



It Is Your Chamber, Be A Part Of It

2017 was a GREAT year for the Bolivar Area Chamber of Commerce. It is because of the strong support of our members, Board of Directors and the Bolivar community. Let's keep the momentum going in 2018. Did you know that 75% of the Bolivar Area Chamber of Commerce's annual budget is generated through partnerships and membership fees? YOUR investment in the Chamber is what makes events like Light the Park, Bolivar Night at the Cardinals and the Annual Christmas Parade possible. As a Chamber, we strive to cultivate networking opportunities to help strengthen Bolivar and YOUR business. Annual renewal notices were sent out earlier this month. Don't delay, renew for 2018 today!



THANK YOU PARTNERS!

On January 5, the Bolivar Area Chamber of Commerce hosted our Corporate and Executive Partners during the annual partner luncheon. The luncheon was a opportunity for the Chamber Board and staff to share highlights from 2017 and gather input from this valuable group. The resurgence of the Chamber After Hours came out of this meeting last year and we are looking forward to implementing some great ideas from this year's meeting. We can't say THANK YOU enough to these partners. Corporate partners are Polk County, Southwest Baptist University, Citizens Memorial Healthcare, Bank of Bolivar, Keeling Financial, Mid-Missouri Bank, Farmers State Bank, Commerce Bank, The Complex, and Tractor Supply Company. Executive Partners are Bolivar R-1 Schools, Douglas, Haun and Heidemann, Southwest Electric and Stephens Photography.

PASSING OF THE GAVEL

Thank you to outgoing Chamber President Nick Seiner, pictured center, for his leadership and service in 2017. The year included several major events including a move of Chamber offices and significant growth in Chamber membership. The Chamber is now nearly 250 members strong. The 2018 Chamber President is Jesse Ankrom, left, and 2018 Chamber Vice President is Jared Taylor, right.

FOCUS

Focus is the Chamber's news link with its membership, reporting on Chamber action involved in building a better community.

Phone: 417.326.4118
Email: info@bolivarchamber.com

JOIN THE CHAMBER... PASS IT ON

Do you know of a business that could benefit from a Bolivar Area Chamber of Commerce membership? Encourage them to join; invite them to a meeting; forward the newsletter to them.

INSPIRING WORDS OF WISDOM

"Happiness cannot be traveled to, owned, earned, worn or consumed. Happiness is the spiritual experience of living every minute with love, grace and gratitude." ~ **Denis Waitley**

"To get the full value of joy you must have someone to divide it with." ~ **Mark Twain**

**Bolivar Area
Chamber of Commerce
2018 Board Members**

President

Jesse Ankrom
Kirksey Law Firm

Vice President

Jared Taylor
Capstone Insurors

Secretary

Rebekah Wright
Southwest Baptist University

Treasurer

Sheldon Toler
Bank of Bolivar

Jennifer Cole

Cole & Fields

Levi Kemp

Duck Creek Technologies

Jennifer "Jenni" Williams

OakStar Bank

Penny Swearingin

Highland Design Studio

Scott Kirchoff

Citizens Memorial Healthcare

Mila Chernioglo

Citizens Memorial
Healthcare Clinics

Martha Meza

Mid-Missouri Bank

Josh Baker

Quality Fire Extinguisher

Tiffany Phillips

Polk County Circuit Clerk

Bobbie McKnight

Mary Kay

Matt Wells

Tractor Supply Co.

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

January 11, 2018

Board members attending: Jesse Ankrom, Jared Taylor, Penny Swearingin, Rebekah Wright, Sheldon Toler, Jennifer Cole, Bobbie McKnight

Guests attending: Gail Noggle, Dennis Wiggins, Glen Farrow, Heather Heckadin, Vicki Benner, Jim Benner, Dan Bunch, Josh Baker, Trish Lavish, Trisha Doering, Wren Hall, Anthony Shade, Darin Peterson, Donna Peterson, CC Gulick, Michelle Morris, Matt Rains, Anna Christopher, Gary Christopher, Chris Asby, Nick Seiner, Aaron Sloan, Randy Boulware, Daniel Leith, Ben Salmon, Tracy Slagle, Rev. Tom Rhodes, Dawnielle Robinson, Lucy Mayfield, Gray Nordan, Raed Elmansy, Melody Glasgow, Carissa Gooch, Linda Bunch, Lorrie Simpson

Chamber President Jesse Ankrom opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Nick welcomed new chamber members:

- Polk County Central Dispatch – Sarah Newell
- LGK & Son Upholstery – Margie P. Keith
- Porter Seed House – Tony Porter
- Akers Home Improvement, LLC – Tammy Akers

Chamber board member recognitions:

- New board members for 2018 – Bobbie McKnight, Mary Kay, Tiffany Phillips, Polk County, Josh Baker, Quality Fire Extinguisher
- New officers – Jesse Ankrom, President; Jared Taylor, Vice-President, Sheldon Toler, Treasurer; Rebekah Wright, Secretary

Membership Renewals have gone out. Please return them as soon as you can.

Linda Bunch – 2017 review and 2018 outlook –

- Linda introduced Tracy Slagle as the new Bolivar City Administrator – the chamber works closely with the city and the county.
- Linda has The Marketing Bunch that contracts with the chamber board to manage and market the chamber office. Had a very busy year this year and looking forward to another one in 2018.
- What are you getting for your membership – look at your chamber membership like a gym membership – you pay your dues but the more you

use it, the more you'll get out of it. Lots of new members last year – over 50.

- Networking @ Noon was one of the most popular events – programs, education, networking opportunities for you to introduce your business. We have an opportunity to bring a customer service speaker for a ½ day program in February or March.
- After-Hours social proved very popular last year – came from a survey. Next after-hours is on March 16 at Smith's Restaurant – no charge, come-and-go networking opportunity.
- Ribbon-cuttings – always a privilege of the Chamber to be a part of opening, expanding, re-opening businesses. Take advantage if you have a special event coming up. The Chamber has been here for 105 years – adds to credibility to your business to be a member.
- New resident gift bags – attract a lot of new residents. We are working with real estate agents, churches, schools and others to have new residents come by and pick up a bag – as a Chamber member, you can provide information, gifts, coupons, other items to go in the bags. Bring 50 – 100 items to the Chamber office.
- Leadership Bolivar – another opportunity that will take place in 2019 – kick off for sign up will begin fall of 2018 – good opportunity for you or your employees to get acquainted with Bolivar and other people in Bolivar. Educational sessions on Tuesday evenings, meals provided, also a trip to Jefferson City included.
- Golf tournament – has been hosted by the chamber for several years – one of the major fundraisers for the chamber. Networking opportunities and advertising opportunities. Bring in good clients to play with you.
- Bolivar Day at the Springfield Cardinals – we are one of the longest running and largest communities participating in their community nights. Good opportunity to do fun things with your staff and clients – 800-900 people from Bolivar. In 2017 we added the option to put your company logo on the back of shirts.

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- New Teacher Welcome Luncheon – the Chamber partners with SBU to host this event for all new teachers in Polk County – nearly 100 attend each year – gift bags are provided and give you an opportunity to donate something – gets your name in front of them and says thank you.
- Simon Selfies – stop by the Chamber office and get your pic taken with Simon. Popular during downtown events. Grace Douglas painted him.
- We have a new location at 117A S. Main this year – been looking at other locations for years – part of strategic plan is to help vitalize the downtown – statistics show communities with vital downtowns are stronger communities. We feel much more connected to community – have more visibility. Had a great open house in September with a ribbon-cutting.
- Taste of Bolivar – signature event of the chamber – over the past few years the chamber board has been looking at everything we do and decided to combine the Expo, Taste of Bolivar and live and silent auction into one event. Working with Bolivar High School to have it this year at the end of Bolivar – free expo booths for chamber members – paying customers at this event. Showcase Bolivar and showcase your business as we roll into the Christmas season.
- Christmas Open House – any Chamber member can participate - \$60 fee included all materials and advertising. Two people who have entered into drawings at the participating businesses win \$200 to spend at any of those businesses. In the past we had approximately 2,000 entries with 25-30 business – in 2017 we had 49 businesses and 7,000 entries. It's a growing, popular event and lets people know Bolivar is a great place to shop and eat. Want to remind people to shop locally – we have a lot to offer.
- Christmas Parade – ‘Believe in Christmas’ was this year's theme – 3,000-4,000 people come to Bolivar for the parade. Free entries. Floats, bands, horse entries – people also stay and shop and eat in Bolivar.
- Light the Park – 15th year this year – starts the day after Thanksgiving and runs through the end of December. Businesses sponsor displays, and money is raised for very deserving charities and not-for-profits. No cost to drive through but donations to those charities are accepted.
- We have many opportunities for members to promote their business but throughout the year, we are trying to promote Bolivar. We're working to provide a very attractive community.
- A 2018 calendar was distributed listing tentative dates for events and networking meetings. Please like the chamber Facebook page. The weekly e-blast will go out on Wednesdays in 2018 – send info or fliers to be included.

- We thank you that you have made this investment into the Chamber and into your community. It's all of us working together. A \$160 membership fee is an investment of about 65 cents a day.

Jesse introduced Gray Nordan and Nick Seiner as past Presidents – they've set a good example of what it is to be a good board member and support the Chamber.

Roundtable –

Trisha Doering, SWMO AHEC – Bo Bonus is doing a medical rotation in OB at CMH through their program. Also, they have been trying to get a satellite office in Bolivar – found an office space. Trish Lavish will be the local coordinator.

Gary Christopher – DAV – also chairman of Polk County Veterans Welcome Home – planning the 2018 Welcome Home in May. Starting to contact donors soon for honor flight of the Ozarks. Monetary and product donations are good because they will have an auction during their event.

Greg Ankrom – Bank of Bolivar – their annual holiday giving program raised \$5,900 for four charities

Dennis Wiggins – Ozarks Regional Workforce Development – thanks to those who have taken the survey, but you still have time to take it if you haven't. Find the link on past chamber e-blasts. Survey closes on January 16. Also willing to come to Economic Summit and present results of survey.

Ben Salmon – KLIFE – their annual banquet will be on February 24 at CMH. Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. and tickets are \$25 or \$200 for a table of 8. There will also be a dessert auction. KLIFE helps impact youth culture through Christ.

Glen Farrow - MO Job Center – on January 23 they will have virtual job fair – designed for employers looking for veterans. Helping connect those active duty soldiers with those hiring.

Jim Benner – working with the current race track owner to re-open the Bolivar Speedway.

Daniel Leith – Polk County House of Hope – Hope's Closet thrift store is open and doing well. Come on in and shop. Have helped 4 people with job opportunities through Hope's Closet. Have now branched out into Dallas County with a resource office there.

Anthony Shade was invited by board member Bobbie McKnight and introduced himself.

Bobbie McKnight – Mary Kay – brand new beauty experience – spa time in your own home. Contact her if you are interested.

CC Guilick – She lost her husband last month. Jim had a passion for the food pantry and the farmers market. Please support them.

Matt Raines – Paul Long Agency – attending his first chamber meeting. They will have a quarterly crop growers' meeting on Monday, January 15 at 6 pm at Smith's. Call the agency to register – free dinner. They also insure pastures.

-- Upcoming Events --

Community Connections

Thursday, Feb. 1 at 7:30 a.m.
CMH Community Room #2

Monthly Networking@Noon Meeting

Thursday, Feb. 8 at noon,
CMH Community Room #2

DID YOU KNOW??

You have the power to reach the Chamber network with a simple email? Get the word out on a special event, class, promotion by taking advantage of the weekly email blast to your fellow Chamber members. The e-blast deadline is 5 p.m. on Tuesday. E-blast will be sent out on Wednesday. Submit e-blast information to info@bolivarchamber.com.



NETWORK AND INVITE A FRIEND TO THE MONTHLY NETWORKING@NOON MEETINGS

Make sure to be a part of our monthly networking meetings as well as all of our events. Monthly meetings are the second Thursday at noon in the community rooms at CMH. Get them on your calendar today! Lunch is available for \$6, but the meal is completely optional. 2018 dates are:

February 8	August 9
March 8	September 13
April 12	October 11
May 17*	November 8
June 14	December 13
July 12	

Our next meeting is Thursday, February 9. Hope to see you there!

*Third Thursday

AFTER HOURS IS MARCH 16

The first Chamber After Hours of 2018 is March 16. Network with fellow chamber members and invite potential members to attend from 5 to 7 p.m. on Friday, March 16 at Smith's Restaurant. The social hour event includes food, a cash bar, door prizes as well as networking opportunities. Make plans now to attend.

After Hours
SOCIAL



Mark your calendars know for these annual Chamber events.

Business After Hours, 5-7 p.m.,
March 16, Smith's Restaurant

Golf Tournament, April 13, Silo Ridge

Bolivar Day at the Springfield Cardinals,
June, Hammons Field

New Teacher Welcome, Aug., SBU

Business After Hours, 5-6:30 p.m., Sept.

Taste of Bolivar Expo and Auction,
Oct., Bolivar

Christmas Open Houses, Nov. 9-10

Light The Park, Nov. 23-Dec. 30

Christmas Parade, Dec. 8

DON'T FORGET WELCOME BAGS

Remember to bring items in for the new welcome bags - drop off Monday-Friday 9-12; 1-3. Be one of the first businesses to roll out the welcome mat to newcomers with coupons, gift certificates, gifts, such as pens, cups, notepads with your company name or samples from your business.

Support Your Fellow Chamber Members.

Thanks to the Chamber Corporate Partner Businesses.

Commitment, Service & Dedication to Polk County

www.commercebank.com



Looking to start **or grow** your business this year?

Contact the Polk County Economic Development Coalition (PEDCO) or the Bolivar Area Chamber of Commerce at 417-326-4118 for help.



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