



Direction for Business

March 2011

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The Power of Music

A Message from your Chamber President

I enjoy music, all kinds of music; country with its message of overcoming adversity, jazz with its insistence on hope and inspiration, and the sheer beauty and passion expressed by orchestras through the conductor's precise direction. I also have a sincere appreciation for musicians. These talented artists devote hours and hours honing their skills so that we, the listening audience, can be inspired, soothed or motivated. Of course, like everything else, beautiful music does not just happen. If you've ever been in the auditorium when an orchestra is warming up you know what I mean! The screeching and wheezing that occurs as each instrument is tuned up bears little resemblance to what is heard at the concert.

Music is most definitely an example of the strength of the whole being greater than that of any single component. When just one instrument is played, the impact is limited. The sound may be pleasant but the complete essence of the music is only realized when certain key elements (melody, harmony, rhythm and dynamics) are in sync. One musician alone cannot create the depth and richness that a band, when working in unity, can convey. What we recognize as a song, is achieved only when the key elements are complementary, working in a cohesive, harmonious manner.

It occurs to me that this analogy, the enhanced power realized when many are working in concert, is true in many instances. For example, it can be applied to a city's growth and development. Consider this. In 1997, Grand Island leaders undertook Heartland Vision, a community-wide visioning process which provided an opportunity for residents of the Grand Island area to express their opinions on the future for their community. Out of this initiative, support for implementation of the LB840 economic development program and construction of the Heartland Events Center was solidified. Because each and every person was encouraged to participate in defining the future of the community, buy-in and ownership of the end product was strong. It was this strength that caused the two top priorities (jobs, jobs, jobs and Events Center) to be moved forward and achieved.

Some are suggesting it is time to undertake another visioning process. Questions like "what's next?" or "how could we go about doing X?" are being asked with great frequency. People have taken note of what's been accomplished with business expansion and development, the Heartland Events Center and new facilities for the Nebraska State Fair, with the associated recruitment of state and regional events to be held in these buildings, and want this momentum to continue.

Let me highlight some of the most recent examples of the momentum Grand Island is experiencing.

The announcement of jet service by American Eagle to Dallas/Ft. Worth, beginning in June, is reflective of the forward thinking, progressive approach to air service demonstrated by the Central Nebraska Regional Airport Board and staff. Because of the Airport's great success with the Allegiant flights to Phoenix/Mesa and Las Vegas (a visionary, bold initiative), Grand Island was deemed an attractive location to American Eagle.

Standard Iron is a great example of a company that focused on growing its' clientele base in Grand Island, Nebraska, and neighboring states and, as a result, is now expanding. They will add 53,000 square feet to the existing facility and 25 new jobs.

Speaking of jobs, how many communities in the nation have one of their major, premiere employers actively hiring? Grand Island is privileged to have this occurring. Several weeks ago, Case IH placed a portable electronic sign in front of their plant advertising for employees. At a time when the national unemployment is over 9%, a Grand Island manufacturer is aggressively seeking workers.

The City Council's approval of Skagway's plans for a \$3.5 million renovation and expansion of the current store at Five Points (along with demolition of ancillary buildings) clearly demonstrates what is possible when business and government play from the same sheet of music. A key financial element of this project is the tax increment financing and façade funding (programs implemented years ago) available through the Community Redevelopment Authority and the City of Grand Island. Previous city leaders showed vision in their recognition of the need for these types of tools to facilitate development in a blighted and substandard area.

These projects, and more, speak to the continued harmony of our community. Something is happening in Grand Island that not many communities are experiencing; businesses are expanding and reinvesting here. Trade show and event coordinators are very impressed with our new facilities. Our challenge, then, is to take care of today while, at the same time, develop plans for the next wave of progress. By their very nature, visioning processes speak to recognition of the need to mobilize resources to ensure economic growth with a

strong, vital and diverse business base. It is this foundation that propels all other growth within the community.

It is reassuring to realize that no matter how unruly an orchestra's warm up practice (characterized by a cacophony of sounds), when the conductor picks up the baton and begins directing, the musicians, playing in harmony, will create dynamic music. The same is true when a community draws on its residents' opinions and leaders' visions to create a shared plan. This singular composition produces a product that embodies the combined talents of each instrument and musician. Beautiful.



My Lil Pride & Joy invited the Connectors to a ribbon cutting on February 11, 2011 to celebrate their new Chamber partnership.



The Crisis Center celebrated their new Chamber partnership with a ribbon cutting on February 11, 2011.



Complete Nutrition invited the Connectors to a ribbon cutting on February 18, 2011 to celebrate the opening of their Grand Island location and their new Chamber partnership.



Nebraska Danger Business After Hours, February 24, 2011.



Paula Mayfield, Eric Lorenz, Jodi Rauert, Angie King, and Dave Wetherilt visit at the Danger Business After Hours.



313 Cafe & Cream celebrated their new Chamber partnership with a ribbon cutting February 25, 2011.

Welcome Rhonda!

Rhonda Veleba is the latest addition to the Grand Island Chamber of Commerce staff. Rhonda holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the University of Nebraska at Kearney. She worked with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Grand Island for three years before coming to the Chamber. Rhonda lives in Grand Island with her husband, Aaron, and daughter, Macyn, who is about to turn one.

Rhonda has been a Big Sister through Big Brothers Big Sisters for three years and spends time every week with her "Little Sister" Shaleah. Rhonda also spends a lot of time in Giltner



attending the sporting events her husband coaches. Rhonda is excited to be a part of the Chamber staff and is looking forward to coordinating volunteers for the Nebraska State Fair and other community wide events. Rhonda will also be helping with the Chamber Connector program, the outreach and mentoring component of the Chamber.

Next time you are in the Chamber office, make sure you stop by and tell Rhonda hi!

2011 Annual Meeting with speaker Curt Tomasevicz

Curt, along with 3 team mates, won the gold medal in bobsledding at the 2010 Winter Olympics, marking the first time the Americans had won the gold in 62 years. Curt is from Shelby, Nebraska. He played football for the Nebraska Cornhuskers and received Bachelor's and Master's degrees in electrical engineering from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Thursday, March 31, 2011

Social Hour - 5:30 p.m. Live Auction - 6:15 p.m. Dinner - 6:45 p.m.

Heartland Events Center
700 East Stolley Park Road

Tickets are \$40 or \$280 for a reserved table of 8

To order your tickets contact Micki at mward@gichamber.com

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Viaero

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Auction Prizes:

1. Dinner with the Governor for eight.
2. A beautiful gold necklace that is white gold and reverses to yellow gold.
3. GI Gold - includes Nebraska Danger tickets, GILT season tickets for two, State Fair passes for four, and Nebraska State Volleyball passes!
4. Tailgating Party with a variety of food options.
5. Golf for four at the Prairie Club, outside of Valentine. This includes an overnight stay and 2 rounds of 18 holes of golf!
6. Fishing Trip! A two day, two night guided walleye fishing trip for two to Chamberlain, South Dakota.
7. A beautiful Asian inspired lamp.
8. Landscaping bubbling rock or pot.
9. Two radio advertising packages.
10. Ammo Package, includes an AP Loader, ammo boxes, vintage signs, cartridge reloading book, hat, cap and knife.

Guess Who is Coming to Dinner?

The Young Professionals group has a very special guest coming Thursday, May 12, 2011! We can not yet release our guest's name, but we can give you a few hints!

Born and raised in Hastings, he threw the pig skin around a little in his day, playing for Washington Redskins and San Francisco 49ers. Following his professional athletic career, he led one of our state's universities to national titles in 1994, 1995 and 1997. In 2000, this special individual won a Congressional seat for Nebraska's Third District. During his three terms in Congress, he participated in the Iraqi Women's Caucus, and served on the Agricultural Committee, the Education and the Workforce Committee, and the Transportation Committee. Can you guess who our guest will be?

Space is limited for this event, but you will want to be there!
Mark your calendars and watch for further details.

New Chamber Partners

March 2011

313 Café and Cream
Corey Sheldon
313 West 3rd Street
Grand Island, NE 68801
308.382.7831

Crisis Center
Shellie Pointer
2251 North Webb Road
Grand Island, NE 68802-5885
308.382.8250

Physicians Immediate Care
Sabrina Dickey
425 North Diers Avenue
Suite 1
Grand Island, NE 68803
308.389.3278

Sylvan Learning Center
Mike Dreher
724 Diers Avenue
Suite H-1
Grand Island, NE 68803
308.382.4330

The UPS Store
Mike Manley
1201 Allen Drive
Grand Island, NE 68803
308.382.2009

Verna's Villa
Verna Galloway
418 South Broadwell
Grand Island, NE 68803
308.380.5698

Individuals:

SSG Jack West

Shannon Semm

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

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