

# biznet

A Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce Publication

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## In this issue:

Advocacy Update.....	2
Chamber Voices.....	3
hYPe News.....	4
Chamber Briefs.....	5
Franklin Initiative News.....	6
Health is Wealth.....	7
Mark Your Calendar — Primetime is Coming Up!.....	11
Morning Buzz Makes For Great Networking.....	11
2017 Legislative Agenda.....	12
2017 Local Public Policy Agenda.....	13



The Visitors Center, located on North Walnut St., is the headquarters of Visit Bloomington. Photo by David Snodgrass

## Spotlight: Visit Bloomington

By Kasey Husk

Whether someone's idea of a perfect day involves watching live sports, attending a concert or play, communing with nature or just eating and drinking well, Monroe County has something to offer.

For the past 40 years, one local nonprofit organization has made a business of making sure people know that.

The Convention and Visitor Bureau of Monroe County, Inc. — which does business as Visit Bloomington — is tasked with the role of “selling” the city and surrounding county to tourists, who have an important impact on the local economy. Since 2015, the organization

has implemented some new efforts to draw leisure travelers to Bloomington — and 2016 already brought major results.

Formed in 1977, Visit Bloomington seeks to market Bloomington to would-be visitors who generally visit for one of three reasons: leisure, sports or business.

Leisure accounts for the highest number of visitors, executive director Mike McAfee said, making up perhaps as much as 75 percent of the more than 2 million people who visit Bloomington each year.

“We are a weekend destination,” he said. “People come here mainly on

“We’ve found that once we are able to get that visitor here, their eyes widen and they become a fan of Bloomington.”

—Erin Erdmann,  
director of convention sales  
and travel media

**SPOTLIGHT**  
continued on page 6

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### FEBRUARY

- 8 hYPe Volunteers with Hoosier Hills Food Bank
- 11 Cutters’ 4th Annual Casino Night
- 22 16th Annual Educators of the Year Awards Dinner
- 23 February Business After Hours at the Home Show



## Coming in March:

### Vacation? Stay-cation?

Rediscover Bloomington with a look at homegrown tourism opportunities.



**Health is Wealth**  
The benefits of  
preventive care

See story  
on page 7

# ADVOCACY Update

*The Chamber represents business interests to local, state and federal representatives, serving as an advocate on behalf of all businesses for the issues critical to the future of our community. If you need assistance with a business advocacy issue, please contact your advocacy team at the Chamber.*

## Chamber Releases 2017 Legislative and Local Public Policy Agendas

Every year the Chamber releases two agendas to help guide advocacy efforts for the year. The Legislative Agenda focuses on state and federal issues and the Local Public Policy Agenda focuses on city and county issues. The agendas are compiled from member feedback from the Chamber's annual survey, with input from our Legislative Council and Chamber Advocacy Council, and then approved by the board of directors.

**See the Legislative Agenda on page 12 and Local Public Policy Agenda on page 13**

## Urbanizing Area Plan Approved by Commissioners

The county commissioners unanimously approved Phase Two of the Urbanizing Area Plan at their meeting Jan. 20. The second phase of the plan offers a framework for updating the current zoning ordinance to make the zoning code more clear and predictable. Jim Shelton, the Chamber's government relations manager for the county, spoke in favor of the plan and applauded Monroe

County officials and the consultant group MKSK for including stakeholders and the public in the process.

Along with support for the plan, the Chamber is advocating for the county to hire a consultant to develop the ordinances that will support the plan, recognizing the limited staff resources for the county and the time it would take to create the ordinances. To read Phase Two of the plan, visit [monroecountyurbanizingareaplan.com](http://monroecountyurbanizingareaplan.com).

## Fee Increase for Food Establishments

The county commissioners approved an increase in fees for temporary food vendor permits and retail food establishment licenses. Temporary food vendor permit fees have changed to \$50 per event. Previously vendors were charged \$25 per day with a \$100 cap. Annual license fees for retail food establishments will be the following:

- \$165: 1 to 5 employees
- \$330: 6 to 10 employees
- \$495: 11 to 20 employees
- \$600: 21 or more employees

## I-69 Section 5

INDOT and I-69 Development Partners are committed to finishing Section 5 by October 2017. INDOT will provide a schedule of the progress at the monthly I-69 Local Collaboration Group meetings at the Chamber.

Participants at this monthly meeting include elected officials, city and county planning and transportation staff, INDOT, I-69 Development Partners, business leaders, and members of the MPO. INDOT and the developer are still working on developing a completion schedule. For more information on Section 5 and traffic updates, visit [i69section5.org](http://i69section5.org).

## I-69 Section 6

INDOT and the Indiana Division of the Federal Highway Administration are currently preparing a Tier 2 Environmental Impact Statement for Section 6 of the I-69 Evansville to Indianapolis project. I-69 Section 6 will upgrade the majority of existing State Route (SR) 37 to interstate standards between SR 39 in Martinsville and I-465 in Indianapolis, a distance of approximately twenty-six miles. The project will also include improvements to I-465 from Mann Road to US 31. In the first quarter of 2017 INDOT will release the preferred route, which will

consist of the various interchanges and overpasses from Martinsville to Indianapolis.



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**Have questions about Chamber advocacy?**

Contact Anne Bono  
812-336-6381  
[abono@ChamberBloomington.org](mailto:abono@ChamberBloomington.org)

# Plans and Policies



Jeb Conrad. Courtesy photo

Our Chamber board of directors, staff and members hope that the 2017 is beginning successfully for all in our community. The Chamber has been extremely active already this year, particularly in the advocacy and public policy arena, engaging and monitoring legislation and policy changes that impact our membership and the business community.

At the Federal level, our Chamber remains supportive of measures for long-term, sustainable infrastructure funding to help Indiana, Monroe County and Bloomington continue to improve our transportation routes. We are also monitoring discussions with respect to changes to our national health care policies and will continue to support the repeal of the medical device tax, advocating for NSW Crane as a key regional asset in our community, and other policies that would impact our members' abilities to do business effectively in greater Bloomington.

At the county level, we will continue to be engaged in the continued progress of the Urbanizing Area Plan and particularly in the ordinance drafting phase that would support the policies in the plan. We are encouraged and supportive of Monroe County leadership's continued commitment to investing in local infrastructure that will enable more efficient connection

for commerce and better access for employees and residents.

We will also continue to be engaged at the city level, following the progress of key policy and development initiatives that include the future and current hospital sites, the city of Bloomington's Comprehensive Master Plan and I-69. All are critical to the future success of our local business landscape. The Chamber will also be closely engaged in new proposals that will impact our members and we welcome input from our businesses.

I encourage all of our members, partners and local residents to look at the Chamber's public policy agendas, which are listed on our website, for more information. These approved policies drive our annual engagement in advocacy and are reflective of our members' interests.

The Chamber expects to be faced with many changes, challenges and opportunities to serve as the voice of business in Bloomington and Monroe County. With support and guidance from our members, board of directors and quality staff, you can count on your Chamber to keep you informed, up to date and engaged in issues impacting our community and the business environment.

As a final note, please join us in

**"These approved policies drive our annual engagement in advocacy and are reflective of our members' interests."**

CHAMBER VOICES  
continued on page 15

## CONTACT BIZNET

If you are a Chamber member who would like to announce promotions, expansions, community events, or other news in the "Chamber Briefs" section, please contact Carol Kelly at the Chamber: 812-336-6381 or [ckelly@ChamberBloomington.org](mailto:ckelly@ChamberBloomington.org).

To advertise in *BizNet*, please contact Laurie Ragle at 812-331-4291 or [lragle@heraldt.com](mailto:lragle@heraldt.com). Be sure to ask about discount rate packages for Chamber members!

For subscription information or customer service, please contact Katie Bruhn at 812-336-6381 or [info@ChamberBloomington.org](mailto:info@ChamberBloomington.org).

Please send press releases to [info@ChamberBloomington.org](mailto:info@ChamberBloomington.org).

Thank you for your interest in *BizNet*!



Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce  
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Phone 812-336-6381 • [ChamberBloomington.org](http://ChamberBloomington.org)

## STAFF, PARTNERS & BOARD MEMBERS

The Chamber invites its members to contact these individuals with comments or questions regarding Chamber activities.

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Jacquelyn Carnes, *Member Services Coordinator*  
Kelsie Holt, *Director of Talent, Education & Workforce*  
Jim Inman, *Director of Marketing and Communications*  
Carol Kelly, *Events Coordinator*  
Jim Shelton, *Government Relations-County*  
Heather Robinson, *VP of Operations*  
Tammy Walker, *Director of Member Services*

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# Help us hYPe!

Are you a young professional in Bloomington? Have some young professional employees? Spread the word about hYPe!

By Kelsie Holt, director of talent education and workforce

Helping Young Professionals excel (hYPe) is the Chamber's young professionals group focused on building a network of young professionals in Bloomington. Since our start in 2011, hYPe has hosted events for young professionals like resume workshops, tips for work/life balance, non-profit fairs, wine tastings, dance lessons and more. hYPe also provides opportunities to get involved in the community. For example, we have participated in Habitat for Humanity builds, volunteered with the local Rotary Clubs at New Hope Family Shelter and walked as a team for the annual Hoosiers Outrun Cancer 5k.



One of hYPe's goals is to retain talent in Bloomington. We want you to love where you live! If you have any suggestions for something else hYPe can be doing to serve our young professional community, please don't hesitate to contact Kelsie Holt at [kholt@chamberbloomington.org](mailto:kholt@chamberbloomington.org).

To find out more and to sign up for our next event, visit our website [ChamberBloomington.org](http://ChamberBloomington.org) or find us on Facebook ([hYPeBloomington](https://www.facebook.com/hYPeBloomington)).

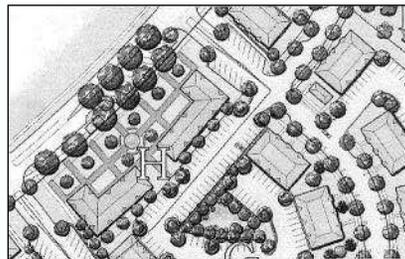


Young professionals from BKD, LLP enjoyed hYPe's holiday party at Lennie's. Courtesy photo

## MEMBER RENEWALS

- Area 10 Agency On Aging
- Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Indiana Realty
- Chick-fil-A Bloomington East
- Closets, Too!, Inc.
- Doering Consulting
- Duke Energy Indiana
- Girl Scouts of Central Indiana
- GSD Consulting, LLC
- Hallmark Rentals & Management, Inc.
- Hannah Center
- Holiday World & Splashin' Safari
- Home Instead Senior Care
- Hurlow Wealth Management Group
- Indiana Adoptee Network JA Benefits, LLC
- Jackson County Bank
- Ken Nunn Law Office
- KRC Catering and Banquets
- KVA Consulting, Inc.
- Legal Shield
- Lisa Smith Interiors
- Marsh Supermarket (East)
- MedExpress Urgent Care
- Mira Salon and Spa
- Monroe County Apartment Association
- Office Depot
- Old National Bank (Downtown)
- Oliver Winery
- Olson & Company, PC
- Personal Finance Company
- Premier Healthcare, LLC
- RE/MAX Realty Professionals
- Red Robin Gourmet Burgers & Brews
- Sabbagh, David
- Simanton Mechanical
- Southern Indiana Pediatric Dentistry
- SPAAH!
- Stampfli Associates, CPAs
- Studio 2Ten Salon & Spa
- Sugar Daddy's Cakes and Catering
- Terry's Banquets and Catering LLC
- The Toy Chest
- Utilities District of Western Indiana REMC
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## NEW MEMBERS

**B-Town Botanicals**  
339 E. Winslow Rd  
Bloomington, IN 47401  
Contact: Jesse Bunnell  
812-822-0755

**JS CORE LLC**  
361 Poplar Dr  
Ellettsville, IN 47429  
Contact: Dave Cochran  
812-360-2732

**Minton Body Shop**  
3210 Venture Blvd.  
Bloomington, IN 47404  
Contact: Max Bland  
812-339-9714

**Quality Collision Inc.**  
2110 S. Walnut St.  
Bloomington, IN 47401  
Contact: Kevin Wells  
812-332-5139

**Renogize Professional Coaching**  
Bloomington, IN 47401  
Contact: Sean Olson  
812-219-8273

**Trinity Wellness Center, LLC**  
3880 E. 3rd St. Suite C  
Bloomington, IN 47401  
Contact: Meghan Stonier-Howe  
812-360-0358

## New Hires and Promotions

### Leyenbeck joins United Way

United Way of Monroe County welcomes Amy Leyenbeck as Community Initiatives Director. Leyenbeck will lead outreach, collaboration and grant writing for United Way's programs focusing on helping people learn more, earn more and lead safer and healthier lives. Contact Amy at 812-334-8370 ext. 11 or amy@monroeunitedway.org.

### Smith Brehob and Associates Partners

Smith Brehob and Associates current partners Steve Smith, Steve Brehob and Todd Borgman are pleased to announce that Don Kocarek and Katherine Stein have become partners with the company. Kocarek is a licensed landscape architect and Stein is a licensed professional engineer.

### Barrick-Higgins New Rec Services Director

The City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department has announced that long-time staff member Becky Barrick-Higgins was promoted to fill the recreation services division director position. Higgins has served as the Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department's community events manager for the past 18 years.

### BEDC Welcomes McCombe

The Bloomington Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) announced the hiring of Anne McCombe as full-time project assistant. As project assistant, McCombe will manage the implementation of projects and programs related to the Bloomington Technology Partnership, Bloomington Life Sciences Partnership, B-Start, and other economic development projects of the BEDC.

## Awards and Designations

### Scallon Selected for Fellowship

Jean Scallon, CEO of Bloomington Meadows Hospital, has been selected for The 2017 Executive Journey Fellowship. The Executive Journey Fellowship provides Indiana's youth workers greater opportunities to bring more meaning to their lives and make stronger commitments to the field of youth work.

## Opportunities and Events

### Annual Casino Night

The Cutters Soccer Club will host the Fourth Annual Casino Night Saturday, Feb. 11, in The Clubhouse at The Fields Apartments from 6 to 11 p.m. Proceeds will go to the Cutters Outreach and TOPSoccer programs. For more information, visit cutterssoccer.org or call Michael Nosofsky at 812-322-4495 or email director@cutterssoccer.org.



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### State of the City Address

Mayor John Hamilton's second State of the City Address is open to the public and will take place on Thursday, Feb. 16 at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater. The address will begin at 7 p.m. with doors opening at 6:30 p.m. For details call Mary Catherine Carmichael at 812-349-3406.

### CASA Cocktails and Karaoke

Monroe County CASA invites you to Cocktails and Karaoke Feb. 18 at 6:30 p.m. at the Bloomington AMVETS for a night full of hilarious performances, great food and drinks and some wildly talented singers. Visit [cocktailsandkaraoke.org](http://cocktailsandkaraoke.org) or call 812-333-2272.

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**Kaytee Lorentzen Photography** is a local Bloomington, Indiana lifestyle portrait photographer dedicated to pursuing a passion of capturing memories to share with clients' loved ones. **Kaytee Lorentzen Photography** serves Bloomington, Indiana and surrounding areas. Visit [kayteelorentzen.org](http://kayteelorentzen.org).

### Soup Bowl Tickets on Sale

The 23rd Annual Soup Bowl Benefit, which benefits Hoosier Hills Food Bank, will take place Sunday, Feb. 19 5 to 7 p.m. at the Monroe Convention Center. Guests can choose a bowl handmade by a local potter and sample soups from nearly 50 local restaurants. Call 812-334-8374 or email [office@hhfoodbank.org](mailto:office@hhfoodbank.org).

### Adoptee Network Spring Conference

The Indiana Adoptee Network will hold a Spring Conference called Building Bridges of Connection April 21 and 22 at the Monroe Convention Center. Accommodations will be available at Courtyard by Marriott. CEUS are available for this conference. For information and reservations, visit [indianaadopteenetwork.org](http://indianaadopteenetwork.org).

CHAMBER BRIEFS

continued on page 15

## The Franklin Initiative Update

# Springing Ahead

By Kelsie Holt, director of talent, education and workforce

The Franklin Initiative is off to a busy start this year! If you're looking to get involved in the Chamber and the Franklin Initiative, our Career Speakers Bureau is a great place to begin. The Career Speakers Bureau is a year-round program that brings local professionals into the local high schools to participate in panels consisting of two to five speakers.

These panels help to introduce students to a variety of career options that are available within a given field, as well as allow students to ask questions about the various professions being presented. Our volunteer speakers provide advice to students for their college plans and inform students how to prepare for success in the field. Each panel is focused around a specific career field, such as medical, STEM, arts, public safety, social work, culinary arts, management and more.

Our next Career Speakers Bureau at Edgewood High

School on March 1 will focus on business and finance. We'll have more dates and topics available soon.

Our other spring programs include Mock Interviews and a day of Job Shadowing for the freshman students participating in the "Preparing for College and Careers" class at the Academy of Science and Entrepreneurship. Our Mock Interviews program provides students with an opportunity to practice their interviewing skills in a safe, supportive environment with an actual professional whom they have not previously met, and allows students to receive feedback and helpful advice for future interviews. It will be held April 20 at The Academy.

Our Job Shadow program allows high school students the chance to explore careers by observing and interacting with people on the job, for a short periods of time. We partner high school freshmen

with professionals from local organizations who offer careers in which the students have an interest. Job shadowing will be held April 27.

If your business would like to host a high school student for a job shadow or volunteer for any of these programs, please contact Franklin Initiative program associate Jacob Summer at [jsummer@chamberbloomington.org](mailto:jsummer@chamberbloomington.org) for more information. Your support is critical for our students as they learn the soft skills needed for their future careers.

Don't forget to save the date for our 16th Annual Educators of the Year Awards dinner on Wednesday, Feb. 22 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Monroe Convention Center. Individual tickets are \$35, student tickets are \$20 and tables of eight with additional marketing benefits are \$500. To register to attend the awards dinner or for more information, contact Kelsie Holt at [kholt@chamberbloomington.org](mailto:kholt@chamberbloomington.org).





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### SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 1

weekends for big events, IU-related events, the culinary scene, the arts.”

But in August 2015, Visit Bloomington took a big step toward increasing potential visitors' awareness of Bloomington by hosting its first Travel Media Showcase. The convention, which included 175 travel professionals and travel journalists from across the country, took almost five years of planning to bring to Bloomington.

“Throughout the three days that the travel journalists were here we worked with 48 local businesses, including restaurants and attractions,” said Erin Erdmann, director of convention sales and travel media for Visit Bloomington, who describes the planning process for the convention as “a labor of love.”

“We were very busy showcasing the best of Bloomington the entire time the conference was held here,” she said.

Hosting the conference meant



Visit Bloomington marketing team (from left) Julie Warren, Danielle Lucas, Emily Hines and Erin Erdmann discuss a project. Photo by David Snodgrass

having a wide audience with whom to share everything Bloomington has to offer. The results, Erdmann and McAfee noted, have been impressive.

Erdmann saw an increase in exposure for Bloomington, including 29 million social media impressions. The conference prompted extensive news coverage of the amenities the city has to offer, based on what the journalists who visited saw.

“It also created dozens and dozens of stories in regional and

national publications and blogs, all sorts of different outlets for people to find out about Bloomington,” she said.

Such news stories tend to carry more weight with potential visitors than advertisements do, McAfee said, making their impact especially important.

Visit Bloomington sought to

**SPOTLIGHT**  
continued on page 14

# Health is Wealth

## *Preventive care adds value for employees and employers*

By Kasey Husk

**T**he old adage “health is wealth” is probably meant to be taken metaphorically — but today, many employers are finding it is literally true.

Healthier employees are more productive employees, and they can be less expensive ones when an employer is covering insurance costs. To that end, many Bloomington businesses are offering wellness programming to help their employees stay healthy, get fit and de-stress.

The payoff, according to these employers, can be lower insurance costs, greater productivity and, above all, happier employees who feel valued by their workplace.

“The environment of the workplace will be much better for people when they feel well, when they can move easily, don’t have digestive problems, don’t have joint problems,” said BreAnna Guan, a naturopathic physician at Bloomington’s Balanced Natural Health.

“Productivity will go up, sick days will go down ... People can think better and have more creative ideas and get things done better when they feel well,” she added.

### **A Culture of Care**

Offering flu shots can be a common first step for employers looking to protect employee health, but many employers are going much further to help their workers identify, prevent and treat illnesses.

Karen Danielson is the program manager for Worksite Wellness, a wellness program for Indiana University Health’s south-central Indiana region. Though all of Indiana University Health’s 30,000 employees have a wellness program — called Healthy Results — through their insurance plans, Worksite Wellness is the continuation of a program started about 20 years ago at Bloomington and Orange County hospitals before they became part of the IU Health system.

“It was decided we didn’t want to relinquish what we knew was good for us, which was fueling a culture of care where individuals, colleagues and coworkers could support each other in making lifestyle changes,” Danielson said. “The local feel is pretty important when you are trying to have a wellness plan.”

The organization now offers a variety of services to the 3,500 IU Health employees it covers, among them health screenings, health coaching, wellness challenges, weight control programs and tobacco cessation.

Danielson’s program has branched out to offer wellness programming to employers throughout the state and is currently working with 35 businesses to offer wellness screenings, reports on gaps in care and risks assessment, and more.

“First and foremost, we are looking for gaps, looking for opportunities to assist our employees,” she said of her programming.

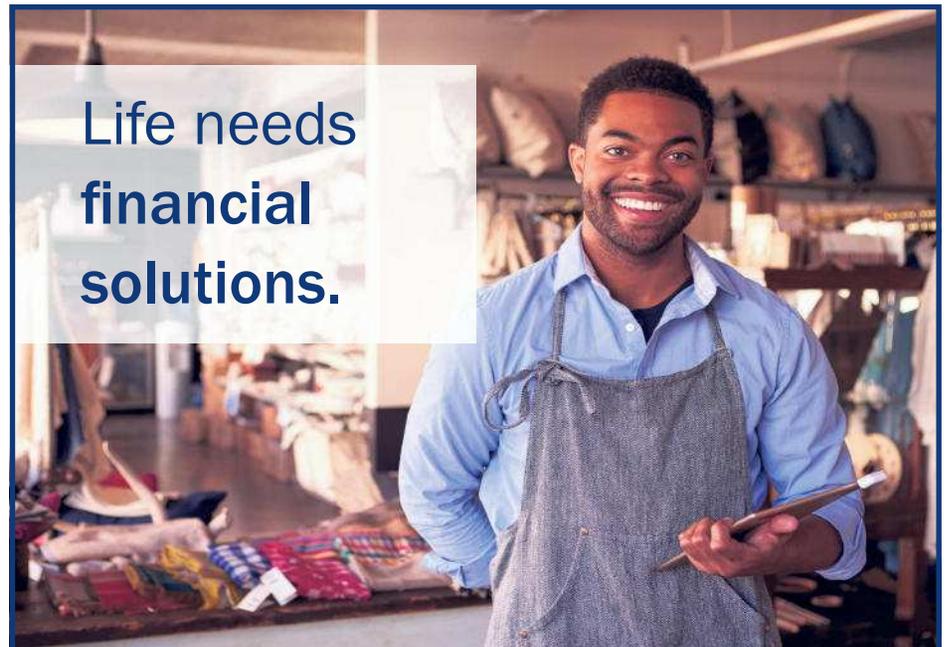
Individualizing the program for a specific audience is vitally important to meeting the needs of that specific workplace, she said. For instance, some workplaces have as much as 30 percent of the workforce at risk of diabetes. In such a case, holding an



BreAnna Guan. Courtesy photo



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**HEALTH IS WEALTH**  
continued on page 8



**"If people are not managing or not getting care for chronic conditions, you are going to end up with loss of productivity, loss of work time through sick leave."**

—Nancy Richman, executive director of the Volunteers in Medicine Clinic

**"People can think better and have more creative ideas and get things done better when they feel well."**

—BreAnna Guan, naturopathic physician at Balanced Natural Health

**"What we want is to make it as easy as possible for an employee to come into work."**

—Jean Scallon, CEO of Bloomington Meadows Hospital

**A health coach can help "peel back the onion and see what's going on with this individual that they are struggling."**

—Karen Danielson, program manager at Worksite Wellness

## HEALTH IS WEALTH

Continued from page 9

become increasingly urgent issues as the Baby Boomer generation continues to age, according to Amanda Mosier, community health coordinator for IU Health Bloomington Community Health's Alzheimer's Resource Service.

The Alzheimer's Resource Center offers educational resources and support for people in the community who have or may have Alzheimer's disease, and it is currently working on programming to educate local businesses on how to best accommodate customers with the condition. As the population continues to age, the numbers of people suffering from Alzheimer's disease or dementia will rise, Mosier said. But having a workplace that is aware of symptoms to look for can make a difference.

"The more that we are aware of the situation and ... recognize the signs and symptoms, the quicker they can get the help they need, and if we get the help we need there is the possibility to reverse it," she said, referring to a few specific types of dementia that are reversible, though she notes that most are not.

"And if not, we can get them the help they need and keep them in the workforce a little longer."

## The Big Payoff

Studies have repeatedly shown that employees who are healthy are more productive. Other studies have shown that happy employees get more done. Wellness programs can help employers build a workforce that is both.

As Mosier explained, preventive health care efforts "keep the employee feeling like the workplace really values them."

Offering wellness programs can be a "win-win" for employers and employees because while employees benefit from improved health, a business often sees a very real impact on its bottom line. Healthy employees are less likely to take sick days, and are more productive when they are at work, Mosier said. People who have their chronic conditions properly identified and treated may be able to remain in the workforce longer, reducing costly turnover.

Perhaps the clearest indication of a wellness program's value comes from its role in helping to manage a company's healthcare premiums. Many companies try to achieve zero-trending when it comes to health care premiums — a term that means the company's health care claims and costs are remaining steady, Danielson said. Given that increases have sometimes run at 12 percent per year, keeping costs from rising substantially is an enormous feat.

"I think a company should expect us to, over time, make some adjustment in their health claims," Danielson said.

When the company is saving money, it usually means the employee is too, in the long run. Still, Danielson cautioned, it is important that employees not feel as if the only motivation to have wellness programs is to save the company money.

"The employers who step up most fully are those who aren't just concerned about their bottom line, but have a genuine care for their employees," she said. "It is a 360 degree approach to wellness."

When a preventive care plan comes together properly, it creates a positive, energetic atmosphere for employees who feel motivated to work.

"It is so awesome to work with healthy people," Guan said. "When people feel well, they are more positive. (They) can communicate more easily and be more productive, have more cognizance and are able to think through things. Wellness stretches over into every aspect of the workplace."

Guan added, "I think in a lot of successful companies, there is a culture of wellness. And I think we need to have more of that in Indiana."



Amanda Mosier.  
Courtesy photo



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# Morning Buzz Makes For Great Networking

By Jim Inman, director of marketing and communications

**O**n Wednesday, January 25, representatives of nearly 50 different Chamber businesses participated in the Chamber's first Morning Buzz of 2017. Morning Buzz, designed as a speed-networking event, was held at College Mall Bloomington in the food court.

After a light breakfast sponsored by Chick-fil-A Bloomington East, and a quick overview of the rules by the Chamber's director of membership Tammy Walker, the Morning Buzz attendees found their assigned seating at one of many different tables. Each Chamber member was asked to bring business cards to exchange, a two-minute presentation about their business and their 2017 business goals. After two minutes a buzzer sounded, and the next person at the table shared about his or her business. Once the four Chamber members all shared about their businesses, attendees rotated tables and met with other attendees. Through seven rounds of rotations, Chamber members had the opportunity to meet several new businesses and find potential ways to work together. Attendees also wrote their 2017 business goals on a display, and were encouraged to note what businesses they could help with attaining those goals.

Our thanks to College Mall Bloomington for hosting Morning Buzz, and to Chick-fil-A Bloomington East for a great breakfast!

Morning Buzz will be a quarterly event hosted by The Chamber. Watch for upcoming dates and locations on the Chamber's website, ChamberBloomington.org. 



Courtesy photo

# Mark Your Calendar — Primetime is Coming Up!

By Jim Inman, director of marketing and communications

**W**e are already thinking spring at the Chamber — and one of our annual events is coming up this April. We are excited to announce the Chamber's annual Primetime Business in a Briefcase and Barbecue Cook-off!

Primetime is a great opportunity to not only meet other Chamber members and their businesses but to also show off some of your business products and services. Chamber members can set up a display table, bring information about their business and network with Primetime exhibitors and attendees. In 2016 Primetime featured over 60 different local businesses, and more than 400 Chamber and community members visited Primetime.

Of course, one of the highlights of Primetime is our Barbecue Cook-off. We invite several local barbecue teams and restaurants to share samples of pulled pork, chicken, ribs and brisket with Primetime attendees. Judges award the barbecue teams with a variety of honors at Primetime, so you know the barbecue will be wonderful! Primetime will be part of the Chamber's monthly Business After Hours networking event.

This year's Primetime Business in a Briefcase and Barbecue Cook-off will be held on Wednesday, April 19 at the Monroe County Fairgrounds. Chamber members may purchase a half table space (4 feet) for \$100, or a full table (8 feet) for \$200. Chamber members who have joined since July 2016 are eligible for a complimentary half table (4 feet), or a full table (8 feet) for \$100.

If you have been considering joining the Chamber, now is the time! Primetime is a perfect opportunity to meet other Chamber members and share your business.

For more information about Primetime, and to reserve your table space, please contact the Chamber at 812.336.6381 or info@ChamberBloomington.org. Please visit ChamberBloomington.org and click Events to register. 



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Art Van Furniture generously donated \$4,000 to our local Habitat for Humanity in celebration of their ribbon cutting and grand opening. Welcome to Bloomington, Art Van!  
Courtesy photo



**The Chamber**

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# 2017 Legislative Agenda

## Business Taxation & Regulation

Foster a pro-business climate to attract and retain businesses in Bloomington and Indiana

- Support federal comprehensive tax reform efforts that lessen tax burdens on business
- Support fair methodologies for assessing commercial property
- Encourage regulatory reform efforts that lessen burdens on business and restore Congressional accountability in the rulemaking process
- Support extending the state's civil rights protections to include sexual orientation and gender identity

## Infrastructure & Job Creation

Develop and maintain a superior state and local framework that supports the needs of business

- Prioritize ongoing completion of I-69
- Support long-term, sustainable funding for transportation
- Promote and protect Crane as a primary regional job provider
- Support policies that incentivize investment in rural telecom for gigabit connectivity
- Support legislation that provides resources for transit expansion

 **As the voice of business, the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce has identified the legislative priorities that encourage economic development, innovation and strategic growth.**

## Healthcare

Promote education and awareness opportunities that help businesses manage their healthcare costs

- Educate members on developments of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the Federal Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP), and the impact on operating costs for businesses
- Support continued enrollment in the Healthy Indiana Plan and continued waiver for and expansion of the plan in 2018

## Education & Workforce Development

Create education opportunities to ensure an intelligent, high-skilled workforce

### Preschool and K-12 Education

- Emphasize importance of funding for early childhood education, preschool, and kindergarten
- Improve the public school funding formula to focus on increased equitable funding per pupil and fix historical inequities
- Promote the importance of STEM-related programs & career training
- Encourage development of entrepreneurship programs and vocational training for technical fields to develop a qualified workforce

### Higher Education

- Support institutional innovation and flexibility to best meet student needs
- Encourage federal lawmakers to help close the innovation deficit by decreasing the gap in needed and actual federal investment in research

**For more information about the advocacy and public policy work of The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce, please contact:**

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Anne Bono  
Director of Advocacy & Public Policy  
[abono@ChamberBloomington.org](mailto:abono@ChamberBloomington.org)



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# 2017 Local Public Policy Agenda

- Continue collaborative efforts among City and County officials and INDOT on Section 5 of I-69
- Work with County and City officials to promote land use and zoning policies that encourage ample opportunity for business growth and expansion on local issues:
  - East-west connectivity for thoroughfares
  - Business zoning for I-69 Corridor and state highways
  - Monroe County Urbanizing Area Plan execution
  - Annexation
  - City's Comprehensive Master Plan
  - Increase clarity, transparency, and predictability of processes
- Promote efforts to maintain a safe and civil city: improving the safety and cleanliness of downtown; preventing crimes and property damage; maintaining the ease of access to goods and services
- Support efforts to expand the Monroe Convention Center
- Remain engaged in local education initiatives
- Monitor and educate business on local public finance impacts

*For more information about the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce and its advocacy and public policy efforts:*

Anne Bono, Director of Advocacy & Public Policy -  
abono@ChamberBloomington.org

812.336.6381 | www.ChamberBloomington.org



**As the voice of business, The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce has identified the following local priorities that encourage local economic development, innovation, and strategic growth.**

## **Additional areas that The Chamber will continue to monitor:**

- Represent business interest in re-development planning for IU Health Hospital site and monitor progress
- Support and monitor the development of key real estate locations in Bloomington and Monroe County
- Encourage greater participation among members on local boards and commissions
- Monitor and study issues related to the management and economic potential of our area's water supply and sewage
- Monitor and study issues related to local business impacts, i.e. affordable housing and mandatory apartment recycling



Inside the Visitors Center, brochures, magazines and souvenirs beckon Bloomington tourists. Photo by David Snodgrass

## SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 6

build on that convention momentum in 2016 with a nine-month “dedicated media plan,” McAfee said. This ultimately resulted in 42 feature media placements that reached almost 3 million people in print and

16 million on the web. The city was also featured in 10 broadcast media segments and on an HGTV series — a new show called *Hunting Vintage* — that had an audience of 31 million people.

The city saw a “huge uptick” in visitors in 2016, to which McAfee partially

credits the media attention from their efforts. While actual numbers of visitors can be difficult to track, McAfee noted that in 2016 about 40,000 more hotel room nights were rented than in 2015 — and 2015 was already a record year.

“That’s a testament to Bloomington’s growth, and the strength of our industry, and how great of a destination we are,” he said.

Of course, more visitors mean more money in the community. In 2015, visitors spent \$362 million in Bloomington, creating \$78 million in federal, state and local tax revenue.

The tourism industry is also an important job creator, McAfee said. Between 2014 and 2015 the number of tourism-related jobs grew from 6,556 to 7,611 — an increase of 1,055 in our local workforce.

Going into 2017, Visit

Bloomington will continue efforts to create buzz about Bloomington. One such effort includes new “Insta Meetups” where people who use Instagram are encouraged to come to meet up at a chosen location in Bloomington — Upland Brewery’s new sours brewery was a recent choice — to socialize.

“They will take photos and document their experience, share with their social network and use hashtags that track back to Bloomington,” Erdmann said. “Then, when people are on Instagram and are searching ‘Bloomington, Indiana’ they will come across these amazing photos and that, we hope, will inspire people to go out and visit.”

But while leisure is the largest category of visitors coming to Bloomington, Visit Bloomington also has an eye toward increasing

business and convention travel to the area.

“Our time to grow is during the week, and who is coming here during the week?” McAfee said. “It is business travel.”

Visit Bloomington employees network to raise awareness about the spaces available for conventions or meetings in Bloomington, which McAfee said is already the second most popular group destination in the state behind Indianapolis. The group supports the expansion of the Monroe Convention Center, believing increased space will bring more opportunities to draw large groups.

Getting people

to Bloomington can sometimes be challenging, Erdmann said, noting that people think of Indiana as a “flyover state, another ‘I’ state in the Midwest somewhere.”

However, Erdmann explained, the payoff when their opinion of the place changes is one of the most rewarding parts of her job.

“We’ve found that once we are able to get that visitor here, their eyes widen and they become a fan of Bloomington,” she said. “They can’t believe the amount of experiences and opportunities. We really are a destination unlike any other in Indiana, and we are proud of that.”



Mike McAfee. Courtesy photo

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## CHAMBER BRIEFS

Continued from page 5

### Other

#### MCHA Clinic and Outreach Center

MCHA has announced the official opening of the Nonprofit Veterinary Clinic and Outreach Center in northwest Bloomington. The Center will house a minor medical veterinary clinic, education center, community cat program and a food and supply pantry.

#### New Members Welcomed

New members welcomed at a Realtors membership meeting include: Alex Everett with F.C. Tucker, AJ Bowlen with RE/MAX Acclaimed Properties, Bobbi Bowden with Carpenter Realtors, Bobbi Robertson with RE/MAX Acclaimed Properties, Joya Kelly with RE/MAX Acclaimed Properties, Kirsten Lee with T. Jones Real Estate, Kortne Monyhan with United Country Coffey, Sarah Williamson with Orion Real Estate and Property Management and William Candelaria with F.C. Tucker.

#### Axia for Gigabit-class Broadband

Mayor John Hamilton was joined by Axia CEO Art Price to announce that the city and Axia have signed a letter of intent to develop a city-wide, open-architecture, gigabit-class fiber optic broadband service. In Axia's business model, fiber infrastructure is available to anyone and is shared across the full market.

#### Blue and Co. Merger

Blue and Co. has merged with Indiana Benefits, Inc. (IBI). IBI joins the Blue Benefits Consulting (BBC) team and brings experience and an existing

client base to the practice. IBI serves approximately 190 employee benefit plans, providing many of the same services as BBC.

#### The Tailored Fit Sewing Classes

The Tailored Fit offers a variety of sewing classes and the schedule is available at [thetailoredfit.com/mediaworksonline.com/classes/](http://thetailoredfit.com/mediaworksonline.com/classes/). A beginner class and several group classes are offered. Learn more by calling 812-323-2665 or email [thetailoredfit@gmail.com](mailto:thetailoredfit@gmail.com).

#### Home Instead Educational Programs

Home Instead offers free monthly educational programs for senior care professionals and others who may be interested. Free continuing education units are offered for these web-based programs. The program has been adapted for accreditation in cooperation with the American Society on Aging. Read about upcoming webinars at [caregiverstress.com](http://caregiverstress.com).

#### Discounted Solar Installations

When Bloomington's city hall and police headquarters go solar next year, residents will be able to join in, at bargain prices, with the Solarize Bloomington campaign. Learn more at [tinyurl.com/solarizebloomington](http://tinyurl.com/solarizebloomington) or call 812-349-3837.

#### Bloomington Tech Sector Growth

The Bloomington Technology Partnership hosted its annual Tech the Halls event. The event showcased accomplishments within the technology sector in Bloomington regarding new job growth, capital investment and significant business developments for several local businesses. See more at [bloomingtontech.com](http://bloomingtontech.com) or follow @bloom\_tech on Twitter.

#### Area Realtors Leadership

New leadership of Realtors includes: President Jeff Goldin, first vice president Kim Hill and secretary/treasurer Jason Millican along with directors Andy Walker, Lisa Funkhouser, Amanda Richardson, Mark Bush, Mary Jane Hall, and director-ex officio Keith Williamson. BBOR has also named Lisa Abbott as the new executive vice president.

#### City Seeks Resident Opinion

Mayor John Hamilton is asking 3,000 randomly-selected Bloomington households to participate in the first ever community-wide, scientific survey for the city of Bloomington. The survey results will help establish a baseline understanding of how residents feel about current conditions in our community. Call 812-349-3406 for more information.

#### Meadows Hospital Outpatient Center

Bloomington Meadows Hospital is expanding and relocating its outpatient services. The outpatient center, located at 445 S. Landmark Ave., will house the Partial Hospitalization Program for adolescents and the medication management clinic for all ages. For more information, call 812-822-3201.



**Chamber members may send submissions for Chamber Briefs to Jim Inman at the Chamber: [jinman@ChamberBloomington.org](mailto:jinman@ChamberBloomington.org). Submissions should be 100 words or less, in straight paragraph form with no quotes or bullet lists. Please submit in Microsoft Word format within the first two weeks of the month for publication the following month.**

## CHAMBER VOICES

Continued from page 3

thanking two excellent Chamber staff members who will be moving forward in 2017. We thank Larry Jacobs, who retired at the end of 2016, for his commitment and tireless efforts on behalf of Chamber City advocacy activity. We will miss Larry's direct engagement as a member of our staff, but also wish him a happy and healthy retirement.

We all also would like to thank Heather Robinson, our COO, for her nearly 17 years of dedicated effort as part of our Chamber team. Heather will be taking a new position at the Bloomington Hospital Foundation and we will miss her leadership, professionalism and expertise as a member of the Chamber staff. We wish her much success in her new challenge as well.



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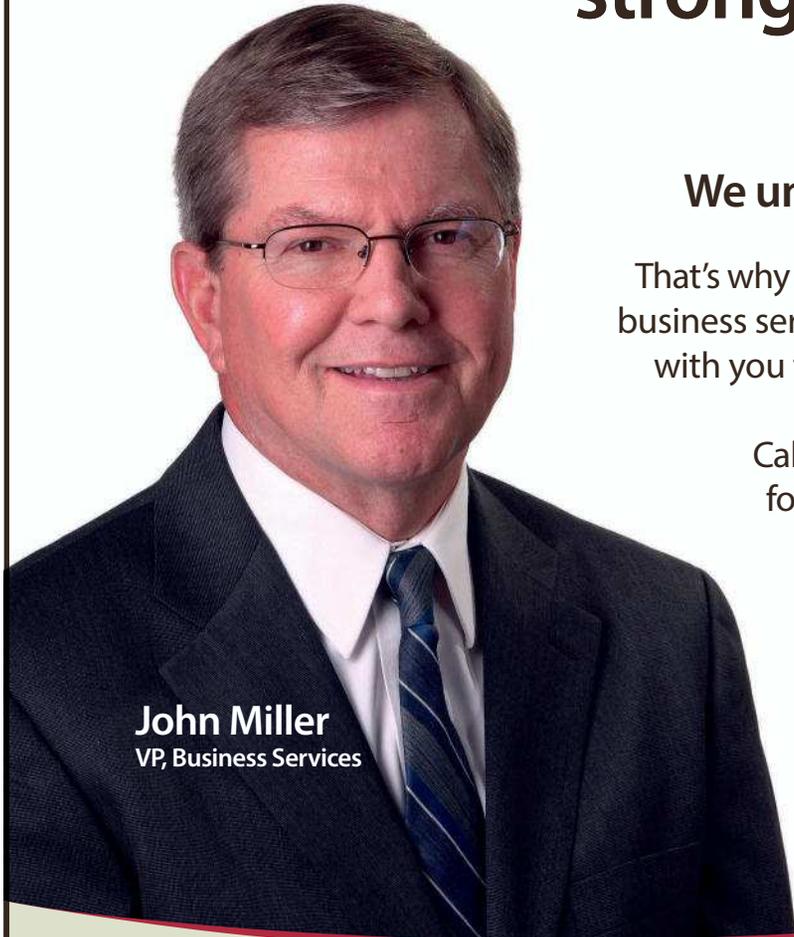
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