



The Power of Place

Christie Ransom, President & CEO
Winona Area Chamber of Commerce

Why Winona Is Worth Investing In

What makes a community truly thrive? At the Chamber, we believe it starts with place. Not just geography, but the people, purpose, and possibility that live here, and in Winona, that spirit is undeniable.

This past month, we had the opportunity to host a leadership group from across Minnesota. These leaders toured just two of our incredible employers—RTP Company and WinCraft by Fanatics—but what they walked away with was so much more. They saw national brands rooted in local values. They heard about Thern winches found on stages from Broadway to global arenas, Acuity lighting illuminating spaces far beyond our riverbanks, and stained glass that graces cathedrals and campuses across the country.

They learned about violin bows crafted with precision, canoes and composites built for performance, and baseball bats that carry the sound of summer. And yes, they got a taste of our legendary Bloedow Bakery donuts, Watkins products and the timeless craftsmanship of Behrens metalware. They left inspired by what we already know: Winona punches well above its weight.

And that momentum isn't slowing down.

From the heart of our historic downtown to the edges of our growing corridors, investment in Winona is alive and well. A new hotel is on the horizon, along with a wave of housing developments that include several multi-unit apartment projects to support our growing workforce. Our downtown continues to evolve with new retail spaces, exciting cocktail and dining experiences, and a renewed sense of vibrancy that blends our rich history with modern vision.

A new locally owned butcher shop is preparing to open its doors, and Sugar Loaf Automotive is expanding with a brand-new Chrysler dealership, adding yet another chapter to Winona's business growth story.

And while we build with bricks and mortar, we're just as focused on building leaders. Through programs like Leadership Winona, the Leader Summit, and our new Leadership Hub for young professionals, we're developing the people who will shape Winona's future. Through events like Big Muddy Brew n Que and Family Night on the Farm, we celebrate the values that make this community such a special place to live, work, and grow.

When we invest in Winona, whether it's through business, workforce, leadership, or community connection, we invest in a place that's already proving it can shine on any stage.

So, whether you're new here or have been calling Winona home for decades, we invite you to engage, connect, and be part of what's next. Because place matters. And Winona is worth it.

ABOUT THE CHAMBER

- OUR MISSION -

To Serve Businesses How and When They Need Us

- OUR VISION -

Be the Foremost Resource and Advocate for Businesses in the Winona Area

Officers:

Jon Olson – Chair
Stan Breitlow – Past Chair
Crystal Hiatt – Chair Elect
Amber Hamernik – Treasurer
Jason Gamoke – At Large

Retiring 2025:

Stan Breitlow
Amber Hamernik
Jason Gamoke
Kevin Ritz
Mandy Hansel

Retiring 2026:

Jon Olson
Ross Lexvold
Tina Lehnertz
Mike Puetz
Shawn Beier

Retiring 2027:

Rod Baker
Meg Krinke
Jennifer Shabel
Crystal Hiatt
Neil Wieser

Staff:

Christie Ransom – President & CEO
Kay Mathews – VP of Finance and Operations
Jacob Ransom – VP of Workforce Strategy and Membership Development
Travis Lybeck – Director of Main Street Programs and Member Relations



When: Tuesday, September 30th Where: Winona State University-Kryszko Ballroom

World-Class Speakers, Game-Changing Insights

All live on stage, sharing powerful stories and practical tools to help you grow, lead, and level up.



Matt Birk 5 Things I Think I Know about Success: Unlocking Elite Strategies to Thrive in Competitive Environments—Powerful Principles Anyone Can Use for Lasting Success.



Lauren Sisler Shatterproof Leadership: Forging Resilience, Bravery, and Purpose in the Workplace.



Kenyon Salo The Bucket List Life: Create More. Share More. Live More. 3 Simple Steps That Anyone Can Do to Accomplish What They Desire in Life, Both Personally & Professionally.



Sarah Wells The 16 Stride Factor: Supercharge Your Organization With Innovative Thinking.

Be Part of Something Bigger.

This immersive, full-day experience marks the beginning of a new legacy of leadership excellence in our region. Don't miss your chance to connect with visionaries, get fired up by bold ideas, and unleash the champion within.



Scan to learn more



Everything we do is with you in mind

Jacob Ransom – VP of Workforce Strategy & Membership Development

Why Chamber Membership Matters

At the Winona Area Chamber of Commerce, membership is more than a transaction—it's a relationship built on mutual investment, shared success, and a commitment to strengthening our community. When a business joins the Chamber, they aren't just adding their name to a list, they're stepping into a network of support, visibility, and opportunity.

Chamber membership matters because businesses matter. Our members fuel our local economy, create jobs, inspire innovation, and

make Winona the vibrant place we call home. We exist to support them at every stage, whether they're a brand-new startup, a growing company, or a legacy business with deep community roots.

Through advocacy, networking, professional development, and promotion, we're here to be a champion for our members. We help navigate challenges, celebrate wins, and open doors that lead to growth and impact.

But beyond all the programs and perks, what matters most is this: we see you, we value you, and we're here for you. Our members are the heart of the Chamber, and everything we do is with you in mind.

Because when our members thrive, our whole community does too.

To learn more about a Chamber partnership, let's chat. Reach out to me at jransom@winonachamber.com to ask questions or schedule a time to meet.



Crazy Days Brings Energy Downtown

Travis Lybeck – Director of Main Street Programs and Member Relations

Downtown Winona came alive during Crazy Days, with businesses welcoming shoppers for sidewalk sales, summer deals, and family fun. Visitors enjoyed exploring local shops, finding great bargains, and supporting small businesses that make our downtown vibrant. From new arrivals to hidden treasures, Crazy Days highlighted the creativity, hard work, and community spirit of over 17 Winona business owners. Thank you to everyone who shopped local and made Crazy Days a success!

Stay updated on event details by visiting [Winona Main Street Program's Facebook page](#).



CHAMBER CHAMPIONS

- VISIONARY -



- PREMIER -



- EXECUTIVE -



August 2025

www.winonachamber.com | (507) 452-2272 | 902 E. Second St., Suite 120, Winona, MN

RIBBON CUTTINGS



Cotter Band Heads to D.C. Parade

Congratulations to the Cotter Band as they traveled to Washington, D.C., to represent Minnesota in the National Independence Day Parade! Their talent and dedication have earned this honor, and Winona is proud to cheer them on as they showcase Minnesota pride in our nation's capital. Special thanks to the Winona Police and Fire Departments for sending them off in style!



Ristorante Saponi di Sicilia Opens Downtown

Big congratulations to Ristorante Saponi di Sicilia on officially opening their doors at 107 W 4th St! Step inside their beautiful new space and enjoy authentic Sicilian cuisine right here in Winona. They're open Tuesday-Saturday, 4-9pm (kitchen closes at 8:30pm). Go give them a warm Winona welcome and savor every bite. Buon appetito!



Merchants Bank Celebrates 150 Years

Congratulations to Merchants Bank on 150 years of serving Winona with financial leadership, community commitment, and local investment. From supporting families and businesses to helping our community thrive, Merchants Bank remains a pillar of strength and trust in Winona. Congratulations on this milestone!

**SEPT. 5-6**
LEVEE PARK • FREE EVENT

LIVE MUSIC
FRI & SAT

FOOD TRUCKS
FRI & SAT

RIB EATING
COMPETITION
SAT 3PM

***BEST IN AREA**
TASTING
COMPETITION
SAT 11-2PM

BEER TENT
FRI 3-10PM
SAT 12-10PM

CORN HOLE
COMPETITION
FRI 5PM

***BLOODY MARY**
TASTING
SAT 11AM-2PM

KIDS
ACTIVITIES
SAT

PRESENTING SPONSOR

WINONA'S GREATEST HITS
MAIN EVENT SPONSOR



General Contractor, Inc.

Affinity Plus Credit Union
Boat House Restaurant
Bucks Bar & Grill
Cornerstone Bar
Elke Club
Gabby's Bar & Lounge


A Trusted Family of Ingredients.

Gerard's Small Engine
Grover Properties
Katie's Place
Harter's Quick Clean Up
Heirloom Seasonal Bistro
M&M Lawn & Leisure
Market Street Tap


BEVERAGE CO.

Midtown Foods
Miller Scrap & Disposal
Northwestern Mutual
Nosh Scratch Kitchen
River City Grill
Saponi di Sicilia
Schott Distributing


Since 1884

Teamsters 120
Signatures Restaurant
Sliced
WA Group
Winona Heat & Vent
Wellington's


MAIN STREET PROGRAM
A City and Chamber Partnership

FULL SCHEDULE OF EVENTS AT BIGMUDDYBREWNUQUE.COM
*Ticketed event. See website for more details

NEW MEMBERS



Rotary Club of Winona - Service Above Self Rotary is a global network of more than 1.2 million neighbors, friends, leaders, and problem-solvers who see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change – across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves. Solving real problems takes real commitment and vision. For more than 110 years, Rotary's people of action have used their passion, energy, and intelligence to take action on sustainable projects. From literacy and peace to water and health, we are always working to better our world, and we stay committed to the end.
Join us in-person at the Leon J. Wetzel American Legion Post 8, 302 E Sarnia, Winona every Wednesdays at noon. For more information visit <https://portal.clubrunner.ca/7962/>



KSMQ Public Media, based in Austin, Minnesota, has been a cornerstone of educational, cultural, and civic broadcasting since its founding. The station first went on the air on October 17, 1972, established by Austin Public Schools as part of the Austin Area Vocational-Technical Institute (AAVTI). Initially, the station offered limited programming, primarily serving as an educational broadcast training facility. In 2005, ownership transitioned from Austin Public Schools to a community-based nonprofit, KSMQ Public Service Media, Inc., ensuring continued local governance and a deep commitment to regional needs. Today, KSMQ serves more than 709,000 individuals across a 24,806-square-mile area in southeast Minnesota and northeast Iowa. Reaching audiences in the Rochester, MN-Mason City, IA-Austin, MN designated market area—the 153rd largest media market in the U.S.—KSMQ delivers content through four over-the-air broadcast channels and a growing range of digital and streaming platforms. By embracing both tradition and innovation, KSMQ continues its mission of informing, educating, and inspiring, strengthening the cultural fabric of the communities it serves.
For more information visit www.ksmq.org or call 507-481-2095



Kimo's Pumping & Portable Toilets has been proudly serving the community since 1987. With a strong work ethic and a good sense of humor, Kimo's quickly grew, becoming "#1 in the #2 business" by expanding into portable toilet services in 1988. The purpose of Kimo's is to provide septage pumping for our customers and to educate them in the proper use and maintenance of their septic system. We try to remind our customers with reminder cards yearly to pump their system before they have problems with a backup or a failed drainfield. Kimo's also offers the rentals of portable toilets for construction sites, birthday parties, graduation parties, reunions, company picnics, parks, and special events. Our units are equipped with hand sanitizer gel for cleanliness, sanitized toilet seats, and ADA handicap units. Our units are available all year round and available for rental daily, weekly, and monthly.
For more information visit www.kimospumping.com or call 507-452-4488



O'Laughlin Trucking & Excavation, Mechanical Our fourth-generation ties to the community and to our customers make the O'Laughlin Team unique. We think every job we do, big or small, deserves the highest standards of quality & care. We know our customers and neighbors need a quality expert they can trust. Our staff has many years of experience, education, and safety training and will make sure your job is done right the first time. We take pride in our work and want every customer to feel like they have been given the best service they should expect. Providing services in Southeastern Minnesota & Western Wisconsin: Residential & commercial plumbing services, Hot Water Heating Systems, Excavating & Trucking Services, Mechanical contracting for residential, commercial and industrial projects.
For more information please visit www.olaughlinteam.com or call 507-452-6340

**CHAMBER ATV RAFFLE**
September 6 at 4pm at Big Muddy Brew 'n Que in Levee Park
TICKETS ONLY \$20 available at
Winona Area Chamber Of Commerce and Sugar Loaf Automotive
Presenting Sponsors:
Sugar Loaf Automotive
M&M Lawn & Leisure

WIN ME!

Need not be present to win. Must be 18 or older to purchase ticket & win prize. Winner responsible for any applicable fees or taxes. 4,000 tickets being sold. Permit #: X-93936-25-009



FAMILY NIGHT ON THE FARM

THURSDAY, AUGUST 7th
4:00-8:00PM
18635 COUNTY RD. 114
ROLLINGSTONE, MN



PRESENTING SPONSOR



EVENT SPONSOR



FARM FAMILY PARTNER SPONSOR



BUS SPONSORS



BAND SPONSOR



KIDS' AREA SPONSOR



HAY RIDE SPONSOR



FFA PETTING ZOO SPONSOR



PICNIC TABLE SPONSORS



ATV SHUTTLES



PICNIC SPONSORS



For more event information:

 WinonaChamber.com

 507.452.2272