



# Direction for Business

November 2010

## Executive Committee

### Chair of the Board

Kent Brown

### Chair Elect

Lisa Crumrine

### Past Chair

Tonja Broadwell

### Vice Chairs

Don Dunn

Terry Pfeifer

### Board of Directors

Kent Coen

Seanne Emerton

Jack Henry

John Hoggatt

Dr. Chad Hudnall

Dave Koubek

Steve Kunzman

Mark Miller

Mike Morledge

Don Smith

Shane Stava

Steve Toner

### Chamber Staff

#### President

Cindy Johnson

Sarah Arnold

Mary Berlie

Janell Folkerts

Shelley Mulinix

Micki Ward

Lisa Willman



## Growing Grand Island

*A Message from your Chamber President*

- How do we strengthen the local economy?
- How do we expand trade and increase sales?
- How do we represent business at the State capitol?
- How do we improve workforce development in Grand Island?

It is almost too cliché to write, but it needs to be said. ***Today's Chamber is not the Chamber of years past.*** As every company must do in order to remain relevant and effective in a highly competitive environment, the Chamber must evaluate the components of its Strategic Plan, identify potential new ventures and initiatives to determine the highest and best use of resources, and evaluate alternative strategies to assist businesses with maximizing their profitability.

Analyzing customer needs and gaining a solid understanding of business requirements will contribute to a Chamber Strategic Plan that addresses YOUR expectations for employee skill enhancement, strong advocacy for pro-business legislation and opposition to legislation that would hurt your bottom line, and identifying and pursuing opportunities to strengthen and grow the local economy. All of this is with an eye toward long-term business sustainability and growth.

Your Chamber Board members are leaders who understand that a strong business climate requires attention. It demands an ongoing, laser-like focus. It requires developing opportunities for *direct impacts* such as: a.) employee training and education, b.) technological improvement and enhancement, c.) linking business with business and buyers with sellers and *indirect impacts* - those that are generally assumed, including: a.) quality of life to attract employees, b.) access to products and services that residents and visitors want, c.) keeping existing businesses engaged and profitable and d.) ensuring Grand Island is desirable for businesses, employees and visitors. Consider this: what would happen if 10% of your staff decided to leave this community? How would the 'look' of the community change if one or two major employers moved production to another State because the business environment or available skilled workforce was not conducive to profitability?

A strong, vibrant, and growing business community does not just happen. Business owners and managers make it happen. They do this by developing a vision, a strategic plan, and tangible action steps as a business community. As your business partner, your Chamber is committed to being an effective and forward looking advocate on your behalf.

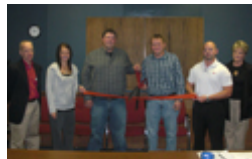
"If you don't have a seat at the table, it's because you're on the menu."  
- Anonymous



Lisa Crumrine and Jaime Parr visit at the Verizon Wireless Community Recognition Banquet & Business After Hours.



Verizon Wireless Community Recognition Banquet & Business After Hours, October 22, 2010.



Premier Snow Removal celebrated their new Chamber partnership with a ribbon cutting on October 29, 2010.



La Cabana celebrated their new Chamber partnership with a ribbon cutting on October 15, 2010.



Fairfield Inn & Suites celebrated the grand opening of their hotel with a ribbon cutting on October 1, 2010.



Alpha Center Reception & Banquet Hall invited the Connectors to a ribbon cutting on October 8, 2010 to celebrate their new Chamber partnership.



Farmers Insurance Group invited the Connectors to a ribbon cutting on October 29, 2010 to celebrate their new location and Chamber partnership.



Full Circle Venue invited the Connectors to a ribbon cutting on October 22, 2010 to celebrate their new Chamber partnership.

## Bump....Set.....Spike!

We have heard the words "progressive," "forward-thinking" and "innovative" quite often recently as it relates to Grand Island. Our forefathers were visionaries; they anticipated the growth of the community and planned accordingly. Today's leaders share that same foresight. They are committed to Grand Island's progress and prosperity and are aggressive and systematic in implementing plans to ensure this growth occurs.

Grand Island's latest endeavor, in keeping with the leadership and vision mentioned above, is hosting the Nebraska State High School Girls Volleyball Championship which began today. First round games are being played at Grand Island Senior High, Northwest High School, Central Catholic and the Heartland Events Center. All play on Friday and Saturday (semi finals and finals) will be played at the Heartland Events Center.

The Heartland Events Center facility will be an impressive setting for the finals. But the facilities alone will not create a "WOW" experience for the participants and fans. It will be the Grand Island hospitality. We have used this space and other forums to stress the importance of making guests to our community feel welcome. Customer service never gets old or outdated. People, all people I would suggest, want to feel welcome, safe, and appreciated. A heartfelt, genuine welcoming spirit creates a meaningful experience and it contributes to a sense of energy and vitality throughout the city. With strong competition for entertainment and recreation dollars, a pleasant experience that surpasses expectations can go a long way.

Grand Island's success with the Nebraska State Fair should be the model for all large events. Fair attendees enjoyed the facilities and programs AND the volunteers. The hospitality bar has been set relatively high. Can we keep the energy high for the next three days of volleyball? With nearly 200 volunteers scheduled to help out at Heartland Events Center, the answer is a resounding YES.

But, there will be a lot of activity outside of the volleyball courts as well. The dynamics of the Nebraska State Fair and the State Volleyball Tournament are quite different. Because of the overwhelming activities and interest in the new facilities, State Fair attendees seemed to spend more time than usual at the Fair itself and less time off campus. Volleyball spectators, players and families will likely enjoy their team's game and then take some time away to shop at our retail establishments, have a latte, and enjoy a meal. With 48 teams and 528 high school volleyball players, and with Christmas just weeks away, it seems likely that cash registers will be ringing, loudly and strongly. Given that it has been a few years since many of us

were on a high school athletic team, we thought it would be interesting to learn about the habits of volleyball players and see what products stores were stocking up on in anticipation of having the volleyball players and fans in Grand Island. Yogurt, fruit, water, and energy bars seemed to top the list of food products. I suspect some stores stocked up on knee pads and head bands as well. Chocolate did not seem to be a favorite! Some things have really changed.

One thing hasn't changed. Visitors to our community will expect to be served with a smile. Customer expectations are high as our reputation for hospitality has been well-publicized. We've rolled out the red carpet; the volunteers are ready. We will deliver. It's the Grand Island way!

## Potential New Chamber Board Members

The following are proposed Board Members: Ray O'Connor, Best Western Inn and Suites and Kurt Haecker, Home Federal Bank. In accordance with the Chamber's by-laws, these names are presented to the general membership. If no objections are raised, the terms will become effective January 1, 2011 and will expire in December 31, 2013.

## Ask Those in the Know

If you've been asking yourself what it takes to be successful in business, give Dee Price (retired), Katie Glover (Financial Solutions), Gloria Thesenvitz or Teresa Grabowski (Nova Tech) a call. These women each shared a few nuggets of wisdom for inclusion in a presentation for the Women's Expo. The essential attributes identified were:

- Passionate belief in a mission
- Inspiring action
- Selection of the right team members
- Continued focus on the goal
- Doing everything the right way every time

When these characteristics are combined with a dose of self-confidence and a willingness to take educated risks, the potential is spectacular. Thank you Dee, Katie, Gloria and Teresa, for sharing your views.

## Top 35 Under 35

This has been an exciting year for Grand Island. Two new major events, The Nebraska State Fair, State Volleyball Tournament, joined the list of successful undertakings by the Grand Island community. The business community, in particular, has stepped up for both of these major events and have done so in a year that has been somewhat challenging. Clearly, leadership recognizes the importance of contributing to events that will have a positive impact, financial and otherwise, on the community.

With an economic recovery somewhat less robust than anticipated, however, we are mindful of sponsorship and financial support limitations. As a result, the Chamber has chosen to forego the Top 35 Under 35 recognition and reception this year. Rest assured, it will return in 2011 as it was very successful and very well received. If you or one of your employees is a potential Top 35 Under 35 super star, mark your calendar for October to begin watching for information on nominations for 2011.

## Entrepreneur/Small Biz Resource Forum

Small business lenders /bankers, E-shop coaches/microenterprise development specialists or mentors and resource providers that assist small businesses are invited to attend a forum organized by Nebraska Enterprise Fund (NEF). The forum will be December 7, beginning at 12 noon at Riverside Golf Club; the Chamber is co-host with NEF. Entrepreneurs and small business owners are also welcome! RSVP to [info@gichamber.com](mailto:info@gichamber.com).

## Legislative Kickoff

Want to hear what Governor Heineman, Senator Mike Gloor and other area Senators expect to happen in the 2011 Legislative session, especially considering the revised (downward) revenue projections offered by the Nebraska Economic Forecasting Advisory Board. (The previous estimate for revenue growth in

FY2012 and 2013 was revised downward from 7.6% to 3.3%.) Attend the Chamber's Legislative Kick Off on Thursday, December 9 at 10 a.m., at Fairfield Inn and Suites, and discover how our Governor and area Senators expect to address this shortfall. RSVP to [info@gichamber.com](mailto:info@gichamber.com).

## Learning Lunch

The Chamber and Best Buy are gearing up for the holiday season. We want to give YOU a sneak peek at the hottest gifts and gadgets! Your loved ones will be impressed with your trend gifts and gadgets! The lucky recipients of these presents will be most pleased with your selections. Join us November 18th at noon at the Chamber. To RSVP email Mary at [mberlie@gichamber.com](mailto:mberlie@gichamber.com).

Do not miss this shopping experience!

## New Chamber Partners

*November 2010*

Closet Savvy  
Deb Hand  
217 East Stolley Park Road  
Suite I  
Grand Island, NE 68801  
308.380.4532

Electrical Unlimited  
Chad Mills  
393 Wausa Road  
Boelus, NE 68820  
308.850.5925

La Cabana  
Alberto Baldovinos  
1201 South Locust  
Suite A  
Grand Island, NE 68801  
308.675.0043

Sanchez Plaza Restaurant and Bakery  
Filemon Sanchez  
218 South Wheeler Avenue  
Grand Island, NE 68801-1614  
308.389.2381

Sears Carpet & Upholstery Care

Doug Schliefert  
5808 Avenue O Place  
Kearney, NE 68847  
308.234.5639

TE Productions  
Stacie Enck  
2018 Blake Street  
Grand Island, NE 68803  
308.379.0870

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans  
Michael Hutchinson  
1213 Allen Drive  
Grand Island, NE 68803  
308.382.0619

Wortman Motors/Enterprises  
Jayne Mann  
1515 12th Street  
Aurora, NE 68818  
402.694.3111

*Individual Memberships*  
Jack Schultz

309 West 2nd Street | PO Box 1486 | Grand Island, NE 68802-1486  
Phone: 308.382.9210 | Fax: 308.382.1154

email marketing by [Marathon Press](#)