

Greater Albion Business News

January 2008

Volume 15 Issue 1

Happy New Year! Board News

We're off to a very busy start this new year and hope that you are as well!

Between breaking in a new computer and all that entails, at last getting around to "spring cleaning" in the office, and planning for several upcoming events, there are just not enough hours in the day!

Las Vegas Night will take place on Friday, January 18 beginning at 7 p.m. at the Elks' Lodge. There will be black jack, the money wheel, dirty queens and let it ride. Tickets are \$4 and are available at the Chamber, at the Elks, and from board members and Ambassadors.

Be sure to get your entry in for the Cardboard Classic Sled Race which will take place on Sunday, January 27 at the Victory Park sledding hill. It's a great and extremely affordable way to promote your business and also a wonderful team building exercise!

And watch your mail for your invitation to the annual meeting which will take place on Friday, February 15! Mark your calendars now!

At its regular December meeting, your Board of Directors appointed Teri Fogel (**Chemical Bank**) to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Missy Hoath (**Chemical Bank**) and Bill Dobbins (**Caster Concepts**) to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Scott Pickens (**Pickens Plating**).

In other business, the Board approved the 2008 budget and the new county-mandated smoking

policy. Then the 2008 officers were elected as follows: Chairman Randy Fisher (**Gordon Martin Builder**); Secretary-Treasurer—Teri Fogel (**Chemical Bank**). Bernie Konkle I (**Decker Manufacturing**) stays on as immediate past chairman and the first vice-chairman will be appointed next month.

Many thanks to Bernie I for a great year and to outgoing board members for their service.

Help Us Get The Word Out!

Please take time to get us your Member Happenings each month!

While times are obviously tough around here, many people seem to want to make them even tougher by spreading rumors about lay offs and additional business closings.

We know that there are many good things happening and we want to share every piece of good news with our members, with our citizens and with surrounding communities!

By the way, when you hear these rumors, please let us know so we can verify the information and help control the damage!

Please get us your e-mail addresses and those of your colleagues. We have saved considerable amounts of money by using e-mail rather than "snail mail" or the phones.

That helps us keep your membership investment at a minimum!

Name _____

Business _____

E-mail address _____

Additional e-mail addresses:

**Member Happenings
Nomination Forms for Small Business Awards**

**page 2 and 3
pages 4-7**

Member Happenings

The Greater Albion Chamber of Commerce encourages all members to do business with each other. The companies and individuals listed below have recently made an important investment in their business by joining or renewing their membership in the Chamber. We hope that you will consider doing business with them.

80 years

Decker Manufacturing

Other Renewals

Able Heating & Cooling

Bob Frahm Chevrolet, Buick, Pontiac

Cascarelli's of Albion

Citizens Bank

Smith-Pulling

United Educational Credit Union

Curves is offering 50% off service fee and one week free. Diet class is now open to the public. The six week course starts on January 19. Please call **Curves** at 517-629-3609 for more information.

Upcoming events at the **Albion College** Nancy G. Held Equestrian Center: Schooling Jumper Show, February 3.

Upcoming musical events at the **College** include: Lin He, violin, and Lia Jensen, piano, on Wednesday, January 23 at 8 p.m. And the Kalamazoo Brass on Friday, February 22 at 8 p.m. All concerts are open to the public and free of charge. They are held at Goodrich Chapel.

Barbara Cooke, director of community development at **Oaklawn Hospital**, is retiring on January 14. Replacing her is the former head of marketing, Keith Crowell. Dan Stulberg will join **Oaklawn** as Director of Marketing/Public Relations.

Ismon House is a wonderful and beautiful meeting place near downtown Albion. Serving all of our residents, Ismon is the only available, attractive, affordable facility of its kind for Albion and neighboring communities.

Over a century ago, Mary (Peabody) Sheldon Ismon built this handsome, four-story, brick-clad Victorian building as a private clubhouse on the corner of Clinton and Porter Streets. By the turn of the 21st century, its survival as a historically and architecturally important structure had been seriously compromised due to neglect and misuse. In order to preserve the building with its 100 years of local history, and to provide a multi-use facility for our community, the **Friends of the Mary Sheldon Ismon House** was organized in 2000 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit membership corporation. During the past 7 years, skilled and unskilled labor from hundreds of dedicated local residents, working thousands of volunteer hours, has saved us an estimated \$160,000 in costs. During this same period approximately \$350,000 has been generously donated by individuals, groups, and foundations toward the renovation of **Ismon**. Less than two years ago the 1st floor was finished, including the kitchen and the elevator, and on May 1, 2006,

Ismon House officially opened her doors to the public. *By the end of the year 2007, after 20 months of operation, Ismon will have hosted nearly 80 scheduled events for approximately 5000 people "of all ages and from all walks of life."* As soon as possible, our adaptive restoration must proceed to the remaining floors. Currently **Andreas Construction** is in the process of replacing the 39 original windows on the 2nd and 3rd floors. These windows are rotting, drafty, and subject to breakage and an "occasional visitor." We also have recently resurfaced the small flat roof over the southeast corner of the building, and tuck-pointed some of the outside brick on the south wall. From the start, **Guardian Industries** has been working with us to insulate the building and soon will insulate the outside walls on the 2nd and 3rd floors, along with the 3rd floor ceiling. **Guardian** has generously promised to continue donating all insulating materials and labor until the restoration project is completed. Once we have properly "buttoned up" the upper floors against the cold and the elements, we will seek the additional funding needed to continue and complete the full restoration of **Ismon House**.

*Please pass along
The Greater Albion Business News to your colleagues and friends and encourage them to participate in Chamber events such as Eggs & Issues, Las Vegas Night, the Cardboard Classic and the annual meeting!!*

Member Happenings

2008 Albion READS Event: Please join the Friends of the **Albion District Library** and Albion Lions Club at Saint James Episcopal Church on Thursday, January 31, from 5:30 to 7 pm for the 2008 ALBION READS Chili and Cornbread Dinner. The Dinner is an annual kickoff event to announce this year's ALBION READ—The Pursuit of Happyness, by Chris Gardner. In this true story, Mr. Gardner chronicles his long, painful, and ultimately rewarding journey from inner-city Milwaukee to the pinnacle of Wall Street. Dinner includes chili, cornbread, salad, dessert and drink for the suggested donation of \$5.00 adults, \$3.00 children 4-12, and children under 3 are free. Selected readings of Pursuit of Happyness will be performed by Susan and Ed Kernish at 6 pm. Flyers; bookmarks; and information about the book, book discussion meetings, and special events will be available. Also available will be information about the newly formed Albion Lions Club and their White Cane Projects that focus on sight conservation.

At the January 3, 2008 meeting of the **Rotary Club of Albion**, Rotarian Jeff Bell (**Homestead Savings Bank**) introduced speaker Elizabeth Schultheiss, new Executive Director of the **Albion Community Foundation (ACF)**. She announced that the **ACF** began in October 1968 and this year will celebrate its 40th anniversary. The value of all the endowed funds is now over \$5,000,000. In 2006 grants awarded totaled \$115,365.01. Since its founding, the **ACF** has distributed over \$1 million in grants. "Together, the **Albion Community Foundation** and its donors are creating "community

capital" - a permanent and growing charitable endowment that, through a wide variety of grants and programs, helps our area tackle today's needs and prepare for tomorrow's challenges." Recently funded capital improvement projects include the Kalamazoo River Trailway System, a school-age playground at the **Johnson's Childcare and Development Center**, the **Ismon House** Restoration Project, the **Kids 'N' Stuff** Capital Expansion Project and many other local capital projects. The **Rotary Club of Albion** has a donor advised charitable fund. Rotarian Jeff Bell is currently president of the **ACF** Board of Trustees.

WhizBang! Tip

Over the holidays my family went to Detroit to see The Lion King. Before the show we went to a section of Detroit called "Greek Town" for dinner.

We had narrowed our choices of restaurants to two. As my husband, Joe, was pointing at the place across the street, a waiter from the restaurant we were standing in front of bounded down three flights of steps and out the door greeting us enthusiastically.

He insisted that he had a beautiful table open and that he would take great care of us. How could we refuse?!?!

Tip #1: Ask for the sale. We might have chosen to go across the street but Nikko, our waiter and new best friend, wanted our business, asked for it, and got it.

Nikko then proceeded to make us feel like family; asking questions, determining what we like to eat (and don't) and ordering our entire family-style meal for us - from flaming cheese appetizer to dessert.

It wasn't just dinner, it was an experience!

His obvious pride in his Greek heritage, the great food, and his willingness to come out on the street to bring us in and make us feel truly special made our night at the New Parthenon restaurant something we'll remember for years.

Tip #2: A memorable first experience leads to great word of mouth (in this case 6,954 of you will hear about our experience!)

Happy New Year... Opa!

Wishing you great sales and lots of fun, Bob and Susan Negen
WhizBang! Training
Phone: 616-842-4237
Fax: 616-842-2977
E-mail: bob@whizbangtraining.com
101 Washington St. #129
Grand Haven, MI 49417

Do you have a great tip to share with your fellow retailers? Something that has made your professional life easier, more profitable, or more fun?

Submit your "WhizBang! Tip of the Week" and if we use it, you'll get our 25 page Retail Business Assessment and Action Plan Kit, a \$49 value, FREE! Plus you'll get to see your name in lights (OK, on our "WhizBang! Tip of the Week" e-mail, but it's still fun). Drop us a line at tips@whizbangtraining.com.

**Greater Albion Chamber of Commerce
Manufacturer of the Year Award**

The 23rd annual Small Business of the Year awards will be made at the Chamber Gala on Friday, February 15, 2008. Awards will be made in four different categories: **retail, service, professional and manufacturing**. Nominations for manufacturer of the year are made by the general membership of the Chamber based on the following criteria:

- Chamber member in good standing
- Been in business at least three (3) years
- # of jobs created over past year
- Staying power (a substantiated history as an established, successful business)
- Financial status (evidence of fiscal responsibility)
- Evidence of contributions to aid community-oriented projects (civic affiliations and accomplishments through the use of personal time or other resources)
- Sales and/or unit volume (an indication of continued growth and/or management ability)
- Under 200 employees.

The Manufacturer of the Year Committee will contact your nominee for substantiating information.

Nomination

Name of Business _____

Reason for Nomination _____

Please return to the Chamber office (P.O. Box 238; FAX 517-629-4284; e-mail—sue@greateralbionchamber.org) no later than Monday, January 28, 2008.

**Greater Albion Chamber of Commerce
2008 Small Business of the Year Awards**

The 23rd annual Small Business of the Year awards will be made at the Chamber Gala on Friday, February 15, 2008. Awards will be made in four different categories: **retail, service, professional and manufacturing**. Nominations for the retail, service and professional awards are made by the general membership of the Chamber based on the following **criteria**:

1. Member of the Chamber
2. Appearance of the business
3. Customer satisfaction
4. Employee satisfaction
5. Community involvement

Nomination for Retail Business

Name of Business _____

Reason for Nomination _____

Nomination for Service Business

(service businesses include restaurants, automotive service, construction, printing, publishing, insurance, real estate)

Name of Business _____

Reason for Nomination _____

Nomination for Professional

(includes accountants, architects, attorneys, consultants, dentists, morticians, optometrists, physicians, veterinarians)

Name _____

Reason for Nomination _____

Please return nomination to the Chamber office (P.O. Box 238; fax 517-629-4284; e-mail sue@greateralbionchamber.org) no later than Monday, January 28, 2008.

**Greater Albion Chamber of Commerce
Tom Feldpausch Community Loyalty Award**

The Tom Feldpausch Community Loyalty Award, established by Blair Bedient in honor of Tom upon his retirement, will be awarded at the Greater Albion Chamber of Commerce Gala, Friday, February 15, 2008 to an individual who shows outstanding loyalty to the community as demonstrated by, but not limited to, the following criteria:

- has a dream/vision for improving Albion for all
- has invested personal resources (time and money) over a considerable period of time to achieve the dream
- has chosen to live and/or work in the greater Albion area (city of Albion or Sheridan, Albion, Parma, Marengo, or Clarence townships) despite ability to live/work anywhere
- is actively involved in other aspects of community life
- by his/her actions, has worked to promote the characteristics of loyalty in others.

The recipient will be selected by a committee appointed by the Board of Directors of the Greater Albion Chamber of Commerce.

Past recipients are: Tom Feldpausch, Hank Konkle, Bill Stoffer, Ralph Cram, Bill Dobbins, Bernard Konkle I, Bob Frahm, Peter Mitchell, and Randy Fisher.

Nomination

Name _____

Reason for nomination _____

Please return to the Chamber office, P.O. Box 238 (or fax 517-629-4284), no later than Monday, January 28, 2008.

**Greater Albion Chamber of Commerce
Mary Cram Women's Leadership Award**

The Mary Cram Women's Leadership Award, established by the Board of Directors in honor of Mary Cram, will be awarded at the annual Greater Albion Chamber of Commerce Gala on Friday, February 15, 2008 to a woman who has demonstrated outstanding leadership qualities based on the following criteria:

- has a dream/vision for Albion
- has invested personal resources (time and money) over a considerable period of time to achieve the dream
- is actively involved in many aspects of community life
- by her actions has worked to improve the lives of women in the community
- has served as a mentor to other women

Nomination

Name _____

Reason for nomination _____

Please return to the Chamber office, P.O. Box 238 (or fax 517-629-4284; e-mail sue@greateralbionchamber.org), no later than Monday, January 28,, 2008.



Eggs & Issues

Friday, Jan. 18, 2008

7:30 A.M.

Cascarelli's of Albion

\$7.00 per person

R.S.V.P (if possible)

517-629-5533

*Start the year out right and bring a friend
and/or co-worker and enjoy the fun and in-
formation.*



Events for January 2008

Week of January 13 - 19:

15th - Chamber Board of Directors meeting @ EDC -11:45 a.m.

16th - Las Vegas Night training @ Albion Elks Lodge-5:30 p.m.

18th - Eggs & Issues @ Cascarelli's of Albion - 7:30 a.m.

18th - Las Vegas Night @ Albion Elks Lodge - 7 p.m.

Week of January 27-31:

27th - Cardboard Classic Sled Race - Victory Park sledding hill - check-in begins at 12:30 p.m.

Friday, February 15—Annual Chamber Gala