco Corporation Kruis Mold & Engineering, Inc. Vista Manufacturing, Inc.

5 YEARS

Bowen Center - Elkhart County CrossRoads RV Elkhart Place Senior Living Martell Electric, LLC REAL Services Russell Cellular Inc.

1 YEAR

Big Dog Adhesives LLC Brothers Boxing and Fitness Cadet Construction DAWA Enterprises, Inc. Don Jose's Mexican Grill and Cantina Elite Gutters, LLC Graphix Unlimited LionsHead Alloys, LLC Mentoring Moments LLC Orthopedic & Sports Medicine Center of Northern Indiana, Inc. (OSMC) The Window, Inc.

Ivy & Oak LLC

www.facebook.com/IvyandOakLLC 1300 Johnson St Elkhart, IN 46514 (574) 218-7169 Alex Walters *Retail: Specialty*

The Jackson Rooftop

www.thejacksonelkhart.com 240 E Jackson Blvd, 4th Floor Elkhart, IN 46516 (574) 359-5473 Kurt Janowsky *Bar & Grill*

Le Macaron Elkhart

lemacaron-us.com 503 S Main St Elkhart, IN 46516 (574) 326-3148 Mike Lucchese Bakeries: Retail

Michiana Stone & Monument

www.michianastone.com 1632 Cassopolis St Elkhart, IN 46514 (574) 206-5475 Jennifer Beer *Monument Dealer*

Northwestern Mutual

www.northwesternmutual.com 4215 Edison Lakes Pkwy, Ste 200 Mishawaka, IN 46545 (574) 247-6636 Fax: (574) 247-6660 Macauley Hill *Financial Services* Referred by Joan Garber, Mary Kay

Octopot, LLC

www.octopot.com 70877 Sunset Blvd Union, MI 49130 (855) 628-6768 Chris Jaworski *Specialty Manufacturing* Referred by Vito Spano, VALA Marketing

Prestige Tooling, LLC

www.prestigetooling.com 419 Harrison St Elkhart, IN 46516 (269) 470-4525 Nick Castelucci *Thermoforming Mold Manufacturer*

She Shack Maker's Studio

www.mysheshack.com 27751 CR 26, 2nd Floor Elkhart, IN 46517 (574) 241-1440 Amy Rainey *Arts and Crafts*



When Life Cives You Lemons, You Have the Right to Choose

Thursday, January 19 11:30 am - 1 pm Location TBD

> Presenter: Sarah Rice, Kem Krest Hosted by the Women's Council

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Register at Elkhart.org

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CHAMBER EVENTS



New Member Welcome 8:30 am Greater Elkhart Chamber 418 S Main St, Elkhart

Alternative Fuel Vehicles and Necessary Infrastructure 8 am Matterhorn Conference Center 2041 Cassopolis St, Elkhart

OSHA Council Breakfast - Simple Technology for Safety Inspections 7:30 am Matterhorn Conference Center, 2041 Cassopolis St, Elkhart

Chamber closed for holidays Reopen Monday, January 2, 2023



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9

New Member Welcome 8:30 am Greater Elkhart Chamber 418 S Main St, Elkhart

OSHA Council Breakfast - Artificial Intelligence Driven Safety Solutions for Ergonomic Assessments 7:30 am

Matterhorn Conference Center, 2041 Cassopolis St, Elkhart

Women's Council Luncheon - When Life Gives You Lemons, You Have the Right to Choose 11:30 am Location TBD

Third House Meeting

Greater Elkhart Chamber 418 S Main St, Elkhart

Noon

OSHA 10 Hour General Industry Training January 31/February 1, 8 am - 5 pm Matterhorn Conference Center 2041 Cassopolis St, Elkhart

Please visit www.Elkhart.org/events for updated information.

Ambassadors of the Month

presented by **J2 Marketing**



Kory Meade Modern Woodmen of America

reps.modernwoodmen.org/kmeade

"I am so grateful for my experiences as an Elkhart Chamber Ambassador for the past two years. It has been a privilege to

learn about businesses in our community and to watch them grow. I am thankful for the opportunities, connections, and friendships I have made along the way and I look forward to what 2023 will bring."



Philip Sleeseman Surf Internet

www.surfinternet.com

"I am very thankful to serve as an ambassador for the Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce. It has been very

fulfilling both professionally and personally to give back to the great members of our chamber. I greatly enjoy connecting with members about the value of fiber internet as well as the value of their chamber membership."

NEWS ABOUT OUR MEMBERS

Tami Hicks has been named the new CEO for the Boys & Girls **Clubs of Elkhart County.**

Beginning in the spring, Kevin Deary will oversee training and development in the nonprofit sector at the Community Foundation of Elkhart County.

Amanda Kindig has joined First State Bank as Branch Administrator in all four regions of the bank. Clayton Bright will serve as the Branch Operations Manager for the Elkhart region. Tylor Lichtenberger is the new Branch Operations Manager at the Middlebury office.

INOVA Federal CEO Dallas Bergl is the 2022 recipient of the Indiana Credit Union League's "Chairman's Global Good Award".

Salem Insurance, located at 609 W Lincoln Ave, Goshen, is now **EPIC Insurance Brokers and Consultants.**

TaigMarks, Inc. has changed their name to Taig Marketing. They are located at 223 S Main St, Elkhart.

Truma North America recently added Royer Allman to its sales team as a Key Account Manager.

Submit your company's news and information to marketing@elkhart.org

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A program for Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce Members.

