



OREGON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
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Promoting Oregon Area's Businesses & Community

OREGON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

March Membership Meeting

Thursday, March 18, 2010; 7:30-9:15 AM

Hosted By: **State Bank of Cross Plains-Oregon**

Sponsored By: **State Bank of Cross Plains-Oregon**



Board Members Present:

- Judy Knutson, Oregon Community Bank & Trust
- David Mastos, DLM Financial Solutions
- Barb Mulcahy, State Bank of Cross Plains-Oregon
- Steve Peotter, Oak Bank
- Erika Weidler, Firefly Coffeehouse

Board Members Absent:

- Erin Kaether, Academy of Sound
- Jeff McCarthy, Alliant Energy
- Jerod Bennett, Keller Williams Realty
- Jason Johns, Wisconsin Legislative Strategies

Staff Present:

Marechiel Santos-Lang (Executive Director), Kristin McGuine (Member Services Manager)

Members Present:

- Sara Hynek (American Cancer Society/Relay for Life)
- Mari Johnson (A Beautiful Window)
- Sandy Ambrosius (Best Paws)
- Richard Lornson (Comfort Keepers)
- Julie Pankow-Helland (Creative Marketing Specialists)
- Kaori "Kay" Nelson (D-Chai Traditional Thai Massage)
- Reverend Karl Hermanson (Faith Evangelical Lutheran)
- Richard Waldschmidt (Faith Evangelical Lutheran)
- Brenda Cuta (First Weber Realtors)
- Dave Payne (Gary Wille's Auto & Tire Center)
- Lori Miller (Group Health Co-operative of South Central Wisconsin)
- Dave Mueller (LiteWire Internet Services)
- Angie Baskin (M&I Bank)
- Gerald Neath (Oregon Area Historical Society)

- Joan Gefke (Oregon Historical Preservation Commission)
- Deb Bossingham (Oregon Pool)
- Susan Santner (Oregon Public Library)
- Franciska Anderson (Pivotal Point Acupuncture)
- Paul Lynch (PLH & Associates)
- Ginny Hazen Damman (Restaino & Associates Realtors)
- Staci Boudreau (State Bank of Cross Plains-Oregon)
- Kyle Zimmer (State Bank of Cross Plains-Oregon)
- Bill Torhorst (Torhorst & Associates)
- Paul Morrison (The Wood Cycle)
- Linda Paddock (Unified Newspaper Group)
- Steve Staton (Village of Oregon)
- Mike Gracz (Village of Oregon)
- Mark Below (Village of Oregon)
- Kermit Traska (WOW Cable Television)

➤ **Call to Order (8:01 AM)**

Chamber President Steve Peotter called the meeting to order. He welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked host and sponsor State Bank of Cross Plains. Steve noted that this month's meeting is being held at a different time than usual this morning, and he thanked everyone for making time to come and attend. Steve also mentioned that it is great to have such a strong and positive relationship with the Village, this morning's featured speakers.

➤ **Around the Table** Members introduced themselves and shared with fellow members information about their business or organization including news, changes, promotions, sales and events.

- **Paul Lynch, PLH & Associates**

PLH & Associates is a real estate developer, property & business management firm. This is to say that they own some of the businesses that are tenants in some of their buildings, such as Cousins & Fantastic Sams here in Oregon. They currently manage about fifteen properties throughout Dane County, but are based in Oregon. They are still working toward building a Holiday Inn Express in Oregon-they are trying to achieve (now at 84%) required equity.

- **Dave Mastos, DLM Financial Solutions**

DLM Solutions is a boutique financial services and insurance company, that helps clients get more out of life. Dave is Treasurer of the Chamber, now for the 2nd year.

- **Bill Torhorst, Torhorst & Associates**

Torhorst and Associates is a local independent insurance agency, and they also do investments. Bill was previous two-time Chamber president.

- **Sandy Ambrosius, Best Paws**

Best Paws is based in Brooklyn, WI but Sandy has a massage table and will travel to client locations. She can help dogs, for example those with arthritis or hip dysplasia, experience less discomfort and a longer life. Best Paws also does dog sitting, walking, and training. Sandy is also selling raffle tickets for the Oregon Police K-9 Unit fundraiser, for chance to win a horse.

- **Angie Baskin, M&I Bank**

Angie is a personal banker with M&I Bank. M&I has a new business checking account product coming out soon, so be sure to be watching for more details!

- **Kaori “Kay” Nelson, D-Chai Traditional Thai Massage**
Kay brought handouts for business owners, offering ten 60-minute massages for \$35 each (usually \$60 each!)
- **Brenda Cuta, First Weber Realtors**
First Weber does mostly residential real estate. She mentioned this year has been starting out really well!
- **Julie Pankow-Helland, Creative Marketing Specialists**
Creative Marketing Specialists helps put your corporate logo on promotional products. Julie has been doing this for 20 years. Julie is also a past Chamber President.
- **Barb Mulcahy, State Bank of Cross Plains-Oregon**
Barb is in bus banking and commercial lending with the bank. She is also currently Vice President of the Chamber Board.

Barb recognized Marechiel as having been selected one of InBusiness magazine’s “40 Under 40” for 2010- and is even on the cover!

- **Mari Johnson, A Beautiful Window**
A Beautiful Window does custom window treatments, and operates in conjunction with Oregon Hometown Design Center, which also offers other home décor products such as kitchen cabinets and flooring. Mari hopes to hold a ribbon-cutting ceremony and host member and customer appreciation events at their newly constructed facility.
- **Lori Miller, Group Health Co-operative of South Central Wisconsin**
GHC-SCW offers business and individual health insurance through ChamberCare plans. These are available either directly through GHC or through independent agents. Two of Lori’s “favorite” agents are here today: David Mastos and Bill Torhorst.
- **Erika Weidler, Firefly Coffeehouse**
Erika is co-owner of the Firefly Coffeehouse. She is also a Chamber board member.
- **Gerald Neath, Oregon Area Historical Society**
The Oregon Area Historical Society runs solely on volunteers. Gerald thanked all who have supported them in the past year. He also encouraged businesses to join their society, if they do so, they will be well-recognized.
- **Richard Lornson, Comfort Keepers**
Richard said he knows that there are lots of family care givers out there—and now they can get paid for the work they do. Comfort Keepers will come out to observe the nature of the care being given, and place a value on the time committed. They will then “hire” the caregiver to provide care. In addition, Comfort Keepers will provide respite care givers when the family care giver is unable to provide care.
- **Susan Santner, Oregon Public Library**
Susan is the Director of the Oregon Public Library. She has been here at the Oregon library about a year. This is the library’s Centennial Year, and there are lots of special events planned. The library is working with Paul Morrison at The Wood Cycle to create a new circulation counter, to be unveiled at the official library birthday party next fall.
- **Sara Hynek, American Cancer Society/Relay for Life**
There are plenty of upcoming activities to raise money for the American Cancer Society. These include:
-Bark for Life, May 1
-Cancer survivors spaghetti dinner, May 22

-Relay for Life – It's never too late to form a relay team! June 18-19

- **Dave Payne, Gary Wille**
Currently running \$23.95 oil change and \$14.95 tire rotation specials. They will come pick up your car to save you the time of coming in to drop it off and have to find a ride back to where you need to be.
- **Staci Boudreau, State Bank of Cross Plains**
State Bank of Cross Plains is running a promotion where they mailed out postcard to local residents, and residents bring the cards in and drop in a drop box. There will then be a drawing for \$1000 from the drop box at end of April.
- **Kyle Zimmer, State Bank of Cross Plains**
Kyle is a personal banker and consumer lender.
- **Fran Anderson, Pivotal Point Acupuncture**
Pivotal Point Acupuncture, after one year in business, boasts over 300 patients from throughout a wide area. And, Fran is very proud that her first infertility case stopped in recently with her baby.
- **Ginny Hazen Damman, Restaino & Associates Realtors**
Ginny is a broker, and she fell in love with Oregon. She wants to sell and list here, and is offering a home warranty on her properties.
- **Deb Bossingham, Oregon Pool**
Deb is the aquatics director at the pool. They are still running their March Madness promotion.
- **Linda Paddock, Unified Newspaper Group**
Unified Newspaper Group publishes the community newspapers in Oregon, Verona and Stoughton, as well as the Great Dane shopping supplement. They are located in downtown Oregon, and are open every weekday until 5:00 PM. They will be printing a home and garden section soon, and this annual section is the biggest supplement section of the year.

The Oregon Observer is now four pages larger. They also have a new press in Platteville, which is affording the publication much higher quality.

Steve Peotter mentioned that we appreciate the Observer for letting us share chamber news through regular newspaper columns.

- **Paul Morrison, The Wood Cycle**
The Wood Cycle takes old dead wood and makes beautiful new objects out of it. One of his current projects is recreating the library's circulation desk, in honor of the library's centennial. He hopes to incorporate as many different kinds of wood from the community as possible.

The Wood Cycle will also be hosting an The Hayloft Gallery Art Fair on June 19-20.

- **Rick Waldschmidt, Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church**
On May 1, Habitat for Humanity will be welcoming 3 families to a new Habitat home (a new four-plex). Rick is a past President of the Chamber.
- **Reverend Karl Hermanson, Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church**
Revered Hermanson has recently relocated to Oregon and mentioned that he loves seeing everyone coming together to work together in the community. He has not really ever experienced this atmosphere before in communities where he has previously worked.

- **Dave Mueller, LiteWire Internet Services**

LiteWire offers high speed internet service to rural areas. Dave also plays guitar in a rock cover band. ☺

- **Joan Gefke, Historic Preservation Commission**

Joan is a retired paralegal. She has become something of a “marketing specialist” for the Village. She is on the Historic Preservation Commission helping promote Oregon’s historic attributes and its uniqueness as a village. Joan is spearheading the effort to host the Wisconsin Association of Historic Preservation Commissions’ spring conference on April 23-24 here in Oregon at the Gorman & Company red brick building. They are bringing in a guest speaker from Annapolis, MD. She hopes the event will bring in 150-160 people from around the state to in turn help local businesses. She does miss the fact that there’s no hotel in Oregon yet, and her conference attendees will be staying in Evansville.

- **Marechiel Santos-Lang, Oregon Area Chamber of Commerce**

Marechiel thanked Barb for mentioning the In Business Magazine recognition and is happy that the article also brought publicity to Oregon.

- **Approval of Minutes from the 2/18/10 Membership Meeting**

Richard Lornson made the motion to approve the meeting minutes. Susan Santner seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- **New Member Plaques**

- Mari Johnson, A Beautiful Window
- Ginny Hazen Damman, Restaino & Associates Realtors

- **Member Development**

Presenting the State of the Village of Oregon

- Village President Steve Staton
- Village Administrator Mike Gracz
- Public Works Director for the Village Mark Below

Village President started out his talk by indicating that he is very pleased that relations between the Village and the Chamber are no longer so contentious, and he recognized Marechiel for bringing about this positive change. He enjoys working with the Chamber on an on-going basis. Steve also said lauded Mike Gracz (“the best municipal administrator in Dane County”) and Mark Below (his job being more than keeping the roads clear from snow and cutting grass but actually involved dealing with engineering plans and analysis of complex public works issues). Steve is impressed with Mark’s knowledge and history with Oregon, and appreciates that he works so well with the Village Board. He also mentioned how he enjoys working with committed Village trustees, who agree to disagree on issues.

The Village is currently in the process of strategic planning. The committee is larger than originally intended, with 11 residents (originally planning on 6) and 17 total. There were a lot of qualified applicants, so they decided to take eleven. The result is a lot of diversity and a broad range of viewpoints. The two recent public information events garnered minimal participation from community members. There were only 5 at first and 10 last night. Both meetings will be aired on Cable Access’ WOW channel. The committee will be doing lots of other things to collect feedback from residents.

The Village will be updating their comprehensive plan this fall and into 2011.

The Village is revising their outdoor park plan.

There is a draft of the master bike and pedestrian path plan. Steve has received lots of comments about the west side bike/pedestrian path, and the board just approved extending the path to the north shopping center area. This path extension will be funded with TIF money. The bike and pedestrian paths attract businesses to build local economies. New Braun Street bike path will probably begin in July/August and done by September.

Florida Avenue, along with the playground equipment in the swampy park, will be removed and the space made into a green area.

The Village is revising their website page, and this should be completed by May. Steve mentioned that the Village website does get a lot of use, and so soon it will be easier and more visually appealing to use.

The Village continues to make progress on the issue of storm water. They continue to work to move structures out of the flood plain and off Florida Avenue. BUT, it should be kept in mind that you will have flooding anytime there is enough rainfall.

Scheduled street projects include extending Braun Road, resurfacing/sewer main repairs on Market Street. It was noted that some of the worst streets in the area are actually county roads, and not under the jurisdiction of the Village.

The Village is changing the way mowing is handled due to a tight budget.

Historic markers have been installed from Main Street to Market Street. In April, there will be more installed on South Main Street.

The Village is working with the Chamber to put in new welcome monument signages.

Village finances 2011 will be challenging (as in 2010).

Steve noted that spring is here, and encouraged everyone to go downtown and enjoy the new hitching park and new post-reconstruction downtown. He further mentioned that the new downtown and the west-side bike/pedestrian trail are the two things he gets lots of comments and positive feedback on.

Being part of the school district, Steve also mentioned that German students are coming to town as part of an ongoing exchange relationship with a sister town in Germany. There will be 27 students here at end of March/early April. On March 30, there will be a reception celebrating 20 years of exchange, and 20 years that the head chaperone/coordinator from Germany has been part of the program. German flags will be hung around the community to represent partnership and appreciation to the students and exchange program leader.

Question & Answer

A question was asked about the timeline for the Hwys 14 and 138 intersection. The bridge replacement and roundabout installation is scheduled for 2011, while Hwy 14 will be extended to Brooklyn in 2014.

A question was asked about banners for the new light poles downtown. It is understood that 18 banners have been purchased through the Flag Fund held at the chamber. We are waiting for room tax support to purchase more.

➤ **Chamber and Schedule Announcements**

- Summer Fest will be June 24-27. This is the biggest Chamber fundraiser, and also the largest community-engaging event in Oregon. Members have the opportunity to make the most of Summer Fest to gain exposure for their organization:
 - Participate in the parade
 - Be a food vendor
 - Be a business booth vendor
 - Sponsor Summer Fest

Registration forms for the parade and vending booths will be mailed to last year's participants soon.

- Be watching for information about a membership survey. This is your opportunity to let us know how to improve our service to you, our members. We want to make sure all members get maximum value for their membership dollar, so please plan to participate.
- Thank you to all renewed members for their 2010 membership.
- The April membership meeting will be held on Thursday, April 15 from 11:30 AM-1:15 PM at Holy Mother of Consolation Church. The topic will be an introduction to Microsoft Windows 7.
- The Spring After-5 Mixer will be held on Wednesday, April 28, with the venue yet to be determined. Please let us know if you have any good suggestions!

➤ The meeting concluded at 9:09 AM.

We look forward to seeing you next meeting. We value your input and participation!

Meeting Minutes taken by Kristin McGuire.