

7-29-09

Branson Chamber Chatter

Deadline Friday for Booth At Business Expo

The deadline to sign up for a booth at the Branson Area Business Expo 2009 is Friday, July 31. The Expo will be open to the public from 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 20, in the Chateau on the Lake Resort & Convention Center. The Expo provides members of the Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce the opportunity to showcase their goods and services. The Springfield Business Journal is a partner in the event.

From 2 p.m. to 3 p.m., sponsor The Center for Workforce Development at Ozarks Technical Community College will present a free workshop on "Lean" principles that can be adapted by the service industry to reduce waste.

There also will be a members-only Business After Hours from 5:30 to 7 p.m. following the Expo. To sign up, call Ladonna Johnson at 334-4084, ex. 314, or go online to www.bransonchamber.com.

"Love Your Neighbor" Barbecue

The next "Love Your Neighbor" Barbecue will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 2, at the Payless Inn, 1900 W. Missouri 76. The event held at weekly or extended-stay hotels in the Branson area is funded by a grant from Ozarks Area Community Action Corp. and hosted by Church Army and other supporters. Resources will be available for assistance with food, housing and other needs from alcohol abuse to parenting classes. For more information, to volunteer or donate food, call Michelle Harllee at Church Army 339-3804, ex. 109.

Indoor Garage Sale for Boys & Girls Club of the Ozarks

The public is invited to a free garage sale/farmers market from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 8, in the gymnasium of the Boys & Girl Club in Forsyth. From U.S. 160, turn east on Coy Boulevard at the traffic signal near McDonalds. Then left on Panther Road. Booths are for rent for \$20. The Club also is seeking donated items, which may be dropped off at the Clubs in Forsyth or Branson, or at People's Bank in Forsyth until Aug. 7. To reserve a booth, call the Club at 417-335-2089, ex.230.

Santa's On The Move

North Pole Décor and More has moved to a new location in the Branson Mill Craft Village on Gretna Road. The shop features an assortment of unique home and commercial holiday décor and gifts. It also has items created by Branson artisans including stained glass, wood products and more. Owner Tammy Peters also has North Pole Productions and is creative director of Branson's "Festival of Lights" Christmas drive-through sponsored by the Branson Lakes/Area Chamber of Commerce. Call 243-7653.

I Let the Dogs Out Gets First-Aid Certification

I Let the Dogs Out, a Branson-area pet-sitting service, recently achieved certification in Red Cross CPR and First Aid for dogs and cats, said owner Gailann House. Such care could make a difference until the pet gets to a veterinarian. Pet-sitting allows pets to remain in the comfort of their home when owners are away. Services include overnight stays, daily visits with minimum of 30 minutes for \$15, dog-walking, potty break for \$10 popular with pet-owning RVers, and even a pet taxi to deliver pets to groomers, etc. They offer free meet-and-greet prior to the service, and service is not limited to just cats and dogs.

They also are collecting donations for Presents 4 Pets, supported by the Humane Society and the National Association of Professional Pet Sitters for Animal Shelter Appreciation Week in November. Call House at 417-527-8374 and visit www.iletthedogsout.com.

New Degree for Culinary Arts

This fall, College of the Ozarks will offer bachelor-degree programs in culinary arts. Classes include Classical Cuisine, Menu Development and Food Safety.

Students also will gain experience at The Keeter Center. Professional demand in the Branson area and student interest fueled by TV cooking shows prompted the program, said Jerry Shackette, chairman of Hotel and Restaurant Management.

Upon completing the program, students must pass the Culinary Examination from the American Culinary Federation to receive the title Certified Culinarian. There is currently a shortage of professional chefs, Shackette said. Graduates also may go on to specialize at a culinary school. For more information on the Culinary Arts program, call Shackette at 417-239-1900 or email shackette@cofo.edu.

New Director of Human Resources

Gary Lambert recently accepted the Director of Human Resources position at Skaggs Regional Medical Center after serving in that capacity for nearly 12 years at Big Cedar Lodge. He also worked as human resources director at the Grosvenor Resort at Walt Disney World for nine years before he came to the Ozarks in 1997. Lambert said his mother, Barbara, has lived in Branson since 2000 and has worked as a Skaggs volunteer for six years.

I Fix Computers Receives Award

Since 1994, I Fix Computers has helped business owners in Taney, Stone, Christian and Greene counties get software systems to best serve their needs, said Kent Ward, who co-owns the company with Radel Pedersen. Their motto: "Let us be the mediators between you and your computers!"

Now, I Fix Computers has been recognized by DinerWare, a Seattle software company. I Fix Computers was among four businesses to receive the 2008 Sales Momentum Award by doubling their sales over the previous year. The software links employees at the front register with other staff, generates sales reports, tracks customer preferences and more. It even counts portions remaining in the kitchen.

Software can provide everything from security systems to records for accountants. "No more shoe box to the CPA," Ward said. Ward knows software. He used to work for

Lockheed's Artificial Intelligence division programming Mars-bound robots. Call 417-337-7184 or visit www.ifixcomp.com.

Kathryn Buckstaff is membership public relations manager for the Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce. Send your news, happenings and upcoming events for Branson Chamber Chatter to kbuckstaff@bransoncvb.com. Check "Chatter" archives at www.bransonchamber.com in Chamber Info News.