

August 2020

CHANNAHON
MINOOKA
Chamber & Chamber
A Division of Grundy County Chamber of Commerce

GRUNDY COUNTY
Chamber
of COMMERCE

Courier

Celebrating Anniversaries

Congratulations to the following businesses celebrating a milestone:

10 Years
Rock Soul Love

25 Years
Edward Jones Investments – Ben Sisk

Please remember, to keep your information up to date we need your help. Contact Brenda at the Chamber (admin@grundychamber.com) with the date you opened your business.

Special thanks to ExxonMobil for sponsoring our “Channahon is open for business sign,” and to Midland States Bank for the “Diamond is open for business sign.” Last month we featured pictures of the Morris (Grundy Bank), Minooka (Heartland Bank and Chapin’s), and Coal City (Coal City Bank) signs. Thank you to all of our sponsors for your support of our local businesses during this trying time!



Chamber & Community Foundation give out 35 grants to local businesses

The Grundy Chamber and the Community Foundation of Grundy County are excited to announce 35 local small businesses have been selected to receive \$1,000 grants to support their efforts to serve the community during this pandemic.

“Yes, we gave a few grants to small businesses as a result of the Diamond and Coal City tornadoes, but not to this extent. This was a purposeful effort to raise and distribute grants to small businesses so that Grundy County can rebuild after this pandemic disaster,” said Julianne Buck, Executive Director of the Community Foundation.

While there have been numerous loan and grant opportunities presented through the pandemic, it is difficult for small businesses to qualify or compete with Chicago-area businesses. The Foundation and the Chamber wanted to do something specific for the local business economy and the need was great. The organizations had 54 applications submitted for the grant fund, which has \$35,000 currently.

“We are so proud at how innovative our area businesses have been to try and stay afloat during this time. But we also know they need more help and hope these dollars can assist our local business owners as they continue the fight to stay open,” said Christina Van Yperen, President & CEO of the Chamber.

The Foundation and Chamber worked on this project for months, raising money, researching what other communities were doing, and looking for grant application models that could be adapted. The application was available via the Foundation and Chamber’s websites on June 24. In addition to answering questions regarding business needs and business plans for providing customer service, the applicants also had to identify whether they applied for other programs, such as the national Payroll Protection Program or the local City of Morris TIF grants. The businesses were asked how they expect to use their \$1,000 grant, whether for staff, mortgage/rent, utilities, disposable food containers, or disinfecting supplies – all of which are permissible uses for the small business grants.

The applications were due July 13, then the responses were compiled into “blind” scoring sheets and sent to a review committee comprised of representatives from the Chamber, the Foundation, and from the community at large. The applicant business name and other identifying information was withheld and each applicant was given an ID number to assure that no bias was a factor in scoring. Reviewers then scored each application based on the various sections of the application and the 35 applications scoring highest are receiving grants.

“To date we have only \$35,000 in the Disaster Fund specifically for small business grants. If donors would like to contribute to the Fund for this project, we’ll be able to approve more grants, going down the line based on scores. The Foundation can also reach out to donor advised funds and look to our regular grants budget to see if we can find more money for this project,” Buck said.

To donate to the Disaster Fund so the Foundation and Chamber can disburse grants to the remaining applicants, visit www.cfgrundycounty.com.

Board of Directors and Staff

Board of Directors:

+John Adler
Aflac

+Jaclyn Aldridge, Chairwoman
Grundy Bank

Angela Baumeister
WCSJ / WJDK Radio

Sarah Beach
Village of Coal City/Sunshine Garden
Center

Megan Borchers, Vice Chairwoman
LyondellBasell

John Callahan
UC Davis-Callahan Funeral Home

+ Matt Fritz, Secretary
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*** + John Harrington, Treasurer**
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CM Chamber Division Chair

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City of Morris

Mike Petrick
Village of Channahon

Erin Murphy Frobish
Morris Hospital & Healthcare Centers

+Amy Murphy
Joliet Junior College

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GEDC

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SPACECO, Inc.

Steve Vanisko
Shaw Media

***Angela Lilek, Ambassador Chair**
Morris National Bank & Trust

+ Executive Committee
* Appointed Position

Chamber Staff:

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Christine Mendez
Events Director
christine@grundychamber.com

Christina Van Yperen
President & CEO
director@grundychamber.com

Chamber Ambassadors:

John Adler,
AFLAC

Angela Baumeister
WCSJ / WJDK Radio

Brandi Backulich,
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Steve Beck
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Ashley Jurkas,
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Kaylea Mann
First Midwest Bank

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John Reynolds
Channahon General Rental

Mary Rossio
Joliet Area Community Hospice
Angels of Hope

Lara Stehlik, Secretary
Edward Jones

Linda Taglia,
Morris National Bank & Trust

Judi Tapella
Mary Kay Cosmetics

From the President & CEO's Desk

During such stressful and trying times, small things go a long way. Your spouse remembering to fill the coffee maker the night before— results in a smooth morning and the start of a good day. Saving your presentation to a USB drive and emailing it to yourself— saves the day when you forget the thumb drive on your desk. Remembering to run the dishwasher before bed makes for clean dishes for your morning rush.

Wearing a mask is another small thing that goes a long way. I'm not going to rehash the health benefits or that it's your right to wear one or not. But I will point out there is also an economic impact to wearing a mask.

The mask concept all around is a difficult one. But it's also necessary. Grundy County was recently put on warning by the IL Dept. of Public Health, meaning we're moving in the wrong direction and our positivity rate continues to rise. According to the IL Dept. of Public Health, Grundy's positivity rate was at 5.8% as of Aug. 7. In mid June it was around 2%. At 8% the state will start to implement restrictions again. The only way to avoid an eventual second shutdown is to stop the spread. Municipalities, the health department, the Chamber, and other business organizations receive calls daily from citizens and customers concerned with shopping and eating locally due to lack of masks.

When a business has a reported case, all exposed staff have to be quarantined for two weeks. In many cases, having to quarantine staff and perform a deep cleaning of the business can result in the business having to close for those weeks. That's two weeks of employees not working and zero income for the business and employees.

No income means bills go unpaid and people are forced to make hard choices with their money. Many of our friends and family members have already suffered financially due to COVID-19, and further business interruptions may force them to close their doors. That's more local people unemployed.

Let's say one of those unemployed now cancels their salon appointment because they're saving money. That hairstylist relied on that customer coming in every six weeks and others canceled their appointments for the same reason. In order to cut costs, the hairstylist pulls her child out of dance until income is more consistent and stops dining out. Other families who were laid off also cut their classes so the dance school is struggling to make rent this month. That dance school's landlord owns two other buildings where tenants are struggling to pay, and now they will struggle to make their mortgage payments. This could result in a vacant building in a once filled city.

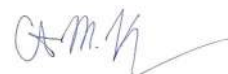
All of this as a result of someone not wearing a mask? Sounds a little farfetched for a ripple effect I know. But it's not. We all have an impact.

We all have our own opinion and beliefs on the masks. We all also want to stay employed and have a thriving economy. To keep our businesses open and our local people working, please keep your social distance and wear a mask when you can't—At work. At the store. At a restaurant. At the Sunday picnic.

Wear a mask to stop the spread. Wear a mask to stay employed. Wear a mask to keep our local businesses open. Wear a mask to keep our community viable.

To help encourage mask wearing there is a printed sign in this newsletter for your use. You can print more of this sign and others from grundychamber.com under "Coronavirus info."

Sincerely,



Christina Van Yperen

The Chamber's mission:

- Support its membership
- Promote economic development
- Preserve and enhance the quality of life of our community

Member News & Briefs

In place of its annual Corn Fest 5K Run, **Morris Hospital** will host the Conquer COVID Virtual 5K this fall. Registration is underway now through August 30 by going to raceroster.com/31061. Those participating will run / walk a 5K course or route of their choice anytime during the week of Sept. 20-27. All participants are asked to adhere to social distancing. Registration is \$15 per person and includes a Conquer COVID Virtual 5K long sleeve running shirt. The first 500 registrants will also receive a face covering. For more information, contact the Morris Hospital Wellness office at 815-705-7364.

iTrees.com and **Spring Grove Nursery** have partnered together to form Planting Peace – Growing Hope 2020. In April they took nominations of healthcare workers. To show their appreciation they planted a tree in their yard for them to enjoy for many years to come. Trees bring us peace, beauty, stress relief, and the health we are seeking during these uncertain times. They received 8 nominations and awarded all with a large Autumn Blaze Maple to be planted. On July 15 iTrees.com and Spring Grove Nursery planted these trees in each recipient's yard. We are so thankful for all our healthcare professionals and we understand the important role they play in our community.

Baseball is back! The **Joliet Slammers** has a family four pack special right now. For \$50 you get 4 tickets, 4 hot dogs, and 4 pops. To purchase call 815-722-2287. They are also offering Twofer Tuesdays—purchase BOGO tickets for all Tuesday games—\$17 for 2 tickets. Check out the Thursday drink specials and nonprofit fundraising opportunities by visiting jolietsslammers.com.

Grundy-Three Rivers Habitat for Humanity's "Board by Board Challenge" online fundraiser was born out of the need to work quickly and safely to finish the home under construction, after it was put on hold due to COVID. Kathleen, a single mother and front line healthcare worker, and her son were selected for the home in spring 2019. The goal is to have them in by Christmas. By week 4, gifts from the community surpassed the board's matching pledge of \$5,000. Reaching the \$15,000 mark would nearly close the gap between budgeted and unbudgeted expenses brought on by COVID complications. Donations can be made online at www.grundy3rivershabitat.org/donate/ or by mail to 105 E. Main, Suite 202, Morris. The fundraiser runs through Aug. 14.

Got news to share? Let us know at info@grundychamber.com

Welcome New Members!

Starved Rock Country Alliance
613 W Marquette
Ottawa, IL 61350

(844) 369-8898

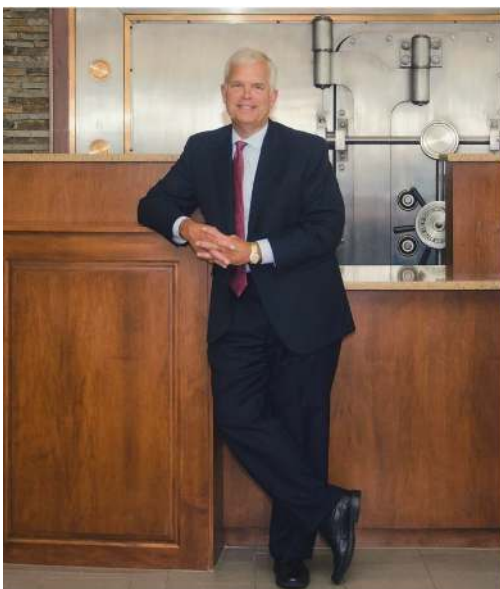
- **Non-profit organization supporting the Illinois Small Business Development Center at the Starved Rock Country Alliance, and focused on raising visibility of Education, Business, Arts and Workforce.**

Tarra Ann Photography
534 Bedford Road
Unit C
Morris, IL 60450

(815) 546-1919

- **Professional photographer specializing in newborns, families and some events.**

Don't forget these new members, and all our members, can accept Grundy County Chamber gift certificates!



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Business After Hours

Thursday, August 20

5– 7 p.m.

POSTPONED DUE TO COVID-19

We continue to monitor phase guidelines and COVID-19 data in hopes of in-person networking events returning soon!

Wear a mask



Watch your
distance



Wash your
hands



Great Food, Networking & Drawings! Bring lots of business cards!

Business After Hours are networking events where you could meet your next customer!



Virtual Coffee & Company

8-9 a.m.

Thursday, Aug. 27

RSVP by Aug. 24

This month's Coffee & Company will be hosted online by Morris Downtown Development Partnership! Grab your coffee and breakfast, and join us virtually as we hear how MDDP has been working hard for downtown Morris during this difficult time. Virtual networking is safe and helps you make connections to better your business!

This event will be held via Zoom and is free to attend. Please contact Events Director Christine Mendez at christine@grundychamber.com. There will be a Zoom link provided once you RSVP. **RSVP by Aug. 24.**

Grundy County Chamber of Commerce & Industry
909 Liberty Street
Morris, IL 60450

Or Current Resident

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