

Fabricating Concepts Announces Partnership

Fabricating Concepts, LLC, a division of **Caster Concepts, Inc.** located in Albion, Michigan announces a manufacturing partnership with Striker Tool for the production of the "Striker TS" air operated post driver.

The Striker TS Post Pounder is the result of 3 years of product development by Roger Cunningham, chief engineer for Striker Tool. Roger stated, "The Striker TS is a world class product that simplifies the task of driving metal fence posts while alleviating physical fatigue when multiple posts must be driven. Through an innovative process of product development and prototype testing we believe we have a product that consumers in many markets will find extremely valuable."

Fabricating Concepts, LLC, under the direction of Striker Tool has now assumed all production responsibilities for the Striker TS product line.

Fabricating Concepts specializes in the most difficult fabricating challenges while combining precision machining, laser

cutting, forming and welding. Products produced by **Fabricating Concepts** are built to the highest quality standard demanded by the customer combining ease of use and durability. Fabricating Concepts, LLC will manufacture, assemble and ship the Striker TS product complete to the customer.

William Dobbins, president of **Fabricating Concepts, LLC** commented, "Great partnerships begin with great ideas and are built around trust and respect and this could not be truer in this partnership with Striker Tool. We are excited about our partnering with Striker Tool and its post pounder line of products. The Striker TS is an outstanding product that we believe will find rapid consumer acceptance and long term success in the market place."

For more information, visit: www.fabricatingconcepts.com, www.casterconcepts.com, and www.strikerpostdriver.com.



The Striker Post Driver

Please Help Us Out

In order to cut down on our operating expenses, while providing even better service to our membership, we are trying to communicate with you by e-mail as much as possible. Please send us your e-mail addresses if you have not already done so. We would really appreciate it.

Also, don't forget to send in your "Member Happenings". However, unimportant they may seem to you, they will help us to better serve you and promote your business.

Winterfest 2009
Member Happenings
Top Hat Affair/Awards Nominees

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Perfect Snow, But Very Cold for Winterfest 2009

Saturday, January 24, Victory and Rieger Parks were the scene of the first winter disc golf tournament on Albion's new championship course. Registration took place at the Victory Park pavilion at 11 a.m. where instructions and techniques were demonstrated prior to the tournament.

The very cold weather prevented many people from participating, but the seven enthusiasts who turned out had a lot of fun!. Several people from Jackson than showed a sound interest in participating in the Cardboard Classic on Sunday. While they did not, they did come to observe and plan to participate next year.

Chamber Board Chairman Lee Schultheiss chaired this event and sponsors were:

Albion Auto Mart
Albion Insurance
Artisson, LLC
Decker Manufacturing
Culligan Water Conditioning
Dove & Hickey, PLC
Gordon Martin Builder
J. Kevin Tidd Funeral Home
Murray-Tymkew & Associates
and Springport Insurance
Performance Automotive
Pickens Plating
Riley, Rowley, Weeks
Triangle Plumbing
Zick's Body Shop

Thank you to Lee, the sponsors, and the participants.

We're looking forward to the next Chamber tournament the first weekend in May.



Many people with 'cabin fever' turned out at Las Vegas Night held at the **Elks** on Friday night January 30 to kick off the 2009 Winterfest.

While snow wasn't really a problem this year as it has been sometimes in the past, it was a very cold night outside, but warm and animated inside.

Randy Fisher (**Gordon Martin Builder**), Immediate Past Chairman of the Board chaired this event. Other committee members included: Mike Olma (**J. Kevin Tidd Funeral Home**), Mike Tymkew (**Murray-Tymkew and Associates**), RoseMary Fisher (**Gordon Martin Builder**), Teri Fogel (**Chemical Bank**), Ron Wright (**Citizens Lumbertown**), Wendy Couling (**Culligan Water Conditioning**) and Sandi Pfeffer.

Thanks to all of the volunteers and participants and the **Elks**, the evening was a great success!

Hundreds of people braved the cold to participate in the 18th Annual Cardboard Classic Sled Race on Sunday, January 25. Many spectators were there to watch as well.

The 111 sledders came from all over the State and from Indiana as well. Many were repeat visitors while many were new. The oldest participant was 70 years old and has been participating almost from the beginning. Others who have repeatedly participated were Doug Keller from Bay City and Dave Daniels from Troy. Larry Maynard and Jim Davis revived the sled they "retired" a year ago," The Grateful Sled" to "Tis The Season", and proceeded to win 1st place in their division, 1st place over all, and the Corporate Challenge.

The results were as follows:

Category A – 3-5 year olds
 Best design – Caleb Whittaker
 Downhill
 1st place –Elena Rivera
 (continued on page 4)

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.

86 Years

Albion College
SEMCO Energy

50 years

Family Fare (formerly
Felpausch)

25 years

Albion Public Schools
Smith –Pulling Insurance
Tendercare Health Center of
Albion

15 years

Lopez Taco House

5 years

Albion Community Initiative

1 year

Priority Health

Other Renewals

Albion Economic Development
Corporation
Anne B. Norlander
Clariant
Owens Petroleum

At the January Board of Trustees meeting for the **Albion Community Foundation**, the board voted to rename the foundation's undesignated fund, the "Fund for Greater Albion." While the fund will continue to provide the basis for the Foundation's unrestricted

grantmaking, the new name will help the Foundation emphasize its commitment to the greater Albion area. **2009 grant deadlines for the Fund for Greater Albion will be April 1, 2009 (with grant announcements made in late June) and September 1, 2009 (with grant announcements made in late November).** Any 501 (c)(3) or other tax exempt organization serving the greater Albion area is eligible to apply for a grant from the Fund for Greater Albion. All applications and guidelines are available via the **Albion Community Foundation's** website at

www.albionfoundation.org and at the office of the **Albion Community Foundation**, located at 203 S. Superior Street, Albion. "The **Albion Community Foundation** is committed to enhancing the quality of life in our community, especially in these uncertain economic times," stated Elizabeth Schultheiss, executive director of the foundation. In order to maximize grantmaking in 2009, the foundation will be capping grants at \$5,000, and will be putting a moratorium on capital grants (building/renovation grants) and a dollar: dollar cash match will be required by organizations seeking funds for the purchase of equipment. A draft proposal may be submitted for **Foundation staff to review and provide feedback up to three weeks before the deadline. Draft proposals are due by March 11, 2009 and August 11, 2009.** While a draft proposal is not required, it is highly encouraged that persons looking to apply for grant funds, contact the foundation to discuss their proposal prior to submission. **Upcoming drop-in grant technical assistance times are:**

Thurs., Feb. 26th 2:30 – 4:30 pm

Mon., March 2nd 2:30 – 4:30 pm
Tues., March 10th 10:00 - Noon
Wed., March 11th 10:00 – Noon
Tues., March 17th 2:30 – 4:30 pm
Tues., March 24th 2:30 – 4:30 pm

Music, discussion, food and more promise a lively time as **Albion College** celebrates "Making History" Black History Month. This annual exploration of African-American heritage and culture is presented through several interesting and entertaining events, all open to the public. For more information, please contact the Albion College Office of Intercultural Affairs. Thursday, February 5: Panel discussion, "Obama's America: Understanding Blackness Today." Albion College students and faculty, along with community leaders, discuss perceptions and misperceptions of today's society. 7 p.m., Norris Center Towsley Hall

Sunday, February 15: The Brazeal Dennard Chorale. Founded in 1972, the Brazeal Dennard Chorale performs significant works by African-American composers, often with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. 4 p.m., Goodrich Chapel

Sunday, February 22: Taste of Blackness with Parlé With Us Poetry Tour. Albion College Black Student Alliance presents its annual favorite, with traditional soul food and a gospel performance. The Parle With Us Poetry Tour makes a special appearance with a captivating show promoting the art of spoken word and diversity among cultures. 4 p.m., Kellogg Center.

Yinger Family Lecture. Anthropologist and Honors Program director Emmanuel Babatunde of

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Winterfest 2009 *(continued from page 2)*

2nd place – Shianne Alejandro
 3rd place – Cooper Peterson

Category B – 6-8 year olds

Best design-Mikayla Treeg
 Downhill

1st place – Haley Engblom
 2nd place – Blake Blodgett
 3rd place – Halel Curl

Category C – 9 and 10 year olds

Best design- Miranda Gilbert
 Downhill

1st place – Miranda Gilbert
 2nd place – Austin Fountain
 3rd place – Gage Keller

Category D – 11-15 year olds

Best design-Christopher Cubberly
 Downhill

1st place – Marissa Markovich
 2nd place – Devon Reuther
 3rd place – Ross Brown

Category E – 16 years and older (individual)

Best design – Jeffrey and Dave Daniel

1st place – Larry Maynard
 2nd place – Doug Keller
 3rd place – Blynn Dodge

Category F – Powder Puff

Best design –Teresa Ducsay
 1st place – Teresa Ducsay

Category G – Groups, Businesses and Organizations – under 16

Best design – Kids ‘N’ Stuff
 1st place- Cub Scout Pack 157
 2nd place – Able Heating
 3rd place – Caserta/Merritt family

Special thanks to **World Corrugated**, the **City of Albion**, Dan Skean, **Albion College**, Ron Rice (**Albion Insurance Agency**), Ray



Photos courtesy of Lee Schultheiss (Artisson, LLC)



Campbell, **Albion College** student volunteers, Mayor Joe Domingo, Jill Domingo, **Mike Nofs**, Greg Moore, Dawn Morgan and Lisa Eckmyre and all of the volunteers who made this event a huge success. Thanks also to the *Albion E-News*, the *Battle Creek Enquirer*, the *Jackson Citizen Patriot*, and *The Recorder* for their wonderful coverage.

Now that the Sled Race is over, we hope that the snow will soon go away!

Michigan Poem

It's winter in MICHIGAN
 And the gentle breezes blow

Seventy miles an hour
 At twenty-five below.

Oh, how I love MICHIGAN
 When the snow's up to your butt

You take a breath of winter
 And your nose gets frozen shut.

Yes, the weather here is wonderful
 So I guess I'll hang around

I could never leave MICHIGAN
 'Cause I'm frozen to the ground!

Attributed to Bubba-MoCity

Lost and Found

Winterfest 2009
 January 23, 24 & 25

Friday - 7 pm to Midnight
Las Vegas Nights
 Albion Elks Lodge M44357
 Admission - \$4

Saturday - 11 am
Disc Golf Tournament
 Victory Park
 For more information (517) 629-5533

18th Annual
Sunday Cardboard Classic
 Victory Park
 Registration 12:30pm - 1:30pm
 No entry or admission fee
 For information call The Albion Chamber of Commerce at 517 629-5533 www.greateralbionchamber.org

*Pole Signs by Spry Sign and Graphics
 Photo courtesy of Lee Schultheiss (Artisson)*

Tuesday morning all four of these signs were still downtown, but as we went to pick them up on Tuesday afternoon, we discovered that two on the north end of Superior Street had disappeared. We use these signs on many occasions to promote our community and would like to have them back. If you know of their whereabouts, please call The Chamber!

Member Happenings *(continued from page 3)*

Lincoln University discusses "African Immigration as the Radical 'Other.'" 7 p.m., Bobbitt Visual Arts Center.

One Hour Martinizing is celebrating its 51st anniversary.

At the January 22 meeting of the **Rotary Club of Albion**, Rotarian Sue Marcos introduced guest speaker Dianne Guenin-Lelle, professor of foreign languages at **Albion College**. She spoke about the Sister City Relationship between Albion and Noisy-le-Roi France. Through Sue Marcos, who lived in France for a number of years and is now director of the Greater Albion Chamber of Commerce, a vibrant sister city relationship was established ten years ago. Noisy is a bedroom town to Paris. It has an Albion Square and is committed to preserving a green space next to Versailles, its neighbor. There have been many exchanges and partnerships between Albion and Noisy: visits

back and forth, homestays, and internships. This summer, through Michelle Mueller, a trip to Noisy is planned for Albion seniors to stay with families there and study Impressionism. Also, arrangements are being made for young French students, age 18 to 20, to come to Albion for internships at the **Albion District Library** and **Kids 'N' Stuff**. Nicholas Replumaz is arriving from France in February for an internship. Three **Albion College** students are interested in going to France this summer.



The Battle Creek Chamber of Commerce Foundation in cooperation with The Marshall Community Foundation and Kellogg Community College Albion Campus are offering an entrepreneur training opportunity for the residents of Marshall, Albion and Homer communities.

Learn how to write your own Business Plan and pursue the dream of owning your own business by receiving thorough and focused business training over 10 weeks with the **Battle Creek Self Employment Program**

Program Orientations are scheduled for the following dates in 2009 at 5:30 pm—6:30pm Marshall Community Foundation, 126 W. Michigan Avenue Suite 202 Marshall: March 31st, April 7th, 14th, 21st 2009

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*Dianne Guenin-Lelle spoke recently at the Rotary Club of Albion about our Sister City relationship with Noisy-le-Roi, France.
Photo courtesy of Miriam Daly*

Chamber Meets Mayor Domingo

Mayor Joe Domingo hosted the January 20 meeting of the Board of Directors of the Greater Albion Chamber of Commerce in his office in at city hall. Mayor Domingo outlined his goals for the city, one of which is more collaboration with the Albion business community as represented by The Chamber. That goal coincides with one of the Chamber's goals, as well, which is more collaboration between The Chamber, the City, the DDA and the EDC. An open and candid exchange between board members and the Mayor was extremely beneficial and The Chamber looks forward to the

opportunity to work more closely with the Mayor and City Council as we move forward in this struggling economy. The Chamber is a private, non-profit, membership organization made up mainly of businesses in our community. The Chamber sponsors many community events (such as the Festival of the Forks, La Fete de la Musique, the Cardboard Classic Sled Race) that bring people into our community where they "spend dollars" to help support our local businesses. Promoting a prosperous business community is our goal. Supporting Chamber events helps our community and its quality of life.

Annual Chamber Gala and Awards

We hope that you have received your invitation to the Annual Chamber Gala and Awards which will take place at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, February 13 at Bellisima Bridal Salon (the former Masonic Temple). If for some reason, you have not received yours please call the Chamber (517-629-5533). Chaired by Elaine Rice (**Albion Insurance Agency**), the committee has been mindful of *your* pocket book in these tough economic times (tickets are \$8 per person for some very unique entertainment) and of the weather conditions this time of year (the event is in town rather than at the lake). Moreover, the committee wanted to promote our member eateries and encourage guests to dine downtown at **Cascarelli's**, **Charlie's**, **Lopez Taco House**, or **The Phoenix** and visit one of Albion's unique retail businesses housed in an historic building.

To accommodate our younger members, (or grandparents) **Kids 'N' Stuff**, is holding a Valentine's Day party for children 1—12 years old from 5:30-10:15 p.m. See enclosed flier for details.

Awards are always a special part of our galas and this year is no different. We will be honoring member businesses and individuals who have worked hard to improve our community. While one not need be present to win, we **certainly encourage all nominees to attend!**

In the retail category, the following member businesses have been nominated: **Albion Paint Spot**, **Citizens Lumbertown**, **College Chevrolet-Buick-Pontiac**, **Culligan Water Conditioning**, and **RB Electronics**

(**Radio Shack**).

In the service business category, the nominees are: **Advance Cleaning**, **Albion Heritage Bed & Breakfast**, **Albion Insurance**, **Albion Tire City**, **Art Craft Press**, **Artisson, LLC** (Lee Schultheiss), **Cascarelli's**, **Chemical Bank**, **Narconon Freedom Center**, **Parks Drug Store**, **Ruff & Kreger**, and **Spry Sign & Graphics**.

Nominated professionals are: **Jennifer Aschenbrener, DVM**; **Ralph Cram, MD**; **Colin McCaleb, PhD** (KCC-EAC), **Neil Starkey, DDS**; and **Lane Stumpos, DDS**.

Nominated for Manufacturer of the Year are: **Caster Concepts**, **Guard-**

ian Industries, **Team One Plastics**, and **World Corrugated Container**.

Up for the Mary Cram Women's Leadership award are: **Cathy Campbell**, **Sherry Grice**, **Nancy Held**, **Robina Quale-Leach**, **Juanita Solis-Kidder**, **Miriam Tenorio**, and **Colleen Verge**.

And for the Tom Feldpausch Community Loyalty Award: **Bill Dobbins**, **Edward Haas**, **Lee Schultheiss**, **John Shedd**, **David Weeks**, and **William Wheaton**.

The **Albion Community Foundation** will also present its non-profit (501c3) of the year award during the evening.

Top Hat Affair

Greater Albion
Chamber of Commerce

ANNUAL MEETING
& AWARDS

Friday, February 13, 2009

"A Unique Fashion Show"
Bellisima Bridal Salon
200 W. Center St, Albion

7:30 p.m. Meeting & Awards
Fashion Show Following

Don't miss
this extremely
unique fashion show

Tickets
\$8.00

Member Happenings *(continued from page 5)* Connections

Classes begin Saturday May 23rd 2009 at Kellogg Community College Campus (I-94 Exit # 119)

Call (269) 962-4076 to arrange for an Orientation

Program Training Cost \$200 * \$100 down balance due June 15th 2009

WE HELP GIVE WINGS TO YOUR BUSINESS DREAMS

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 and the annual Gala and Awards on Friday,

Mark these dates on your calendar NOW!

April 30—Launching of 2009-2010 Virtual Expo

May 2—Disc Golf Tournament

June 21—Fete de la Musique. Think Music. Think Albion.”

One of the benefits of belonging to The Chamber is the use of our bulk mail permit which brings you considerable savings on postage. In some cases, the savings even pay for your Chamber membership. So don't forget to take advantage of this program when you wish to reach many people by direct mail.

However, be sure to check with Peg (517-629-5533) to find out just what the postal requirements are.

And whether you do bulk mailings (200 +) through The Chamber or send out large mailings (-200) yourself, be sure to check with the Post Office as they are now enforcing some old regulations which had not been followed heretofore. Organizations which send out newsletters should definitely check with the post office before their next mailing!

Let's Celebrate Our Successes!!!

While the media continues its messages of doom and gloom, The Chamber offers several means of celebrating our successes, whatever they may be. For example, hold a ribbon-cutting for an expansion, a move, new employees, new products or just for fun! They are a very cost-effective way of making your business more visible and celebrating our successes. They're not just for new businesses! And please, please send us your *Member Happenings* (electronically if possible) for *The Greater Albion Business News* or *Chamber e-News*. It's a totally **free** way of promoting your business! Be creative-it doesn't have to be headline news!

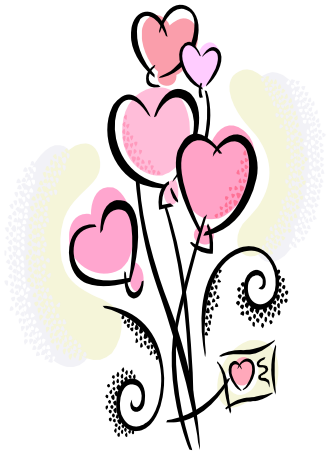
Mayor Joe Domingo is busy making the rounds this month to learn what various groups are doing in hopes of consolidating the work of many organizations and committees which are working on similar goals. Finding new people to participate, eliminating many meetings and duplication of efforts, getting everyone on the "same page" is one of his goals.

It was with that in mind, that the mayor joined the first meeting of the spring semester of the "College/Community Connection", an informal group composed of leaders of community and campus organizations, which has been meeting once a month during the school year for the past three years. The goal is to exchange information, recruit volunteers, and make better connections between Albion College and our community.

The Chairmanship of "The Connection" is shared by Michael Frandsen, Director of the Gerstacker Program of Professional Management, and Al Pheley, Director of the Ford Institute for Public Policy at the college. Approximately 25 people attend the monthly meetings of "The Connection" which have been mutually beneficial.

E-Mail Addresses

As postal rates continue to rise and the USPS is considering cutting delivery days down to five, we encourage you to give us your e-mail addresses so that we can get news to you in an affordable and timely fashion. Send to sue@greateralbionchamber.org



**Kids 'N' Stuff's
Valentine Friday Fun Night
Friday, February 13, 2009
5:30-9:00**

Extended care available until 10:15 for an additional charge of \$5.00 per child

Ages 1-12

Cost: \$25 first child, \$15 each for additional siblings, maximum charge of \$45 per family

Space is limited; reservation and payment are needed by Wednesday, February 11, 2009. We will not be taking walk-ins for this event.

Pizza, Juice and a snack will be provided. Participants will have the chance to make crafts to take home with them.



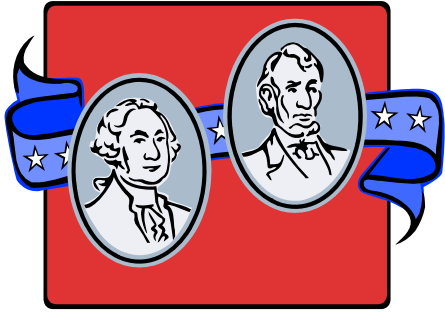
**Call or stop by Kids 'N' Stuff today
to reserve your spot 517-629-8023**



Kids 'N' Stuff

An Interactive Experience for Kids

301 South Superior Street • Albion, Michigan 49224



Events for February 2009

Week of Feb. 1 – 8:

2nd – City Council Meeting – 7:30 pm @ City Hall

5th – Albion EDC Board of Directors meeting – 7:30 am. @ EDC conference room

Week of Feb. 9 – 15:

11th – Albion Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors meeting – 7:30 am

13th – Chamber Annual Gala – 7:30 pm – Bellissima Bridal Salon - \$8 per person – call 629-5533 for info.

15th – “Men Who Cook” - 12:30 – 2 pm – First United Methodist Church

Week of Feb. 16-22

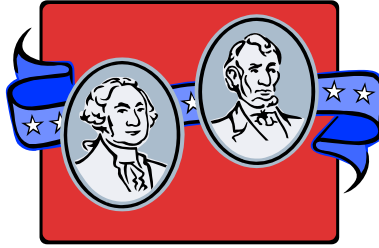
16th – Presidents’ Day

17th – Chamber Board of Directors Meeting – 11:45 am.

17th – City Council Meeting – 7 pm @ City Hall

20th – Eggs & Issues – 7:30 am – Cascarelli’s of Albion

20th – Forks Senior Center Walleye Dinner – 5 – 7 pm @ Albion Elks Lodge - \$12 per person



Eggs & Issues

Friday, February 16, 2009

7:30 A.M.

Cascarelli's of Albion

(Please use conference room door off back parking lot)

\$8 per person

R.S.V.P.

517-629-5533

(New Policy- to keep cost down- R.S.V.P by February 19th at 4 p.m.-Please honor your reservation or you will be billed)