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Anne Hinton: Retires after 23 years of dedicated service...

Anne Hinton's title for the past 23 years has been director of the Huron Public Library. In that time, she's worn many hats, among them, overseeing construction of the new building at 333 Williams St. and transforming the tri-level structure into a bright, welcoming collection of rooms and spaces. The addition nearly tripled the size of the library, going from 12,000 sq. ft. to 36,000 sq. ft. She and the staff have brought the small-town library into the computer age, opening up new horizons to readers of all ages.

There were 43,977 titles on the shelves in 1988 and by last year it had grown to 56,880. "We've added all different types of media down through the years, with cassettes, books on tape, books on CDs, movies and videos," Anne explained. The Huron Library isn't just a place to go in and get a book - thanks to the hard work and diligence of all the staff, it's become the community center that Huron doesn't have. Somewhat of a computer wizard herself, one of Anne's proudest accomplishments was joining the local library with the Clevnet system, "opening up the rest of the world of literature to Huron readers."

"We had a collection of 50,000 books at that point, and now we have access to 2.5 million," she said proudly. "And we've gone from four to 27 internet-accessible computers for patrons." There was one computer in the building when Anne came to work there in 1988. An Apple, it was used to

create catalog cards. Cathy Buckingham, former president of the Library Board, feels that "Anne's vision and contribution has been significant in creating a modern day library that is a lasting gift to the Huron community.

"She has been an advocate of both the taxpayer and the library patron, leading our library and providing quality services through periods of growth and also times of great fiscal restraint," she added. There are activities and community meetings going on non-stop throughout the year at the library and it also houses the huge collection of artifacts belonging to the Huron Historical Society.

Seeing many middle-school children coming over from McCormick School in the afternoons, with nothing but homework to occupy them for the several hours until their parents got off work, Anne and the staff created the Huron Youth Connection, a program that is now part of the Boys and Girls Club of Erie County. It offers opportunities for socializing, help with homework, craft projects and snacks after school.

While she will have more time to spend with husband, Gary, and her granddaughters, Sara, 6 and Jayna, 3 1/2, as well as creating pieces of glass artwork, Anne's not going far from the books. She's already teaching a class in information literacy at Ohio Business College.

Anne Hinton: On to the Next Chapter...

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More Than Just Lunch..

Inside Business Magazine, July 2010—NEO Grow

By joining a local chamber, the Northern Ohio Area Chambers of Commerce say businesses get the ability to collaborate, have a community voice and lower their operating costs.

If you think joining your local chamber is just about monthly luncheons, think again. True, chambers are known for networking and their ability to bring businesses of all sizes together, but there's much more to the story.

"It's important for small businesses to join their local chambers of commerce for three reasons: networking opportunities to grow their businesses, the chance to have a voice in the community regarding small-business needs and the ability to lower their operating costs," says Wayne Lawrence, Executive Director of the Beachwood Chamber of Commerce and chairman of Northern Ohio Area Chambers of Commerce.

Local chambers offer its members multiple networking opportunities to give business leaders the chance to connect with other community members, whether it's simply to find a mentor for educational purposes or to collaborate on future projects.

In addition, some chambers are actively involved in reviewing and recommending key pieces of legislation that can affect small-business needs. Therefore, through participation in their local chamber, business leaders can have a voice in the community and effect change. For example, if a property tax levy were to pass, it could have a major impact on a business' bottom line.

"Many local chambers of commerce are very active in local community issues, whether on the city, state or national level," says Lawrence. "And many communities turn to their local chambers to gauge the pulse of the business community on issues that affect commerce."

But most importantly, a chamber has the ability to pass along savings to businesses through memberships such as NOACC. Incorporated in 1995, the organization was established to provide discounted benefits and services to the nearly 29,000 employer groups through the membership of local chambers of commerce in northern Ohio.

What started as a small, discreet group of chamber of commerce directors who met to discuss common chamber issues in the



Executive Director Vicki Hawke (Left front) and NOACC Team

late '80s is now the largest independent chamber association in the United States. Representing 127 local chambers, NOACC offers members savings on programs and services, including health insurance, workers' compensation, credit-card services, overnight delivery and payroll processing.

"If companies are able to lower costs of operating and increase revenue, it will drive more profit, meaning more money for expansion, capital improvements and even hiring," says Lawrence. "The more profitable our businesses are, the more likely they'll invest and hire additional employees and that's true economic growth."

With the goal to attract and keep members in the local chambers, NOACC has the ability to negotiate savings programs through the buying power that the chambers bring to the table.

"It's really dollars to their bottom line," says Vicky Hawke, NOACC's executive director, offering the example where NOACC helped save a local city thousands of dollars on its health insurance. "It's not about selling people things, it's about helping the small businesses achieve savings that they couldn't do on their own."

Montague's 10th Anniversary Holiday Tea Luncheon

This year's last tea luncheon will be held at Captain Montague's B&B at noon, on Wed., Dec. 15th. This will mark the tenth year that Judy Tann (proprietor) and Johnna Dail have provided the community with a variety of programs, exquisite teas, and creative menus. The Christmas luncheon is always a favorite at the beautifully decorated B&B!

This year the HHS Troubadours, under the direction of Jeff Skaggs, will sing songs of the season delighting those in attendance. This talented a cappella group of sixteen high school students is truly extraordinary. The menu will be a traditional tea luncheon with delectable tea sandwiches, scones, soup, and an array of delicious desserts. Reservations are required as seating is limited. **Price per person is \$25.** Reservations can be made by calling Judy at 419-433-4756 or by email: captainmontagues@bex.net



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Santa Sails To Town On Chamber Light Display

Wow! Where did 2010 go? Here we are in the midst of another bustling holiday season. We want to take this opportunity to wish all of our members and their families a blessed Christmas and a healthy New Year.

The lighting of the many various displays at Sawmill Creek Resort's Festival of Lights marks the beginning of this special season and provides an opportunity for organizations participating to raise funds through the sale of vacation raffle tickets, donations to the Candy Cane house and a silent auction at the opening night party in Wilderness Hall at the resort. This year your Chamber committee raised \$1,615, thanks to the generous folks who opened their hearts and their wallets, but most of all, the businesses that donated many valuable auction items.

From a life-sized cut-out of Dale Earnhardt, Jr. from Nemecek Insurance, to a Sunset Sail for 6 from Harbor North, to an awesome, hand rubbed, 3-door, cherry credenza created by Ron Michel, Derrick Bartlett and the crew at Cornerstone Custom Cabinets, we had auction items that were in such demand two women got into an argument over the spectacular holiday centerpiece created by Karen Giaco.

Auction items were donated by:

ACE Hardware
Arby's - Huron
Brass Pelican on the River
Chapman Insurance Group
Cornerstone Custom Cabinets
Dee Hartley-H&R Block
Domino's Pizza
Don Ritzenthaler
Family Eye Care Centers
Foster Chevrolet
Harbor North
Huron Outdoor Shop
Huron Pizza House
Jim's Pizza Box
Marconi's Restaurant
Plantation Motel/Anderson Realty
Rye Beach Pizza & Deli
Sand Bar
Summit Motorsports Park, Norwalk
Sandusky Speedway
Village Gallery & Framing



Ray Cathcart, (l.) and his wife Donna, joined Santa in visiting children who came through the Festival of Lights display. The Chamber's display, "I Saw Three Ships," is in the background.

SANTA at CANDY CANE BOOTH every night!

Around Town

Stephanie Kramer Sings For Seniors

Chamber member and innkeeper, Stephanie Kramer, will entertain with a musical "History of Holiday Tunes" at the Erie County Senior Center's luncheon on **Friday, Dec. 10th**. She operates the Canton Avenue Bed and Breakfast. The luncheons are at noon at the Center, 620 E. Water St., Sandusky. Seniors can enjoy the fun of decorating holiday cookies from 10 to 11 a.m. on **Monday, Dec. 20th** at the Center.

Sip of Wine, Auction Assist Humane Society

The 5th annual Holiday Wine Tasting and Silent Auction, sponsored by the Erie County Humane Society, is planned from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., Friday, Dec. 10th at Lyman Harbor in Sandusky. A Doggie Fashion Show has been brought back by popular demand. Tickets are \$25 if purchased ahead of time at the shelter, 1911 Superior St., Sandusky, or phone 419-626-6220.

New Chamber Members:

Cellular Central/Verizon Wireless Store

David Vargas/Ryan McGhee, Huron store
406 Cleveland Road W.
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419.616.7000
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Short Takes ...from Sheila

South Shore Marine Named to Top 100



Congratulations to **Tom Mack** and **Chuck Thompson** of **South Shore Marine**. The full-service boat dealership was recently named one of the Top 100 Boat Dealers in North America by Boating Industry magazine for the fifth year. The award recognizes those marine dealers that are unsurpassed in overall business operations, customer service, marketing and professionalism.

Busy Mom, Entrepreneur, Community Activist, Now MBA

Jennifer Grude learned the fast food business at an early age as she pitched in to help her mom and dad, Tim and Gloria Smith, at the McDonald's stores that they operated then in Millersburg and Loudonville. It was during high school there that she met her future husband, Nate Grude. During college, her dad "recruited" him to work at the Loudonville store and he later became a part of this "McFamily."

Now Jennifer and her husband are the owners of the Huron McDonald's at Rye Beach and Cleveland roads. She oversees the Huron store and combines this with various duties for the other five family-owned stores in the area, along with being a hands-on mom to her children, Isaac and Olivia.

Taking one course a semester at the Lorain County Community College campus, she completed her course work and received a Master of Business Administration from Kent State University in August. Way to go, Jennifer.

Meet a member!



Ann Valerino is shown with her signature embroidered lighthouse towels.

Ann Valerino made a major career change this past Spring when she purchased Katman Graphics from Dave and Linda Katz. After fifteen years in management for Speedway service stations in Akron and Avon Lake, she decided it was time for a change.

Despite the fact that the only sewing she'd ever done was in a high school home economics class, she "just had a good feeling" about buying the established business in Huron's Commerce Plaza. "Dave and Linda were wonderful with me, taking much more time than we'd planned, teaching me how to run the

computerized embroidery machine and many other important aspects of the business," she explained. It was a major leap of faith, but one that is working out tremendously well for Ann. "The people of Huron have started to embrace me, and I love them. I wish I lived here," said the Avon Lake resident who commutes here each day.

The store also does vinyl graphics and handles sublimation products, a process that applies a picture to things like T-shirts and mugs. A long-time staple at the store has been spirit wear, the hundreds of various items of clothing emblazoned with Huron Tiger logos. In addition to shirts and caps using Huron's signature lighthouse, the energetic entrepreneur has developed a line of towels using the embroidered images – everything from hand towels to beach towels and luxurious linen place mats. She's created window displays with all the new products that look like something out of a Fifth Avenue store. It seems that Ann's made an easy transition from service stations to sewing business.

2010

Chamber Moments & Members



City Manager Andy White gave members of the Chamber Board of Directors a tour of the demolition progress at the ConAgra site.



Jerry Bogner, owner of The UPS Store, on Route 250 in Sandusky, hosted the Sept. get together and a large crowd that turned out for his wife, Tina's unique, delicious hors d'oeuvres. After chatting for a bit, board member Jacquie Clark realized that Jerry was an old high school chum.



The Chamber lucked out with a perfect fall day for the annual Don Billman Memorial Golf Outing at Sawmill Golf Club.



Some tall tales were spun about the tee shot that came so very close to the pin during dinner, door prizes and awards at sunset on the patio at Mulligan's Pub.

FUN!



Chris and Kelli Wechter hosted a late summer ice cream social After Hours on the lawn behind Pied Piper and Lighthouse Real Estate. Chris, (r.) welcomes guests as Bruce Miller and Dave Clark look on



Like the original Pied Piper, Tony Frank and his ice cream treats attracted all the kids to come and sit with him. Frank and his wife, Pam, are managers at the "Pied."

Friends



Chamber members pitch in to sell carnival ride tickets each year during Riverfest. Helping out this summer were Sheila's great-granddaughters, (l. to r.) Amber and Hailey Ehrhardt-Simpson, proving that being good "carneys" runs in the family. Sheila and John grew up at Cedar Point in the days when concessions were privately owned. Sue Fawcett, Riverfest co-chairman, is the granddaughter of the matriarch of the Berardi family who made their French fries into nationally known food fare.



Fred Fox gave board members a tour of all four schools, to see firsthand improvements and what's going on. He then did several of them for the public. Fred also took the group of Chamber members into the wind turbine power station.



The staff at Discount Drug Mart sold hot dogs and baked goods this summer to raise funds for the Dial-A-Ride program which offers transportation services to city and township residents. Bryan Erney, (2nd from right) presents a check for \$521 to Rich Gordon of Dial-A-Ride. Looking on, (l. to r.) are Danielle Wiggins, Kyle Cooper and Penny Breier,



The dedication of a black granite marker commemorating Huron's 2009 Bicentennial Celebration, was brought full-circle after more than two years of planning and hard work by a dedicated committee. Bicentennial artist Robb Harst, conceived and constructed the impressive three-dimensional marker with the help of a small army of volunteers. Mementos of current life here in Huron were placed in a time capsule beneath the compass rose base, to be opened in 100 years.

