

Monticello Chamber of Commerce & Industry

ANNUAL REPORT

December 31, 2009

Once again the Monticello Chamber of Commerce & Industry has a lot to celebrate during these challenging economic times as we close this business year. Membership remains at 276 members and we were recognized by Minneapolis/St Paul Business Journal as one of the top 25 chamber in the metro area again this year.

As a voice of the business community, the Monticello Chamber of Commerce & Industry works to accomplish what no individual or single business can do alone. The strength of any organization lies in its membership and when you become involved as a Chamber member in the business community you have invested yourself in an active network of resources that allows you to share business ideas and work to improve the business environment in your community.

Monticello Chamber represents a broad base of business from corporate to home-based, from industrial-driven manufacturers to the service and professional sectors.

Our membership consists of Monticello businesses with additional memberships joining from neighboring communities. With this blend comes the expertise and skills available from a variety of business backgrounds. Monticello Chamber of Commerce & Industry works to bring the business community, government and schools together as one unit to make use of available resources, assets and talents to build a better future.

We are working very hard on your behalf to enhance the community in which we live and work. During the year ahead we intend to continue demonstrating the value of Chamber membership through tangible and intangible benefits. Please visit our website (www.monticellocci.com) and check out our business listing, upcoming events and opportunities, news items, committee activities and details about Chamber benefits.

Your Chamber staff and the Board of Directors look forward to an exciting year and encourage you and your employees to take advantage of the programs and services we offer. Please let us know how we can serve you better.

Chamber Mission Statement

To continually represent, support and enhance all business sectors in the Monticello area by striving to strengthen communication among businesses, industry, school, government, service organizations and area residents.

2009 Activities and Accomplishments!

ANNUAL BANQUET

Our Annual Banquet provides a wonderful opportunity for the business community to come together and network during this fun and relaxing evening event. Change of Chamber leadership & Monticello Businesses and Industry of the Year are recognized at this time.

ART IN THE PARK/ TASTE OF MONTICELLO

Two fun activities during the City's Riverfest summer festival. The Chamber is actively involved in Riverfest and is host to Art in the Park/Taste of Monticello. Our art show attracts 75 top notch vendors and over 7,000 visitors. The Mississippi River is the perfect setting for this one day outdoor art show.

BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Each year the Chamber selects one business from the industrial sector and one non industrial business to receive this honor for providing consistency of products and/or services to its customers & promoting the betterment of our community.

CANDIDATE FORUM

Candidate forums are held for School Board, City, State and Federal office elections, with the purpose of informing voters of candidate's views on key issues impacting our region.

BUSINESS EXPO

Businesses from Monticello and surrounding area communities participate in this exciting fall event. Our food court, 80+ vendors, and fun entertainment create a nice community networking, family friendly event.

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Monticello Chamber's tournament is always one of the first tournaments of the season. Sponsorships & registrations fill up quickly. (Our Sponsors always provide the most creative and fun activities to add excitement to the tournament!) Thanks to our 2009 great host the Monticello Country Club.

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

This free family fun event happens the first Friday in December. Santa Claus and St. Nicholas are present for families to bring their children for photos with Santa Claus and to hear the Story of St. Nicholas are apart of this celebration. Horse and carriage rides stroll along Front Street which runs along the Mississippi River. The Land of Lakes Choirboys performs familiar Christmas carols and free refreshments of cookies, hot chocolate and apple cider are served the entire evening.

HALLOWEEN PARADE

Kids come dressed up in their Halloween costumes and parade down Walnut

Street. Following the costume contest kids trick or treat at businesses that line the hallways at the Community Center. This is a cheap way to pass out candy to kids and maybe a promotional item to mom and dad.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS CMTE

The Monticello Chamber's role is to be a regional voice for business. As such, one of our key mandates is to work with local, state and federal officials and provide information on both sides of an issue for membership and allow them to make their own educated decisions about legislation affecting their business.

This year the committee worked to educate the business community on issues such as EFCA, Mandatory Paid Sick Leave, Transportation Issues, Cobra Changes, legislation pertaining to Nuclear Energy and other State/Federal issues. This committee successfully worked with the City of Monticello on a new sign ordinance that better meets the needs of the business community.

HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS

Our Chamber stays well connected with local schools and provides an important link to our business community. Each year the Monticello Chamber offers two scholarships in the amount of \$750 each on behalf of

membership. Monticello Graduate must be employed by a Chamber business to be eligible. Scholarship Applications and criteria are available at the high school.

LAND & LEASE FILE

The Chamber office maintains a listing of available commercial land and lease space available in Monticello. Community Profile & Relocation Packages provided upon request.

HOSPITALITY / TOURISM CMTE

Shop & Dine Locally

This year, our first Shop and Dine Local campaign was created as an opportunity to showcase retail businesses. We are committed to a strong local economy and to let the Monticello area know that the Chamber of Commerce & Industry means **BUSINESS!!**.

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION (Ribbon Cuttings Recognition)

The Chamber Ambassadors help to welcome new businesses in town and promote special events for existing members. Ribbon cuttings, and member visits are top priorities for our Ambassadors.

Board Members actively work to improve business retention. They make

scheduled visits to our membership throughout the year seeking your comments and suggestions on what we can do better to serve you.

MONTICELLO ROYALTY

Our Monticello Royalty is one of the best public relations liaisons for our community. These girls represent Monticello at 85+ events throughout the year. These young ladies become more well-informed about their community and what it has to offer. They learn self-respect, respect for others, etiquette techniques, enhance their public speaking skills, and build new friendships to last a lifetime. The Monticello Chamber and our local business community are proud to sponsor this program and all that it represents.

NETWORKING

Networking is critical to doing business in a small town. Each month our Chamber Lunch draws 80+ members. Our speakers are both interesting and educational for membership.

Business After Hours, Good Morning Monticello and Extreme Networking (combing Monticello, Big Lake & Becker Chambers) all provide additional ways to meet your next customer. Check our

Calendar of Events at www.monticellocci.com for specific dates and times.

PROMOTION

Our staff likes to say that our job is to “promote your business” and we work really hard at doing just that. The Chamber website allows you to add as much information about your business as you want to (i.e. business hours, business description, logos, photos, box ads on our website, and more). Member News is always free; Chamber Newsletter Inserts are an inexpensive way to advertise. We’ve expanded an area in our office to showcase your promotional pamphlets and business cards.

WALK N ROLL

A wonderful family event that provides a business great exposure! There is no cost to participate, and the exposure to young families is unprecedented. Over 2000 people attend this pathway event, with business booths lining RiverStreet. Monticello businesses donate bikes to be given away at the park. The event ends with food, fun and give-a-ways at West Bridge Park. Thank you City of Monticello for allowing the Chamber to co-sponsor this event with you.



There is no other place quite like Monticello, Minnesota!

Monticello has retained its small town atmosphere, while offering some big town amenities. Just look what we have to offer.

Monticello is situated on the mighty Mississippi River. Take a stroll or grab a fishing pole and relax by the banks of the Mississippi River.

Monticello Chamber of Commerce & Industry's 2010 Board of Directors

Joni Pawelk, Chair
New River Medical Center

Laurie Tennessen, Past Chair
Von Hanson's Meats

Dave Howe, Treasurer
Premier Banks of Monticello

Dr. Kelly Cripe
Monticello Chiropractic & Therapy

Rich Harris
Midwest Precision Machining

Wes Olson
Wes Olson Electric

Perry Sloneker
Best Western Chelsea Inn

Terri Sweet
Monticello Times & Shopper

Nikki Mercer
Mississippi Shores

Tom Ollig
TDS Telecom

Sandy Haggerty
St. Benedict's Senior Community

Chris Kruse
Edward Jones Investments

Megan Barnett, City Liaison
Economic Development Director