



Chamber installs new officers; board members

CHAMBER BULLETIN BOARD

STOP AND GET DIRECTIONS

Nothing says "I love you, honey!" more than admitting you are lost and stopping to ask for directions. Now Chamber members can be the beneficiaries of all that love and affection by hosting a beautiful Harbor Country map on the side of their building.

The details are being hammered out as we go to press, but indicators are pointing to around \$1,000 for a four foot by eight foot board with your company name brazenly placed as a sponsor of this marriage-saving device. This does not include installation. Call Sue Harsch and she'll direct your call to the proper resource. 469-5409

MAGICAL SATURDAYS

It's almost Christmas in Harbor Country. Janet Clark and her committee have been busy putting the finishing touches on a line-up of activities to take us through the Holiday season.

Country Christmas/Magical Saturdays include appearances of the jolly round fellow, parades, a house walk, tree lightings, sales events and more. A complete listing can be found on our web site at www.harborcountry.org

The Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce closed the door on one year and reopened it to fresh new faces on October 2. The transition took place at a picnic-style installation and wrap-up party held at River's Edge Bed and Breakfast in Union Pier. About 100 (20% of the membership) attended. The rain held off for most of the evening. Noticeably missing from this 24th installation, were the suits and ties and fancy dresses. This regime has a youthful outlook. As always, they continue to have the best interests of Harbor Country at heart.

Diane Botica Olszowka has taken the reigns of leadership as president of the Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce. The sprightly blonde moved to this area with her husband Rob eight years ago. They reside in Michiana.

Botica has operated her business "Dinner's Ready!" from her home for that past few years, but has now opened

a commercial kitchen and retail space at 424 E. Buffalo Street, New Buffalo.

A graduate of the United States Personal Chef Institute in Phoenix, as well as an active member of the United States Personal Chef Association, she is also educated in food sanitation and is CI trained. Chef Diane has worked in food planning and preparation as well as

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President Diane Botica Olszowka



Vice President Patty Prino

l e a d e r s h i p



Harbor Country®
Chamber of Commerce

**Officers of the
Board of Directors:**

Diane Botica Olszowka, President

Patty Prino, Vice-President
Chair of the Membership Committee

John Nelson, Treasurer
Business Watch Coordinator

Board Members:

Mira Poncin
Newly Installed

Jackie Sexton

Janet Clark

Greg Bubb
Newly Installed

Ray Vasquez
Chair of Internet/Online Services

Liz Grim
Newly Installed

Ellen Block
Newly Installed

Chuck Garasic
Chair of Community Development
Co-chair of Guide Committee

Karen Gear
Immediate Past President

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Chamber of Commerce**
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i n s i d e y o u r c h a m b e r

Moving on; moving forward

By Karen Gear, Immediate Past Chamber President

As my term as President of the Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce comes to end, I want to thank all of you that helped support the Chamber in its activities and growth this last year. As I look back there is much that the Chamber has done, including:

- Our first-ever **Marketing Plan and Budget** used to promote the Harbor Country area to our local and neighboring communities especially in South Bend, St. Joseph, Michigan City and LaPorte. I would like to thank Mike Hojnacki for his efforts on this.

- **Harbor Countryopoly board game**, a fund raiser in partnership with New Buffalo Fine Arts Council and Southwest Michigan Symphony Orchestra. Patty Prino was the force behind this successful venture.

- A new look to our **Harbor Country banners** with original art and new banners on order to fill in all the gaps with the hopes of unifying all our communities. Chuck Garasic continues his quest to maintain this unique identification of the area.

- Continued monitoring and safeguarding of our **trademark** thanks to the efforts of AJ Boggio and Ray Vasquez.

- Updated internet programs with our **new contract with Lightsky**. Again under the guidance of Vasquez and Boggio.

- Under a contract with Artistic Energy Group, Inc. the Chamber has sent out more **press releases** than ever before in its 24-year history.

- Plans call for new **Harbor Country map boards** throughout our footprint of the Harbor Country area. These will be paid for from the Chamber share of the proceeds from the Harbor Countryopoly game.

- The new look of the **Installation Dinner**, with special thanks to our hosts Keith and Prudence Sindelar, Patty Prino, Diane Botica, and your Chamber Office staff Sue Harsch and Nancy Burns.

- Continued **support of our Chamber area events** with improved coverage and organization of all the special events such as Art Attack, Harvest Days, Music in the Park, Sounds of Silence, and Harbor Country Christmas/Magical Saturdays just to mention a few.

As we I move on with my life and interests, I would like to thank each and every one of you that has volunteered your time, effort, and talents to the Chamber. It is through your work as committee members, doing research, updating information with the office, getting a member, safeguarding the trademark, or a dozen other things that we continue to promote our most valuable asset: Harbor Country.

I am always awed as I reflect upon all the amazing talent, skill, hard work, effort, and dedication that I see each and every day from all of you who make the Chamber better organized and efficient. You are making our home a better place to live and work, and are the major contributors in creating the Harbor Country Lifestyle. There is still work to be done and I can see a new energy willing to take on that mission.

As we move forward, the Chamber will continue to have a special place in my heart. It is with humility, and yet with great pride, that I relinquish the honor of being the President of your Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce to the next President, Diane Botica.

May we all play well together.

Harbor Country®
Connection
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Hot Deals Revamped

If you are unfamiliar with the Chamber's Hot Deals program, this is a benefit to members in good standing for free Internet advertising on any specials, discounts or packages. The Hot Deals page, www.harborcountry.org/hotdeals is among the top visited pages on the Chamber's site, indicating that Hot Deals are a hot topic among our visitors.

The Chamber and Lodging Association have invested heavily in our online marketing. As a result, the award winning HarborCountry.org site has one of the area's largest inventories of Internet traffic, and ranked #1 on major Search Engines such as Google, Yahoo, MSN. So take advantage of this free member benefit and get exposure

from thousands of pageviews and direct traffic to your site or business phone.

We're now on Phase III of the Chamber's site upgrade to be completed by the first week in November, 2005. Among other new features, we will have a completely revamped Hot Deals submission process; the result of much research and member feedback. This upgrade includes a change in the posting submission schedule. Instead of the awkward 1st and 3rd Friday of each month, you can submit Hot Deals any time, to be published every Friday. All submissions will still be reviewed by the Chamber staff for policy compliance before publishing online. The online posting form will be automated and will populate your business contact

information from the Member database. Additionally, you will be able to submit multiple Hot Deals back-to-back in a single session, as long as dates don't overlap. Each submission can be scheduled for any time-frame, to run up to 31 days. This feature provides greater flexibility to schedule out even an entire season of Hot Deals in advance without having to remember each monthly posting deadline.

Since this benefit is restricted to members, the posting form requires a Membership Number login. If you do not have your Membership Number, contact the Chamber office at 269-469-5409 or chamber@harborcountry.org and it will be emailed to you.



New Board of Directors Ellen Block, Greg Bubb, Mira Poncin....



...and Liz Grim

NEW LEADERS from page 1

Event Design since 1986 in Chicago and has branched out. Dinner's Ready is now serving clients in Harbor Country, as well as in Indiana and Illinois.

Botica told the attendees that she wants to develop even stronger communications between members. "I want everyone to make more money," she said with a big smile. She hopes that more of the membership gets involved with the direction the Chamber is going. With the new marketing guidelines in place for a full year, Botica said she would like the Chamber to consider using television as the next step.

Patty Prino was sworn in as the new vice president of the Chamber. Prino owns Patty's Picks in Union Pier. She has served as the dynamic, indefatigable chairperson of the membership committee, taking the Chamber over the 500-member mark. She is also responsible for spearheading Harvest Days and taking an active role in Magical Saturdays.

John Nelson will serve his second term as Treasurer of the Chamber of

Commerce. Nelson is a co-owner of Lakeside Antiques. He was instrumental in developing the Business Watch program two years ago that provides a network to report suspicious activities at member businesses. Alerts from local law enforcement are sent out by the Chamber office.

Returning to the Board of Directors is Ray Vasquez, owner of Union Pier Summer House, for his second three-year term. Vasquez is the chairman of Internet and Online Services. He, along with AJ Boggio, have been the cogs that keep the wheels of our website turning. Janet Clark, owner of Michigan Thyme, will continue on the board with a two-year term.

Newly elected to fill three-year seats are Mira Poncin, Greg Bubb and Ellen Block. Poncin is the editor of the South County Gazette. Bubb is the co-owner of Harbor Country Insurance Agency. And Ellen Block owns Block Fine Art and Block Communications.

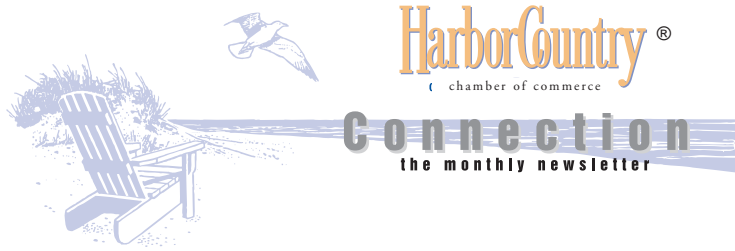
Liz Grim, who owns Getting It

Done in Harbor Country, will help the Chamber get things done during her one-year term. (*Editor's note: The one- and two-year terms fill the balance of a term left by a vacancy on the board.*)

Immediate Past President, Karen Gear, has two years remaining of her three-year term. That term was specially approved so that she could serve as President. She said she will continue to serve the needs of Harbor Country. (See her farewell address on page 2.)

Reaching their term limits of six years and retiring from the board of directors are Michael Hojnacki and AJ Boggio. Both served as Presidents of the Chamber. Boggio continues as President of the Harbor Country Lodging Association. Hojnacki said he would continue as marketing chairman if asked to do so by President Botica.

A special thanks for their support of the picnic went to Red Arrow Roadhouse, Classic Catering, Milda's Corner Market, City Flowers, Topp Press, and River's Edge B&B.



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The art of scaring the bejezus out of you...

Here's a Harbor Country twist-- scare them at the front door and they will come. Hey, it works! The Judges had a difficult time picking winners but here are their choices: Most Creative (2 winners) At Home with Nature and Field of Dreams; the Scariest scarecrow was at Milda's Corner Market; the Funniest at Patty's Picks; And the Best of Show (drum roll please!) is Sweet Haven Resort (pictured at right). Honorable Mentions went to Sawyer Garden Center, Treasure House B&B, and You're Invited. A People's Choice Award will be announced when all the ballots have been collected.

Patty Prino and her committee want to thank everyone who participated in the 2006 Harvest Days. Once again, we need feedback as to the success and impact it had on your business-- good or bad.



new members

Three Oaks Masonic Lodge #239
 14 1/2 N. Elm Street
 Three Oaks, MI 49128

Anthony Consola
 1160 Shore Drive
 New Buffalo, MI 49117

J. Berger Construction
 Joe Berger
 9042 Red Arrow Highway
 Bridgman, MI 49106

Miller's Country House
 Joseph & Charleene Riedeke
 16409 Red Arrow Highway
 Union Pier, MI 49129

Sweet Dreams Cabin
 Gale Dyskie
 7650 Warren Woods Road
 Three Oaks, MI 49128

Harbor Country Bike and Hobby
 Jerry Poncin
 22-B N. Elm Street
 Three Oaks, MI 49128

Jacquie Craig Realtor-Coldwell Banker
 10 N. Whittaker Street
 New Buffalo, MI 49117

Frazier Art Studio
 Suzanne Frazier
 25 S. Willard Street
 New Buffalo, MI 49117