

# Chamber Chatter

Spring  
2009

## Board Members

**Norma Nelson** – President  
THE National Bank

**Aubrey Fisher** – Vice-President  
Aubrey's Candles and Crafts

**Corinne Bender** – Secretary  
Morrison Chamber of Commerce

**Rhonda Biller**  
Pleasant View Rehabilitation & Health Care Center

**Louise Clark**  
Re/Max Property Associates

**Dr. Suellen Girard**  
Morrison Community Unit School District #6

**Melinda Gonzalez**  
Community State Bank

**Lisa Gremba**  
Pleasant View Rehabilitation & Health Care Center

**Chad Haskell**  
Morrison Community Hospital

**Tim Long**  
City of Morrison, IL

**Jeff McClrath**  
Emmanuel Reformed Church

**Michelle Meinsma**  
Community State Bank

**Bart Smith**  
DQ Grill and Chill

**Jim Thicksten**  
Farmers National Bank

## Chamber Hosts Photography Contest

The Morrison Chamber of Commerce is hosting a contest to find photos to fill the collage frames on display in the Chamber office. While prizes will be awarded for the top three entries, many photos will be chosen for permanent display on the walls in the Chamber office. Photos will also be used for marketing efforts through the Chamber website and brochures.

The photography contest is open to all amateur photographers (anyone that doesn't participate for gain as a photographer). Minors must have permission from a parent/legal guardian to enter. Participants can submit up to three photos, but are limited to a single prize. First prize is a \$50 savings bond, second prize a \$25 savings bond, and third prize a Morrison Shirt.

Photos must be taken in and around Morrison of people, places, and things that depict life in the community. Photos submitted must be color pho-

tos, can be from the past few years, and from any season. Entries will be judged on composition, sharpness, creativity, and how well the photo is representative of Morrison. Deadline for submitting photos is Friday, May 15, 2009.

Each photo should be "4 x 6" and accompanied by a completed entry form and a model waiver, for any recognizable person who is in the photo. Entry forms are available at the Chamber office at 221 W. Main Street, for download at [morrisonchamber.com](http://morrisonchamber.com), or through e-mail at [morrisonchamber@frontiernet.net](mailto:morrisonchamber@frontiernet.net). Digital photos may also be submitted with cropping and red eye removal as the only allowable alterations. They should be of high resolution, in jpg format, and submitted with contact information; after a completed entry form has been received. For more information, contact the Morrison Chamber of Commerce at (815) 772-3757.



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## Movers and Shakers

**Mickley Insurance** has moved across the street from their previous location to 102 E. Main St., Morrison, IL. Owner Todd Mickley, together with a staff of professionals including former owner Karen Bramm, provides area customers with a full-line of insurance products including agricultural, vehicle, property and health/life insurance. Mick-

ley Insurance is open M-F from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Owner Aubrey Fisher is pleased to announce the recent move of **Aubrey's Candles** to a new expanded location at 16194 E. Lincolnway, Morrison, IL. Aubrey specializes in Soy Jar Candles, which she makes and sells onsite. She also carries bakery and electric candles,

Webkinz® and other gift items. Starting in April, Aubrey will be an authorized dealer of i-wireless® services and products including cell phones, MEGAtalk, and nationwide plans. Aubrey's Candles is open M-F from 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.; Saturday from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.; and Sunday from 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

# Welcome New Members



We welcome input and feedback from our members about how the chamber works for you.

## American Products

www.air-king.com  
125 W. Market St.  
Morrison, IL 61270

Phone: (815) 772-3336

Fax: (815) 772-8046

Manufacturer of a full line of vacuum, air & water systems, including service for convenience stores, gas stations, travel centers, car washes & more. Vacuum & air vacuum systems with 4 bag filter system, 2- 1.7 H.P. motors & 3/4 H.P. Thomas compressor, air-vacuum model only; equipped with clog/crush resistant hose & nozzle. Coin operated air machines & vacuum cleaners. Air machine stands in painted or stainless steel.



## United Off-Road Racing LLC

www.unitedoffroadracing.com  
13525 Black Rd.  
Morrison, IL 61270

Phone: (815) 778-3641

The Bike Barn runs many off-road racing events for ATV's and motorcycles including the nationally recognized Moose Run, held Oct. 31- Nov. 1. Bogs, Drags, and Demos are also held monthly, for the novice to the professional class participant. The venue is open to spectators, who get quite a show on Firecracker Weekend, July 4, with a day filled with Bogs, Drags, and Demos, culminating in an evening fireworks show.



# Members of the Chamber

Al and Randy's Construction Inc.

Ameriprise Financial

Aubrey's Candles & Crafts

B-K Real Estate Appraisals, Ltd.

Bosma-Renkes Funeral Home

CGH Medical Center

ComED

Community State Bank

Coplan & Buckwalter Law Office

Cross Creek Golf Course

D Q Grill & Chill

Endress Pontiac-Buick, LLC.

Farmers National Bank

Frontier Communications

Girl Scouts of Green Hills Council, Inc.

H.B. Wilkinson Title Company

Hospice of the Rock River Valley

John Tomasino Jr. D.D.S., P.C.

Karen Bramm

Kenneth W. Kophamer Realty

Law Office of William R. Shirk, P.C.

Maurits and Jost Insurance

Mary Kay Cosmetics-Susan Decker

Mickley Insurance Agency

Miller Health LLC

Morrison Community Federal Credit Union

Morrison Community Hospital

Morrison Family Health Clinic

Morrison Fuel 24

Morrison Historical Society

Morrison Physical Therapy

Morrison Shell Express Lane

Morrison Veterinary Clinic

Nelson's Electric Service Inc.

Northwestern Illinois Center for Independent Living

Norwest Surveying Services Inc

Parkview Motel

Pleasant View Rehabilitation & Health Care Center

Prairie Ridge Golf Course

Re/Max Property Associates

Rock River Lumber & Grain

Scenic Stage Line, Inc.

Sterling Federal Bank

Subway

Sullivan's Foods

Tegeler Accounting Services

Tegeler's Amish Furniture

The City1.com

The Morrison Clinic

THE National Bank

Vend-Omack

Wells Fargo Bank

Whiteside News Sentinel

Wiersema Charter Service, Inc.

## Friends of the Chamber

John Prange

Robert Wood

"With a focus on business, the Morrison Chamber of Commerce serves its members and community by supporting and by promoting Morrison, building relationships, and providing structure and events that unite the community."



## In the Spotlight



Congratulations to **Keith Frederick** of Maurits and Jost, Inc. who recently received the **Underwriter of Merit Award** from Pekin Insurance Agency. Keith received the award for his outstanding professional skill and knowledge of property and casualty insurance. Maurits and Jost, Inc. offers a full line of insurance products including life, health, auto, home, and business insurance. They also offer bonds and license and title work. See Keith at 309 N. Genesee, Morrison, or call him at (815) 772-4041.

This year, **Northwestern Illinois Center for Independent Living celebrates 25 years** of assisting persons with disabilities providing advocacy, peer support, information and referral, and independent living skills training to residents of Whiteside, Carroll, Lee, Ogle, and Jo Daviess counties. Other services provided by NICIL include a personal assistance program, community reintegration program, support groups, public education, and outreach. Businesses seeking accessibility surveys can consult with NICIL to ensure that their business is accessible to the disability community. NICIL is located at 229 1st Avenue, Rock Falls, or call (815) 625-7860.

Congratulations to **Louise Clark**, Broker/Owner of RE/MAX Property Associates who recently became licensed to practice real estate in Iowa, after passing the **Iowa Brokers' exam**. Louise has also recently been designated a **Certified Distressed Property Expert** after comprehensive training on how to handle short sales. In a short sale transaction, homeowners sell their property for less than the mortgage amount, but avoid the foreclosure process. Contact Louise at (815) 772-3200 or see her at 300 W. Main St., Morrison.

### Small Retailers Thrive in a Recession—12 Tips

Less red meat, more spaghetti. Fewer first-run movie tickets, more DVD rentals. Skip the Starbucks latte, sip a McDonald's coffee. As the economy sinks into a recession, people from Seattle to St. Petersburg are adapting their spending habits to adjust to increased prices in all types of consumer goods and services. So, how can small retail stores survive...and even thrive...in a recessionary economy?

"Let's start with understanding the consumer mindset," say Steve O'Leary and Kim Sheehan, authors of a new book, *Building Buzz to Beat the Big Boys: Word of Mouth Marketing for Small Businesses* and the web site *GrabbingGreen*. "In a tight economy, consumers will be less apt to make impulse purchases and more likely to spend time researching purchases in order to find the best value."

So, how do you, the small retailer, make sure your customers continue shopping at your store during tough economic times? Here are 12 ideas to consider:

**1) Continue advertising.** History shows that marketers who stop advertising during a recession lose market share.

**2) Focus on existing customers.** You know your customers better than anyone. You know what types of product mixes are most appropriate for them. Use this information to create offers that are most valuable to them.

**3) Listen.** Collect customer feedback. Use either formal (surveys) or informal (asking people in store) feedback instruments to find out how your customers are dealing with the recession and how your store could help them. Ask them what types of specials they would like to see.

**4) Focus on the neighborhood.** With record high gas prices, people are likely to drive less. Allocate some of your marketing budget to current and potential customers who live close to your store (also known as your retail trading area). Print media is great for this effort, especially flyers and/or direct mail.

**5) Value messages are critical.** Think about the prices you can offer as well as the discounts that might be available. Make both prices clear in your messages.

**6) Politeness counts, more than ever.** Greet customers when they enter your store. Thank them when they leave.

**7) Consider a loyalty program.** If you don't have one in place, think about a punch card-type loyalty program that is quick and easy to implement.

**8) Create benefit offers.** Select specific products or services and package them into a value offer that you can advertise in store and through traditional channels.

**9) Dial up the service.** Make sure

your employees understand the value of exceptional customer service during this time when customers may be looking for reasons to switch.

**10) Think treats.** Even though customers are cutting back, according to *Money Magazine*, they plan to spend a small amount of their tax refund, or rebate check, on a small treat for themselves. Think about what you might offer your customers as a special, one-time discount on a treat to get people in your store.

**11) Partner with a local cause.** During a recession, many of your customers may cut back on philanthropic giving. Partnering with a charitable cause reflects well on you, and can somewhat assuage your customer's guilt about not donating more to charity.

**12) Evaluate advertising messages and response.** If you are promoting sales and discounts in different vehicles (such as in the local newspaper, in *ADVO*, and online), track your response from each vehicle.

<http://www.grabbinggreen.com>

Article Source:  
<http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Steve>

FYI  
Four-color ads receive  
38% higher readership scores than  
black and white.



221 W. Main St.  
P.O. Box 8  
Morrison, IL 61270

Phone/Fax: (815) 772-3757

**MORRISON CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE**

morrisonchamber@frontiernet.net

We're on the Web!  
www.morrisonchamber.com

## Upcoming Events

### April

- April 26 Heritage Museum Grand Opening
- April 28 Morrison Chamber Board Meeting

### May

- May 9-10 CAPA Spring Art Show
- May 16 Citywide Garage Sale
- May 25 Memorial Day Parade/Ceremony
- May 26 Morrison Chamber Board Meeting

### June

- June 6 Farmer's Market Opens
- June 7 Family Fun Bicycle Ride
- June 8-10 Morrison Rockwood Day Camp
- June 14 Mounted Patrol Horse Show
- June 23 Morrison Chamber Board Meeting
- June 26 Hospice Golf Outing—Emerald Hill

The Sauk Valley Business Development Center is available the first Tuesday of each month to assist local businesses with business start-ups, services for business owners, education programs, agricultural businesses, and community partnerships. Call (815) 288-5511 x320 for more information.



We want to know about any awards, achievements, events, and/or milestones that you or your business is having or has received, so we can share this information with our readers. This newsletter will be published on a quarterly basis so send in, or e-mail your good news!