

December 2021

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



Chamber Honors Retiring Board Members

Christie Ransom, President & CEO
Winona Area Chamber of Commerce

At the Board of Directors meeting in December, we will have the pleasure of honoring five directors who are retiring from the board: Dave Jensen, Jolene Vaselaar, Joanne Thompson, Ben Adank, and Rebecca Lamberty. We are grateful for their dedication to the Chamber and their support of the business community. Please join us in reflecting on their contributions and thanking them for their time and talents.



Dave Jensen, Farmers Insurance Dave Jensen Agency – Dave has been a strong champion of the Chamber for many years. His service to the Board is simply one of the ways he has supported our organization. Dave served as the Chair of the Board in 2020, one of the most difficult years to Chair an organization such as ours. He served as the Past Chair this year and has been on the Executive Committee all 3 years of his term. Dave is a part of the Chamber Ambassadors, where he is an active leader and a former Chair. He is also an active volunteer and supporter of many of our events.



Joanne Thompson, Minnesota State College Southeast - Joanne has been an incredible champion for our Career Expo and a part of our Business Education Network. Over the past 3 years with the Board, Joanne has been an active volunteer at many events, such as the Career Expo, the Ambassador Food Trailer, and at Big Muddy Brew n' Que.



Jolene Vaselaar, Altra Federal Credit Union - Jolene has been a wonderful supporter of the Chamber serving as our Board Treasurer and a part of our Executive Committee for 2 years during her 3 year term on the Board. She has been a regular champion of Eggs and Issues and our Golf Classic, as well as a supporter of many of our programs and initiatives.



Ben Adank, Itechra, Inc. – Ben has been a member of our Business Education Network, serving as the Chair. Ben's support of our events through the active volunteerism of his entire team has been invaluable.



Rebecca Lamberty, Winona Health – Rebecca has served the Chamber in a number of ways. She is an active promotor and has been a volunteer at several events, such as our Big Muddy Brew n' Que. Rebecca is a part of our Public Policy Committee and supports many of our initiatives and programming in a myriad of ways.

This group of leaders has played a pivotal role in the entire rebranding of the Chamber, including a new Mission and Vision. They have brought a high-level perspective that creates vision for the future and allows our organization to thrive and succeed. They lead with passion and support our events and programming in so many ways. The work of the Chamber does not happen without an amazing volunteer Board, and I certainly have the best. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time working with each of these talented individuals. Getting to know them over the past two years has been a true highlight. I certainly appreciate all that they have done and continue to do for our organization and thank them for their time on our Board of Directors. They will be missed but know that they will remain involved in their commitment to the success of the Chamber. Again, thank you all!



Main Street December Newsletter

Ben Strand, Program Manager
Main Street Program

Whew... what a month November was! MN State College Southeast's welding students finished the 17-foot-tall holiday tree and we assembled almost 80 strands of garland to wrap it up. We kicked off the holiday season with inaugural Light Up Downtown Tree Lighting ceremony at Peter's Biergarten that hundreds of people attended. Then there was Thanksgiving and a successful Shop Small Weekend! I just want to give a big thank you to everyone who was involved in, supported, volunteered, donated, or shopped at any of these events.

Now that we're into December things will start winding down a bit. The Holiday Window Walk runs through the end of the month, so make sure to stop downtown and check out all the cool window displays! We also have our annual winter fundraiser, the BRRR Crawl Pub Hop – A Taste of History, on Saturday, December 18th from 2-6 p.m.

There are several official BRRR Crawl stops and no predetermined order in which you must visit them. The cost to register is \$20 in advance and \$25 the day of. Each participant will receive a pair of BRRR Crawl gloves to wear for the afternoon. Show them to the bartenders/servers at each location and you get sweet drink specials, snacks, and discounts on appetizers (and don't forget to check out the posters that have some history on the pubs/buildings of downtown)!

You can learn more about the BRRR Crawl Pub Hop – A Taste of History fundraiser by visiting www.winonamainstreet.com, emailing Ben at bstrand@winonachamber.com, or calling the Chamber of Commerce at 507-452-2272.



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:

Michael Charron – Chair
Andrew Puetz – Chair Elect
Dave Jensen – Past Chair
Jolene Vaselaar – Treasurer
Kyle Rupprecht – At Large

Retiring 2021:

Ben Adank
Joanne Thompson
Dave Jensen
Rebecca Lamberty
Jolene Vaselaar

Retiring 2022:

Michael Charron
Danny Rivers
Kyle Rupprecht
Randy Skarlupka
Ellen Smith

Retiring 2023:

Andrea Northam
Dave Pederson
Kelly Pronschinske
Andy Puetz
Mike Dieter

Staff:

Christie Ransom – President & CEO

Kay Mathews – Vice President of Finance and Operations

Amanda Steine – Membership Development and Programs Manager

Ben Strand – Main Street Program Manager

CHAMBER CHAMPIONS

- VISIONARY -



- PREMIER -



- EXECUTIVE -



BRRR CRAWL

A TASTE OF HISTORY

A FREE-STYLE PUB HOP WITH A HISTORIC TWIST
Saturday, December 18th 2-6PM
at Participating Downtown Businesses
\$20 in advance | \$25 the day of

- Proceeds from the BRRR Crawl go to help keep Winona Main Street Events FREE!!

TO LEARN MORE OR TO PURCHASE TICKETS VISIT
WINONAMAINSTREET.COM



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BIZ BITES



Chris Thrune has been promoted to Mortgage Lender at **Merchants Bank**, according to Sue Hovell, Director of Retail Banking Performance. Chris replaces Rhonda Merchlewitz, who retired in November after 23 years serving mortgage customers in St. Charles and Winona. "It's a huge benefit to have someone with Chris's background as your Mortgage Lender," said Hovell. "He knows all the complex details of the mortgage process and can really break it down for our customers to make things easy to understand." Thrune has been with Merchants Bank since 2013 and has spent the majority of his career in the mortgage area. In 2015 he became a Mortgage Lender for Merchants Bank in Cottage Grove before returning to Winona in 2018 as an Underwriter. He grew up in Winona and graduated from Winona State University with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting & Finance. "Being a Mortgage Lender in Winona is what I've always dreamed of doing," said Thrune. "Working face-to-face with customers is what I truly enjoy and helping them get into their dream home is so rewarding." He and his wife, Larissa, live in the Winona area and are happy to have put down roots in their hometown. Chris volunteers annually for Merchants' 10 Days of Giving food drive and is part of the Southeast Minnesota Realtors (SEMR) Events Committee. He is also looking forward to becoming more active in the community volunteer efforts. His hobbies include being outdoors, hiking and golfing.

RIBBON CUTTINGS



Edward Jones celebrated the opening of their new multi-advisor office located at 102 Walnut Street in Downtown Winona. Edward Jones Advisors working at 102 Walnut Street are: Brandi Moore, Gregg Brandt, John Hardy, Kim Renk, and Scott Shull. Edward Jones specializes in helping individual investors rather than institutions and as a privately-owned company, they're able to focus on relationships rather than shareholder returns.

They've consistently been ranked among the best companies to work for by FORTUNE magazine, and their employees tend to stay with them for years. As a privately-owned company, Edward Jones has a very personal feel that's almost like family. Out of their partnership structure grows a spirit of collaboration. They have a shared focused on doing what's best for their clients, their communities, and one another.

To learn how an Edward Jones Advisor at 102 Walnut Street can help you give them a call at 507.452.9685 or stop by their new office 102 Walnut Street, Suite 101.

Order Winona Bucks for Staff Bonuses, Incentives and Gift Giving

Winona Bucks are the perfect gift. They can be spent at any participating member business and there are no fees to give or use them. Help support local business and give a gift that everyone will love! Winona Bucks are universal gift certificates good at any Winona Area Chamber of Commerce business. Anyone can purchase Winona Bucks and they come in increments of \$5 and \$10.

Our chamber member businesses have purchased the Winona Bucks for:

- Raffle drawings at an Open House
- Area Retailers purchase them as bonuses for their sales staff
- Organizations pay their youth with Winona Bucks
- Manufacturers award Winona Bucks to their staff for safety records and incentives
- Members purchase them for gifts and bonuses for their employees
- Businesses purchase them to reward their employees for years of service

Keeping the dollars in the Winona area is good for business!!
To order, or for more information, call Kay at 452-2272 or e-mail kmathews@winonachamber.com.



Remember to shop local and look for the Winona Bucks Redeem Here decals at your favorite retailers.



Rolling Out The Red Carpet
FOR THE 2021 ANNUAL BANQUET & AWARDS

FRIDAY, JANUARY 28TH

5-9PM AT VISIONS EVENT CENTER

MORE INFO AT WINONACHAMBER.COM

Congratulations to our 2021 Award Winners

BUSINESS OF THE YEAR



WATLOW

Powered by Possibility



SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR



MAIN STREET BUSINESS OF THE YEAR



INNOVATION AWARD

NEW MEMBER

THORNE'S REFRIGERATION

Thorne's Refrigeration has been serving the Winona area since 1938 and is owned by Jim Deedrick. Thorne's does commercial and industrial work, servicing equipment in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Nevada, Texas and Indiana.

Thorne's offers service on: refrigeration and air conditioning, piping line sets, gas piping, control work, and compressor rebuilds. They specialize in selling products. They are also the oldest York Dealer in the State of Minnesota and also sell Bohn Refrigeration Equipment, Scotsman Ice Machines, Beverage Air Coolers and Prep Tables, KOLPAK Walk-Ins, TONKA Walk-Ins, Honeywell Controls, and Copeland Refrigeration.

For more information give them a call at 507.452.2500 or stop by Thorne's Refrigeration located at 375 West 2nd Street in Winona from 7:30AM-4:30PM Monday-Friday.

WINONA CHAMBER NETWORK NITE

This networking event is open to all Chamber Members and their employees. Don't forget your business cards!
Thursday, December 16th from 5-7PM

Held in Kryzsko Commons
(parking in the Minne Hall Gold Lot)

