

March 2017

Connecting the Chamber with members in a monthly news source.



ST. JOSEPH
Chamber of Commerce

The President's Perspective

Regional Strength

The Chamber just recently participated in Great Northwest Day at the Capitol. This is a great event that brings people from our region together to advocate for issues of importance to Northwest Missouri. As part of the day, we heard from an analyst with the Missouri Extension Service about the regional economy. To say his insights were pessimistic might be an understatement, but no real surprise. Population is declining, young people are moving to the big cities, jobs are fewer and businesses in the rural areas have a hard time making it. The statistics paint a gloomy picture. But are we seeing the whole picture?

Discussions regarding Northwest Missouri remind me of the discussions about downtown St. Joseph when I arrived over 25 years ago. People at the time only saw downtown for what it had been, not what it could be. No, J.C. Penney and Western Auto were not coming back and sadly the Robidoux Hotel was gone, but St. Joseph had to change the paradigm of what downtown success looks like. Today downtown is defining success in a different way from the past and seeing the benefits of it.

I see a similar future for the rural areas of our region. Success will look different than it did in the past. While perhaps still to be defined, building on our natural strengths is certainly a way forward. The quality of life is excellent: low cost, good schools, friendly neighbors

– the area is drawing a new breed of settler, those looking for a better place. Entrepreneurs, military, small business, retirees, people who choose to live here because they want to.

The workforce in the region is considered by many to be the best in the country; industrious, hard working and dependable. Just ask some of our local manufacturers, they will tell you. That said, we must find better ways to provide those who live in Northwest Missouri access to skills needed by modern manufacturers. Today a skilled workforce is the number one factor in attracting business.

Yes, if you think in terms of the past, regional economic indicators will point you in a downward direction. However, thinking in terms of what a new economy in the region might look like could point us toward long-term success. There is substantial strength to build on in Northwest Missouri, its people, its quality of life and the opportunity to build a new future in which everyone can share in the success.



R. Patt Lilly
President & CEO



Great Northwest Day at the Capitol

Ten state senators, 90 state representatives, 100 staff members and more than 25 state departments attended Great Northwest Day at the Capitol this year in addition to more than 300 people from Northwest Missouri counties. Eighty-seven attended from St. Joseph. Officials from Northwest Missouri's federal legislators offices also were in attendance. The goal of the event is for all parties to work together to pursue legislative priorities for Northwest Missouri.

NEW MEMBERS

The following businesses and individuals have been approved for membership in the St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce:

Affinity Enterprise Group Mike Wrenn

7509 N.W. Tiffany Springs Parkway
Ste. 200, Kansas City, MO 64153
(816) 398-4111
mike@nreinsurance.com
www.affinityeg.com
Insurance

Hughes Chiropractic Chuck Hughes

1918 N. Belt Highway (06)
(816) 279-3319
hughesfamilychiro@yahoo.com
www.hughesdc.net
Chiropractors

Actuarial Consulting Services, Inc.

Scott Stoltenberg
5830 S. 142nd St., Suite B,
Omaha, NE 68137
(402) 614-1844
sstoltenberg@acsincnet.com
www.acshrbenefits.com
Consultants

Critter Control

Jeff Archer
5508 N. Lucerne,
Kansas City, MO 64151
(816) 215-5202
kansascitymo@crittercontrol.com
www.crittercontrolkansascity.com
Pest Control

The Fort

Nate Easley
3800 S. Belt Highway (03)
(816) 944-3678
natee@fortbrands.com
www.fortbrands.com
Retail

Beth Banks

3306 Linda Lane (06)
(816) 351-4060
bbanks69.bb@gmail.com
Civic Membership



March Calendar

All members, employees and guests are invited to attend events. Call the Chamber for any dietary needs.

9 **DIPLOMATS CLUB Breakfast**
Presented by Mosaic Life Care
The Diplomats Club is a fun group that provides opportunities to promote your business and serve as a link between the Chamber and the community. Join them for their monthly meeting!

Thursday, March 9
7:15 to 8:30 a.m., \$5
Breakfast provided
American Red Cross
401 N. 12th St.
RESERVATIONS REQUIRED:
816/232-4461 or www.saintjoseph.com

9 **Circle of Influence**
Circle of Influence is a leads group composed of small business professionals who are looking to increase their revenue by forming relationships with other Chamber members for the purpose of exchanging direct client referrals and leads. The group also provides a forum for the discussion of issues which businesses commonly encounter. Only one member per profession/speciality in each group. There is a \$100 joining fee. There are two groups, one that meets the first and third Wednesdays at Stoney Creek Hotel and another that meets the second and fourth Thursdays at Commerce Bank at Ashland and Karnes roads. On March 9, both groups will come together for Visitors Day. Don't miss this chance to find out more about COI. Contact Natalie Redmond for more information, redmond@saintjoseph.com or (816) 364-4107.

Thursday, March 9
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Guests Free
Stoney Creek Hotel & Conference Center
1201 N. Woodbine Road

14 **Lunch & Learn Seminar**
Lunch by Rib Crib
Presented by CliftonLarsonAllen
Topic: "Websites for Small Businesses"
SJC Marketing will provide information on free or affordable website options, and what may or may not be your company's best choice. Anna West and Brian Juhl also will discuss the benefits of utilizing a managed website package option through a trusted partner. Learn what is needed for a secure site and how to build yours for functionality.

Tuesday, March 14
11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m., \$10
3003 Frederick Ave.
RESERVATIONS REQUIRED:
816/232-4461 or
www.saintjoseph.com

16 **LEAD**
Presented by Altec Industries, Inc.
LEAD, the Chamber's group of young professionals will discuss business etiquette and have professional photos taken at this month's meeting. Does your company have someone 40 or younger that you'd like to see grow as a leader? Have them come to this meeting and sign up for the club. Learn more at saintjoseph.com/lead

Thursday, March 16
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., \$10
Lunch provided
St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce
3003 Frederick Ave.
RESERVATIONS REQUIRED:
816/232-4461 or www.saintjoseph.com

21 **BUSINESS after HOURS**
Presented by Altec Industries, Inc.
Please join us for your monthly chance to make some new business connections. Bring your business cards and meet some new people! This month is hosted by IMKO Workforce Solutions.

Tuesday, March 21
5 to 7 p.m., Free
St. Joseph Country Club
50 Ridgeland Road

21-22 **Washington, D.C. Fly-In**
Presented by Missouri Western State University
A delegation of local business and community leaders annually visit the nation's capitol as part of the Chamber's Fly-In. While in D.C., the delegation meets with members of Congress, U.S. Senators, legislative staff and U.S. Chamber officials. Contact Steve Johnston for more information at (816) 364-4109.

Tuesday & Wednesday, March 21 and 22
Washington, D.C.

24 **FARM CITY BREAKFAST**
Presented by LifeLine Foods
This popular event is held in celebration of National Ag Day. It recognizes the farmer/producer and the importance of agribusiness to the area economy. Proceeds benefit Agriculture Future of America (AFA) scholarships. Brian Klippenstein, executive director of Protect the Harvest, will be the guest speaker.

Friday, March 24
7 to 9 a.m., \$12
Word of Life Church
3902 N. Riverside Road
Tickets available at the Chamber or online

27 **Women's Leadership Group**
Presented by Sam's Club
Co-sponsored with Northwest Missouri State University's Small Business and Technology Development Center, each month has a different featured topic for women business owners, managers and employees.

Monday, March 27
12 to 1 p.m., FREE
St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce
3003 Frederick Ave.
Bring your own lunch