

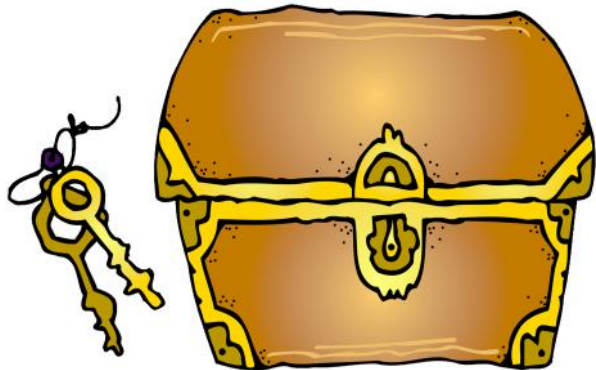


Chamber News and Notes



April 4, 2011

Belmond Area Chamber of Commerce



Ever consider going into business for yourself, but not sure how or where to begin? I found this article in All You magazine, written by Emma Johnson, which gives great tips on “[How To Build a Business From Home.](#)”

She outlines 6 steps to beginning your own home business.

1. TALK IT UP. The first phase to realize your vision is to share it with friends, family, and other people whose skills and savvy you respect. Feedback strengthens your idea and makes you more likely to see the project through.

*How to do it: At www.surveymonkey.com, create questionnaires about your potential business for friends, acquaintances, Facebook connections and anyone else whose opinion you value. Email the survey to them, and reap the benefits of your market research for FREE! You might learn that your assumptions about going rates were off mark, or why people might pay more for your service under certain circumstances.

2. LOCATE YOUR CUSTOMERS. If you can define your potential clients and identify where to find them, it will be easier to get your product in their hands.

*How to do it: Want to cook meals for customers who are pressed for time? Target working moms on a day-care bulletin board. Put up dog walking flyers on community bulletin boards and veterinarian’s office. Consider the Chamber office’s **Daily News Bites** to share the news, or Facebook it.

3. CHECK OUT YOUR COMPETITION. Thinking

of launching a cupcake enterprise? It’s better to know beforehand if three already exist in town. Identifying businesses like yours not only gives you an idea of the market and pricing, but also allows you to differentiate yourself from your competitors.

*How to do it: Be the target customer and call similar businesses to ask about their prices and services. In stores, don’t be afraid to ask a sales associate about the quality and popularity of different products. Crafters should attend as many craft fairs as possible. Use www.Google.com to get an idea of how many local businesses exist in your niche. Be open to approaching others who have already done what you want to do. You will gain valuable information together.

4. SET YOUR PRICE. Figuring out how much to charge takes trial and error. The trick is to determine what customers are willing to pay without undervaluing your costs in materials, time, and skills. If it takes you six hours and \$5 in supplies to make a craft that you are selling for \$15, your price is too low.

*How to do it: Pricing is more an art than a science. Use the free time-tracking program downloadable at www.timeedition.com so you know how many hours you spend on each project and can bill accordingly.

“Don’t quit your day job – yet! The most successful businesses start at the kitchen table and grow slowly, partly through weathering challenges and setbacks. Keep tweaking your product, sales tactics, target audience and advertising until you discover what works for you.”

5. SPREAD THE WORD. Advertising is key to connect and making the sale. Try several different methods and media, offering frequent promotions and news to keep your product on buyers’ radar.

*How to do it:

- Face to Face – Nothing sells as well as you can, so print up business cards and pass them

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around to everyone you meet.

- Locally – Get involved with your **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE** and attend events to build a local reputation and meet people. Advertising in newspapers, school newsletters, craigslist, bulletin boards (day cares, libraries, groceries, hardware stores, gyms, cafes, etc). Make sure you become a repeat customer at other local businesses – they recognize loyalty by supporting your efforts as well.
- With Your Own Blog – set up your own free blog at www.wordpress.com, including photos and links to your own shopping site. Link to other blogs as well – they might return the favor.
- Through Email – build an email list and send out occasional updates (**personal note – I collect email addresses like other people collect baseball cards - it comes in handy). Make sure you include a link to your blog in your email signature.
- On other Blogs – Find top ranking blogs that cover products or services similar to yours at www.alex.com. Introduce yourself to the blogger, and start communicating and commenting in the blog community there. Being part of the dialogue may attract more people to your own blog.
- Using Social Networks – Create a Facebook fan page for your business and encourage your friends to “like” it, and then keep the page updated regularly. You can also use several Facebook apps to sell items from your page – try Marketplace (similar to craigslist). Link to your eBay, etsy, or CaféPress account so your Facebook friends can easily check out your current merchandise.

“Create a StoreFront.” Peddle your handicrafts at www.etsy.com or sell just about anything through www.bigcartel.com, which you can link to a blog, website, or Facebook account.

6. MIND THE MONEY. Staying on top of expenses, invoices, income and deductions is essential to building a successful business. Create a simple way to track paperwork regularly and designate a folder to collect receipts. If your operation starts to take off, consider hiring an accountant.

*How to do it: www.Outright.com makes expense and income tracking a breeze (free for 30 days, then \$10 per month).

Congratulations to Rehabilitation Center of Belmond and Belle Haven Assisted Living facility, named to the U.S. News and World Report list of Best Nursing Homes in the state of Iowa. The facilities received the highest rating from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Ratings were based on performance in health

inspections, nurse staffing and quality of medical care.



In Our “Backyard”

Long before the 9.0 earthquake in Japan, the Federal Emergency Management Agency had planned to stage a “catastrophic earthquake” exercise in mid-May to simulate a major tremor along the storied New Madrid fault in the south central U.S. Now, the agency said, the drill May 16-19 has taken on “new emphasis.” This year is the bicentennial of the first of a series of devastating quakes in 1811-1812 in the Missouri, Arkansas and Tennessee region underlain by the fault. No one knows how many people died, but entire towns were wiped out. Geologists say the area is overdue for another major seismic tremor. The FEMA exercise will test plans for evacuations, communications, sheltering and feeding operations, warnings and emergency centers.

We hear the word trillion tossed around casually these days in referring to federal budgets, incomes and spending. **If someone spent \$1,000 a minute from the time of Christ's birth until today it would be \$1 trillion.** Could that be possible? Sometimes what you read isn't true.



So I did the math: there are some over 500,000 minutes in a year. So 2000 years would be just over \$1 trillion. One trillion is a big number!

Springtime means many things.....

Including an increase in home break-ins and robberies. Here is a tip for keeping your home and your family safe:

If you hear a noise outside your home or someone trying to get in your house, just press the panic button for your car. The alarm will be set off, and the horn will continue to sound until either you turn it off or the car battery dies. This tip came from a neighborhood watch coordinator. Next time you come home for the night and you start to put your keys away, think of this: It's a security alarm system that you probably already have and requires no installation. Test it. It will go off from most everywhere inside your house and will keep honking until your battery runs down or until you reset it with the button on the key fob chain. It works if you park in your driveway or garage. If your car alarm goes off when someone is trying to break into your house, odds are the burglar/attacker won't stick around. After a few seconds all the neighbors will be looking out their windows to see who is out there and sure enough the criminal won't want that. And remember to carry your keys while walking to your car in a parking lot. The alarm can work the same way there. Warmer weather means that not only do we want to be outside, but so do the criminals!



Community Calendar of Events

April 11—July 4 Planning Meeting, City Hall Meeting Room, 6:00pm

April 12—Abraham Lincoln visits Belmond

April 14—United Methodist Church Baked Potato Bar

April 16—Dance With Me Recital, Luick Auditorium 1:30 and 6:30 pm

April 19—Friends of Library Annual Meeting, 7:00 pm—Guest Speaker is Belmond Native Glenda Field, author

April 20—Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors Meeting, Chamber offices, noon

April 23—Beta Sigma Phi Easter Egg Hunt, 9:00 am City Park

April 24—Easter

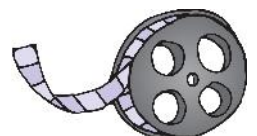
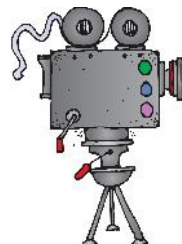
April 27—Chamber Monthly Luncheon, American Table Restaurant, noon

April 29—Belmond Historical Society Chicken and Biscuit Dinner, Leinbach Center 4:30-7:00pm

April 30—Belmond Klemme Prom

****This is not the complete April community calendar. Check the *Belmond Area Chamber of Commerce Facebook page* for Daily News Bites—more activities added daily!**

The Lyric Theater is now beginning a fundraising effort to update the theater equipment to accommodate the 3D technology that so many films are now being shot with. Watch for more information coming soon regarding this exciting project!



21 THINGS YOUR BURGLAR WON'T TELL YOU

1. Of course I look familiar. I was here just last week cleaning your carpets, painting your shutters, or delivering your new refrigerator.
2. Hey, thanks for letting me use the bathroom when I was working in your yard last week. While I was in there, I unlatched the back window to make my return a little easier.
3. Love those flowers. That tells me you have taste... and taste means there are nice things inside. Those yard toys your kids leave out always make me wonder what type of gaming system they have.
4. Yes, I really do look for newspapers piled up on the driveway. And I might leave a pizza flyer in your front door to see how long it takes you to remove it..
5. If it snows while you're out of town, get a neighbor to create car and foot tracks into the house.. Virgin drifts in the driveway are a dead giveaway.
6. If decorative glass is part of your front entrance, don't let your alarm company install the control pad where I can see if it's set. That makes it too easy.
7. A good security company alarms the window over the sink. And the windows on the second floor, which often access the master bedroom - and your jewelry. It's not a bad idea to put motion detectors up there too.
8. It's raining, you're fumbling with your umbrella, and you forget to lock your door - understandable. But understand this: I don't take a day off because of bad weather.
9. I always knock first. If you answer, I'll ask for directions somewhere or offer to clean your gutters. (Don't take me up on it.)
10. Do you really think I won't look in your sock drawer? I always check dresser drawers, the bed-side table, and the medicine cabinet.
11. Here's a helpful hint: I almost never go into kids' rooms.
12. You're right: I won't have enough time to break into that safe where you keep your valuables. But if it's not bolted down, I'll take it with me.
13. A loud TV or radio can be a better deterrent than the best alarm system. If you're reluctant to leave

your TV on while you're out of town, you can buy a \$35 device that works on a timer and simulates the flickering glow of a real television. (Find it at <http://www.faketv.com/>)

14. Sometimes, I carry a clipboard. Sometimes, I dress like a lawn guy and carry a rake. I do my best to never, ever look like a crook.
15. The two things I hate most: loud dogs and nosy neighbors.
16. I'll break a window to get in, even if it makes a little noise. If your neighbor hears one loud sound, he'll stop what he's doing and wait to hear it again. If he doesn't hear it again, he'll just go back to what he was doing. It's human nature.
17. I'm not complaining, but why would you pay all that money for a fancy alarm system and leave your house without setting it?
18. I love looking in your windows. I'm looking for signs that you're home, and for flat screen TVs or gaming systems I'd like. I'll drive or walk through your neighborhood at night, before you close the blinds, just to pick my targets.
19. Avoid announcing your vacation on your Facebook page. It's easier than you think to look up your address.
20. To you, leaving that window open just a crack during the day is a way to let in a little fresh air. To me, it's an invitation.
21. If you don't answer when I knock, I try the door. Occasionally, I hit the jackpot and walk right in.

Sources: Convicted burglars in North Carolina , Oregon , California , and Kentucky ; security consultant Chris McGoey, who runs <http://www.crimedoctor.com/> and Richard T. Wright, a criminology professor at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, who interviewed 105 burglars for his book *Burglars on the Job*.



Thank you to Doug and Fonda Thompsen of Thrivent Financial Services for guest speaking at the March Chamber of Commerce Monthly meeting. They spoke about the impact of global events on the economic climate.



Only **9** more memberships needed to reach our goal of 86 members for 2011! We can do it—speak to your business neighbor, and remind them that the Chamber of Commerce is a great way to promote your business, network with others in the area, and that **Chamber Members are the only businesses that can cash Chamber Gift Certificates!**

2011 Belmond Chamber of Commerce Membership Drive

ABCM Corp/Belle Haven
 Accents on Main
 Aldrich Tree Farm
 Allen Home Center
 Alliant Energy
 Andrews Funeral / Andrews Floral
 Barnes & Louscher, DDS
 Belmond Country Club
 Belmond Independent & Millie's Hallmark
 Belmond Medical Center
 BIDCO
 Bloemke Pharmacy
 Casey's General Store
 Cattleman's Steak and Provisions
 City of Belmond
 Crave Salon & Spa
 Creative Solutions
 DK Arndt, PC
 DND Farms
 Drs. Snively & Gildner
 Earl Kalkwarf
 Eaton Corporation
 Fareway
 First Gabrielson Agency
 First State Bank
 Greenway Communications
 H & K Plumbing & Heating
 Hancock County Co-op Oil
 Hansen Home Projects
 Hogan Hansen PC
 Houser, Berkland, & Simonson, Lawyers
 Howard Enterprises
 J & J Collectibles & Antiques
 Jaspersen Ins. & Real Estate, LTD
 Jazzercise
 Jerry's Place
 Joe's 66 Service
 Kinseth Plumbing & Heating
 KIOW 107.3 FM Forest City
 Klemme House Bed & Breakfast

KLMJ 104.9FM Hampton
 Kum-n-Go
 Laura LaRue Photography
 Lieberknecht OK Tire
 Luick Corner Bed & Breakfast
 Max Yield
 Music Man Maintenance
 Old School Records Management
 Northwest Bank
 P & G Market
 Pizza Ranch
 Printing Services, Inc.
 Property Link
 Rex A. Boyd Home Star Windows
 Shear Relaxation Salon & Spa
 Silverscreen Videos
 Sparboe
 Sparetime Lanes
 Steve's PC Clinic
 Syngenta
 Thrivent
 True Value
 United Seating & Mobility
 We 3 Catering
 Winding Creek Gardens
 Wright Medical Center
 Wright County Motors

Associate Memberships

Belmond Area Arts Council/Lyric Theater
 Belmond Community Housing Corporation
 Belmond Historical Society
 Belmond Klemme Community School District
 Belmond Trees Forever
 Glenn Meints, Lifetime Membership
 Knights of Columbus
 Krysilis, Inc.
 Talbot Belmond Public Library
 Russ & Lora Talbot

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A note from the National Wildlife Federation:

It's a terrible fact: Due to the inactive, indoor nature of their childhood, today's kids may be the first generation in U.S. history to live shorter life-spans than their parents.

What if you could help reverse this alarming trend by having a great time in the great outdoors? **Register now for NWF's Great American Backyard Campout at www.backyardcampout.org** and spend June 25th catching fireflies, taking nature walks and singing campfire songs—**while making a significant difference in the health of our nation's children.**

Great American Backyard Campout raises much-needed funds for NWF's programs that connect kids and families with the benefits of nature, **helping them lead active, happy, longer lives.**

As soon as you register at www.backyardcampout.org, you'll receive a link to your personal online Participant Center so you can start planning your campout and have the opportunity to support our mission and fundraise. **You'll also gain access to recipes, activities and crafts to make your night under the stars one-of-a-kind.**

One night can make a big difference for our nation's kids. Camp out this June 25th to help American kids get outside and get healthy!

Register today at www.backyardcampout.org.
Sincerely,

Karoline Hurd
Senior Manager, Special Events
campout@nwf.org
(800) 882- 9919

P.S.: Children gain valuable social skills when they play outside, making them better friends and problem solvers.

P.P.S.: There are thousands of great campfire songs, from classic "O' Susanna" to new favorite Owl City's "Fireflies." Find your musical inspiration at www.backyardcampout.org.



Main Street News

The painter will begin sandblasting poles under the arcades beginning Saturday afternoon (April 2nd). He will be taking steps to prevent sand from hitting the buildings. Please be alert when he is in the area and cooperate with moving vehicles if necessary. Also next week he will begin power washing the underside of the arcade. Again, please cooperate as needed to move vehicles as necessary.

As work on the arcade progresses, remember that like any home remodeling project, there is always a little inconvenience that is far **OUTWEIGHED** by the wonderful end results!



Hunter Education Safety Classes

Iowa Department of Natural Resources will be presenting a Hunters Education Safety Class at the Klemme Public Library on May 2nd, 4th, 6th & 7th. The classes for May 2nd, 4th & 6th will be held from 6:00-9:00 pm, and the class on May 7th will be held from 9:00 am—12:00 pm.

This class is mandatory for anyone wanting to purchase a hunting license who was born after January 1, 1967. To purchase the license, the youth must present a certificate showing they have completed the course. Minimum age for the course is 12 years of age.

Students must register and sign up for a class online at www.iowadnr.gov/training.

For more information contact the Iowa DNR at 515-281-6824, or call Todd Davis 641-587-2115, Dan Manus 515-571-1264, or Randy Yakel 641-923-2146.





LOTS of friends and business associates came out to support PropertyLink Real Estate at their relocation ribbon cutting event. Afterward, people stayed to visit, enjoy refreshments, and view the new facility. Best of luck to everyone at PropertyLink!

take a bow!



Last year's winner, Sharleen Sorum presents the award for Outstanding Community Service to Connie Mattison.



Maria Mickelson accepts the award for Individual Youth Leadership from previous recipient Kali Lovgren.



Jason and Tina Lubben were surprised to receive the award for Outstanding Religious Leader from Pastor Pat Kennedy

THANK YOU!

Presenting...



Lucas Beenken poses with his parents, Ken and Deb, after receiving the Distinguished Junior Leadership Award.



Joni Worden presents the Guardian Angel Award to Gary Berkland and Brad Robson, representing the Luick Memorial Trust.



Nancy Harms graciously presented the Sunshine award to Katie Schlichting.



Todd Buseman presents the Outstanding Team Effort Award to Kevin Bock and Fonda Thompsen, Habitat for Humanity Belmont Project leaders.

The End