

March 2012



THE CHAMBER NEWSLINE

A Publication of the Highland County Chamber of Commerce

Chamber Membership - Are You Getting the Most From Yours?

Businesses and organizations belong to the Chamber for many different reasons. This month I urge you to redefine your reason for membership and take advantage of one of the many programs coming up in March. We have had many requests for local programs that will help support our members and believe we've responded to that with the opportunities you'll find available this month and beyond.

We recently accomplished a major feat through member advocacy as Chamber members let their voices be heard and directly affected change with the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) regarding local electric rates. Our partnerships with the Ohio Chamber and the Southern Ohio Chamber Alliance (SOCA) are assisting with the educational workshop and New Member Breakfast scheduled in March. These programs are designed to give you information to help you meet your business needs. Thanks to local sponsorships, we can continue to have Coffee & Commerce and *Business After Hours* to assist our business community in getting their messages out to potential decision makers and networking with other businesses.

What we do as a Chamber of Commerce does matter on many levels. Please take some time to decide what you will be involved in to help your business the most - we've got something for everyone...just call it our form of March Madness! - **Katy Farber**

New Member Breakfast Highlights

Many Benefits & Opportunities for Members

Your Chamber keeps growing and so do the many benefits that you get with that membership investment. On Wednesday, March 14, 8:30 - 10:00am at the Hi Tec, 1575 N. High Street, Hillsboro, we launch our New Member Breakfast program. Join others who are new to Chamber membership (or long term members who want to network and get details on our great programs) and learn exactly what you Chamber involvement can do for your business. Want more details? Just call the Chamber at 393-1111.

Lunch & Learn Series Begins March 21st "Wage & Hour" Overview is Topic

The 2012 Lunch & Learn Series kicks off with a "Wage & Hour" seminar presented by Tim Owens and Monica Waller of Lane, Alton & Horst, LLC. Our partnership with the Ohio Chamber of Commerce is bringing this valuable information to Highland County on Wednesday, March 21, 12:00 noon - 1:00pm at the Hi Tec, 1575 N. High Street, Hillsboro. The cost is \$10 per person, lunch will be provided and reservations are required.

If you have not been updated recently, there are many significant Wage & Hour issues that you need to know. This is a terrific opportunity to "Lunch & Learn" to help keep your business focused and operating smoothly.

The Highland County Chamber of Commerce is an active advocate and resource for our business community, providing economic and community development.



*Coffee &
Commerce*
- Sponsored by Southern State Community College

Coffee & Commerce provides you with an opportunity to talk with elected officials and their representatives in an informal setting.

New for 2012, we're focusing on conversation Coffee & Commerce on March 9. We'll be talking about local workforce development and have invited each of our county schools to bring administrators, faculty and school board members. We hope to have conversations that include input from our business community to help everyone better understand employers' needs so that we can prepare our future workforce to take jobs being created here in Highland County.

Coffee & Commerce is Friday, March 9, 7:30 - 9:00am at Southern State Community College, Room 106.

Mini Business Expo Supports Business - to - Business Marketing

It's time for the 5th Annual Mini Business Expo at *Business After Hours* on Thursday, March 15, 2012 5-7pm at **Weastec, Inc.**, 1600 N. High Street, Hillsboro. Co-sponsored by **Weastec, Inc.** and **Shoelaces Catering** this event is your opportunity to "show your stuff" and do more business right here at home! See the flyer inside this newsletter for details. Whether you are planning to set up a display, or come to see what other Chamber members have to offer. Business After Hours will be sure to fill the bill for everyone!

Why Should We REVITALIZE, EXPAND or open New Business?

What types of new businesses do you think are needed in Highland County? Without singling any out there are some "holes" in our community that are under-served, or not served at all. It is important that we fill these opportunities with revitalized, expanded, or new businesses. Yes, in that order.

Nothing against UPS , FedEx but I see far too many of their delivery trucks dropping off packages in Highland County. Nothing against Eastgate area, Washington Court House, Chillicothe, or Wilmington, but I see far too many cars driving out and back when people shop in those areas instead of locally.

- Revitalizing existing businesses is a high priority because it is better to have a better business than a floundering one that doesn't provide the level of product or service that the community would like to have. When there is not at least one good choice people tend to shop out of the area or on the Internet.
- Expanding a local business to serve a new niche or provides a related product or service is a priority when it strengthens the existing business and provides our citizens a better choice, or a new option besides shopping out of the area or on the Internet.
- Opening a new business to provide a product or service that enhances the lifestyle of our community or provides a local option where customers will not feel the need to shop outside of the area or on the Internet.

Grow! Highland County is here to help revitalize, expand, and start businesses to serve you better.

Hey, by the way, do you know anyone who wants to IMPROVE, START or EXPAND a local business? Tell them to give Sid a call. 937-302-0423.

Sid Raisch is the Highland County Enterprise Facilitator. He provides free and confidential resource services to anyone who wants to start or expand a business in Highland County. Want to know more about the program? Call Sid – he'll be happy to meet with you!

Check us out at: www.GrowHighlandCounty.com or www.facebook.com/GrowHighlandCounty

Save - The - Date Let's Do Lunch is May 4

The women's diversity program, Let's Do Lunch co-sponsored by **Fifth Third Bank** and **Southern State Community College** Foundation will be on Friday, May 4, 11:30am - 1:00pm in the SSCC Atrium. Featured speaker for the event is Denise Taylor who will bring her "We GET To" message to our audience. Want a sneak preview? Visit www.wegetto.org. You'll want to be sure to attend May 4 to hear Denise's

Beware of Alleged Chamber "Partners" Asking for your Advertising Support

We have had several calls from Chamber members asking if the Chamber is partnering with companies selling advertising space on calendars, maps, magnets, etc. The answer is NO. Many of these companies sell advertising in their products and have no distribution plan to get your advertising dollars out to the market. Please, if you are considering any of these projects ask questions to be certain your money is well spent. Any doubts, just call the Chamber - 393-1111, we'll be glad to help!

HFC Safety Council Bus Rolls to Ohio Safety Expo

Are you planning on attending the Ohio Safety Expo in Columbus? If so, think about joining members of HFC Safety Council on the FUN BUS to Columbus. Forget the time and expense of driving yourself and enjoy a smooth, easy trip with other safety minded business neighbors.

You don't need to be a safety council member. Just call the Chamber office - 393-1111 and let us know that you want details. We'll answer your questions and get you signed up.



OSC | 12
Ohio Safety Congress & Expo

March 27-29

Register Now!

News & Happenings...

Kudos to **NCB** for donating some great gently used office chairs to the **Morgan Bodenhamer Senior Citizens Center** - that's Chamber partnership!

Congratulations to **Hamilton Insurance Agency** for being recognized with the 2011 Delegate Agency Award from the Buckeye Insurance Group.

Please join the **Home Building & Loan Company** recognize and celebrate the many business and community contributions that Sandra McNeal has made over her 38 years of service. A reception honoring Sandra will be held on Saturday, March 17, 9:00am - 12:00 noon at Home Building and Loan, 355 Jefferson Street, Greenfield.

Chili Supper & Silent Auction

March 8 | 5:00 - 7:00 P.M.

Old Ponderosa Banquet Center

All proceeds going to the Highland County Society for Adults and Children

Pre - Sale Tickets \$5.00

Tickets at the Door \$6.00

you can purchase tickets at any of the participating sponsors

NCB

Heartland of Hillsboro

Highland County Press

Kroger

Hillsboro Ponderosa Steak House

Wilkin - Wilkin Insurance

Buckeye Country

Chamber Celebrates Ribbon Cutting



Mobile Home Parts & Service, 401 W. Main Street, Hillsboro (937) 393-4848 offers hard to find parts for all brands of mobile, modular and manufactured homes. Pictured at the Highland County Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting are **Mobile Home Parts & Service** owner, Larry Parker, and the Chamber Red Coats.

Have a special occasion or celebration? Call for the Red Coats - these Chamber Ambassadors are ready to bring recognition and attention to your business. Just call the Chamber 393-1111 and we'll get it scheduled.

March Education Opportunities Sponsored by Chamber Partners

Rural Energy for America Program

Rural Energy for America Program is designed to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy development for small rural for-profit businesses.

March 8, 2012
9 - 11 a.m.

The Ohio State University Endeavor Center
South Centers
1862 Shyville Road
Piketon, OH 45661

Topics:

- Grants are available for up to 25% of the project's eligible costs.
- High Priority is being given to projects requesting less than \$20,000.
- Renewable energy includes Wood-fired boilers, solar thermal, solar electric, wind, anaerobic digestion, geo thermal and Flexible fuel blender pumps.
- Energy Efficiency improvements can include lighting, HVAC, insulation, windows or other energy efficiency improvements as documented in an energy audit.
- Loan guarantees are available to help secure adequate financing for these types of projects.
- Detailed review of the grant application and technical reports required.

Admission is free!

To register, please contact Joy Bauman at 740-289-2071 Ext. 111.

Exploring Exporting U.S. Small Business Administration
Breakfast Seminar Series Ohio State University Extension

March 13, 2012
9:00- 10:30am
OSU South Centers
Endeavor Center
\$10
to reserve your spot

Agenda

- Introduction to Exporting
- Export Assistance Resources
- IMAGE Grant Overview
- Is Your Business Ready ?

Event Location:
1864 Shyville Road
Piketon, OH 45661

To register contact Kelly O'Bryant
740-289-2071 ext 235 or
obryant.6@osu.edu

Ohio International Trade Assistance Center The Small Business Development Center Program of Ohio is a funded program of the Ohio Department of Development and the U.S. Small Business Administration. The support given through such funding does not constitute an express or implied endorsement of any of the co-sponsors' or participants' opinions, products or services. Special arrangements for the disabled will be made if requested in advance. This program is provided on a non-discriminatory basis.

March 2012

- March 7** – HFC Safety Council, Wilmington, 11:30am – 1:00pm
- March 8** – HCCOC Executive Committee, Chamber office, 8:00 – 9:00am
- March 9** – Coffee & Commerce, Southern State Community College, Room 106, Hillsboro, 7:30 – 9:00am
- March 14** – New Member Breakfast, Hi Tec, 27A & 27B, Hillsboro, 8:30 – 10:00am
- March 15** – Mini Business Expo, Weastec, Hillsboro, 5:00 – 7:00pm
- March 21** – Lunch and Learn Workshop, Hi Tec, 27B, Hillsboro, 12:00 – 1:00pm
- March 22** – HCCOC Board of Directors, HC Family YMCA, Hillsboro, 8:00 – 9:00am
- March 28** – HFC Safety Council Bus to Ohio Safety Expo, Columbus, 7:30am – 4:30pm

2012 Board of Directors

Board Chair Amanda Bledsoe <i>Crowe Financial Group</i>	Members at Large Bill Smith <i>Weastec, Inc.</i>
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	Terry Mull <i>Highland County Family YMCA</i>

Website: www.highlandcountychamber.com
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