



The Chamber Bulletin

Newsletter of the Stoughton Chamber of Commerce

Stoughton Chamber of Commerce

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FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER 2008



Meetings and Important Dates

FEBRUARY

- 4 **Business Development Comm.**
Noon, Galva Closure
- 5 **Art's Council** – 9 am, Heather's
- 9 **Lake Kegonsa State Park Candlelight Ski** – 6-9 pm
- 10 **Norse Afternoon of Fun** -
1:30 pm, Stoughton High School
- 11 **Board of Directors** – Noon,
City Hall
- 11 **Syttende Mai Committee** –
5:30 pm, Comfort Inn
- 12 **Ambassador's Club** – 8 am,
Depot
- 22-24 **Stoughton Arts Sampler**
- 25 **Lunch & Learn** – Depot Hill
Furnishings

MARCH

- 3 **Business Development Comm.**
Noon, Galva Closure
- 4 **Arts Council** – 6:30 pm,
Senior Center
- 10 **Board of Directors** – Noon,
City Hall
- 10 **Syttende Mai Committee**-
5:30 pm, Comfort Inn
- 11 **Ambassadors Club** – 8 am,
Depot
- 19 **Retail Committee** – 6:30 pm,
EMS Training Room
- 20 **Visitor Services Committee** –
3 pm, Comfort Inn
- 24 **Lunch & Learn** – Welcome
Neighbor (looking for co-sponsor)

STOUGHTON ARTS SAMPLER FEBRUARY 22-24

The Chamber of Commerce will host the 3rd annual Stoughton Arts Sampler on the weekend of February 22-24. A variety of classes are being offered to interested parties to help break up the winter monotony.

Some of the classes to be offered include Glass Fusing, Learning the Art of Sashiko, Forging a Railroad Knife, Meditation and Mindfulness, Artist

Trading Cards, and Raku Pottery Firing. Area artists and shop owners throughout the downtown will be offering the classes to persons who register in advance.

Local residents are encouraged to register for one or more of the classes. If interested in seeing the whole brochure, you may go to www.stoughtonwi.com and click on Chamber Events and Activities. That will take you to a drop down menu that lists Stoughton Arts Sampler. Click there and you will go to the complete brochure with class listings and descriptions and the registration form which may be printed and returned to the Stoughton Chamber of Commerce. Cash, checks, and credit cards are all valid means of payment for the classes.



COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR

On February 23, 2008, the Stoughton Wellness Coalition will conduct a Community Health Fair from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm in the Stoughton High School Cafetorium. Admission to the event is free! Adults may have a free health assessment that includes blood pressure, cholestral, blood sugar, and body mass index. There will also be free bone density screening offered, as well as free chair massages and free health information on nutrition, physical fitness, community health resources, and more. There will be door prize drawings at no charge throughout the fair as well. This is a great opportunity to take charge of your health by having the health assessment. Please plan to attend!

Welcome New Members!

Kegonsa Cove
Tom Ellis
2466 County Hwy AB
McFarland, WI 53558

Membership Renewals

Our thanks to those members who support the Chamber with their annual dues.

Anytime Fitness –
Matt Olinger

ARPI of USA-
Allen Adams

BayWash Stoughton Car Wash-
Lori Irmen

Furseth Heating, Inc. –
Ron Furseth

Vicki & Jim Johnson

Martin Luther Christian School – Sue Mehlert

Prizepromos –
Jan Sunby

Scentiments, LLC –
Candy Cain

Slinde Interiors, Inc. –
Stuart Slinde

Stoughton Area Community Foundation – Kent Knudson

Stoughton Plaza –
Lee Madden

Thompson Plumbing –
David Thompson

Thrifty White Pharmacy –
Doug Kittleson & J. Baumgartner

Are you Included as a Sponsor Yet? Plans Well Underway for the 2008 Syttende Mai Festival

The Syttende Mai Executive Committee has been meeting and planning for the 2008 festival since September, 2007. There will be a lot of familiar events during the weekend plus a few changes and additions for the festival, which will be May 16th, 17th, & 18th this year.

All past and prospective sponsors should have received a sponsorship brochure by this time. There is a February deadline for many of the events as the brochure needs to get to the printer in a timely manner. If you intend to be a sponsor or want an event that is happening at your business listed in the brochure, it is very important that you send in your form and/or contact Syttende Mai Coordinator, Margit Gerber, as soon as possible. (home office 608-873-8082, cellular # 608-438-7912) It's not too late to be a sponsor – but time passes so quickly, it's important to act now. If you have mis-placed the sponsorship brochure, we'd be happy to send out another one to you.

Again, the deadline is necessary due to the fact that the thousands of festival brochures need to go to print soon in order to start circulation in March. If you want to sponsor an event that is mentioned in the brochure, would like to advertise your business, or an event for the festival weekend, you need to contact Margit at one of the numbers listed above or email her at syttendemai@gmail.com. An invoice can be sent to you at a later date. The parade sponsorship deadline is April 1, 2008. Also, remember to put the Syttende Mai Dinner, held at the Stoughton Country Club, on your calendar for May 12, 2008. This evening is a very fun filled with great food, fellowship, and anticipation of another great Syttende Mai Festival in Stoughton. Reservation information will be included in the April *Chamber Bulletin*.

As always, the Syttende Mai Executive Committee appreciates your support of this great festival that is so important to our community. If you have any questions, comments, and/or concerns, please feel free to contact any committee member.



ROCKFORD TRAVEL SHOW

On February 29, March 1, and March 2, Stoughton will be represented at the annual Outdoor Show held in Rockford, Illinois. The booth will be staffed and information the city of Stoughton, events, and local businesses will be distributed in an effort to further get the word out about our community.

Businesses wishing to have their brochures passed out should provide 2000 copies and the \$35 distribution fee to the Chamber of Commerce. However, if you can volunteer to staff the booth for a 3-hour shift, there will be no charge to distribute the brochures through the entire weekend. If you are interested in volunteering, contact the Chamber of Commerce Office at 873-7912.

Drivers Honored at MIS Banquet: *Wilberg, Dickson, Brown, and Bernhagen Crowned Champions*

By John Wells, Stoughton, WI (January 19, 2007)

Drivers in five divisions were recognized tonight at The Heights in Stoughton as part of the Madison International Speedway annual racing banquet. Over 300 guests braved the sub-zero temperatures outside to make the trip to Stoughton to honor the drivers and teams that put on an outstanding show in 2007. In addition to the point fund checks and trophies, several major announcements were also made by track officials.

Track owner Terry Kunes greeted drivers and crews by reviewing the 2007 season and discussing plans for the 2008 season. Drivers and crews were very interested to learn about a new sponsorship program MIS will be offering member teams in 2008. Drivers are encouraged to monitor the MIS website for more information.

Dave Grueneberg, MIS General Manager, announced his plans for the 2008 season. The biggest news was the return of the Super Late Models as a weekly division in 2008. The Super Late Models will join the Limited Late Models, Bandits, Area Sportsman, and Legends. Grueneberg outlined options for the Madison Late Models who may race with either the Super Late Models or Limited Late Models. He also discussed some of the special events the speedway will be hosting including two major tractor pulling events.

Race teams also heard from Pete Raskovic and Dr. Susan Holtz about a unique scholarship program available to high school students who work on race teams or drive at MIS in 2008. Nearly \$400,000 worth of scholarships will be available in 2008 for high school students interested in pursuing a career in automotive technology. This program is part of the ASA Educational Series. More information will be released at a later date.

Jesse Bernhagen of Markesan, Wisconsin, made the most of his trips to MIS by winning the championship in the Bandoleros. Enroute to his title, the fifteen year old high school student won three heat races and picked up three feature wins and finished with 387 points. "I really enjoyed coming down to Madison to race. It was a lot of fun," said Bernhagen. Finishing a close second place was twelve year old Caylie Duncanson of DePere, Wisconsin. Duncanson totaled 370 points and one feature win in 2007. Eden, Wisconsin, driver Aaron Moyer took home third place honors with 365 points and two feature wins. A total of fifteen drivers earned points in 2007. The Bandolero division will be back in 2007 with several events in the works.

Putting on a great show all year was the norm for the Legends division as twenty-eight different drivers came to MIS during the season to battle it out on the quarter mile. When it was all said and done, Blake Brown of Franksville, Wisconsin, would power his way to the track championship. Brown earned three heat wins and three feature wins and a total of 487 points on his way to his first track championship at Madison. Thanks to his efforts at Madison and other tracks in the Midwest, the fifteen year old Brown was also crowned national champion in the INEX Legends Young Lions Series. Brown, who was in North Carolina receiving his national award, submitted a letter that was read by MIS General Manager Dave Grueneberg. "This is a great honor. At the beginning of the year my goal was to finish in the top five and just run consistently throughout the season. Never would I have ever imagined we would win twenty-two features, two track championships, and a national championship," said Brown. Runner up honors went to Matt Booker of Wonder Lake, Illinois who finished with 325 points despite not running at full season. Third place went to Max McNamara of Ingleside, Illinois, who had one feature win and 296 points. It was announced earlier in the evening that the Legends division will return to MIS in 2008 as one of the five weekly divisions.

The wait was well worth it for 2007 Roto Rooter Bandits track champion Steve Dickson of Rockton, Illinois, who won his first-ever track championship. "It's hard to believe at age 48 I am winning my very first track championship in an entry level division," said Dickson who displayed a keen sense of humor. Dickson led the points race wire to wire and finished in the top five all fourteen nights in a point race that went down to the final event. Dickson finished with 1100 points and also notched five heat wins and four feature wins on his way to the title. Finishing runner-up was Bobby Selsing Jr. of Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, who put together an incredible run down the stretch by finishing first or second the final eight nights. He finished with 1069 points including two fast times, five heat wins, and division high five feature wins. Rounding out the top five were Chester Ace of Oregon, Wisconsin, Alex Jones of Middleton, Wisconsin, and Brandon Skolaski of Fitchburg, Wisconsin. Also claiming top ten positions were Tyler Kelley of Oregon, Wisconsin, Alex Lee of Madison, Wisconsin, Rory Padfield of Stoughton, Wisconsin, Cory Skolaski of Fitchburg, Wisconsin, and Ryan Slater of Brooklyn, Wisconsin. Lee was honored as Rookie of the Year and Ace was selected as "Fan Favorite." A total of twenty-five drivers earned points in the Roto Rooter Bandit division which will return as a weekly division in 2008.

Bobby Wilberg of Beloit, Wisconsin, won his first-ever Rockweiler Insulation Limited Late Model championship at Madison International Speedway. This title was the fourth different divisional title for Wilberg at MIS. "I want to thank my crew. It was mainly Rockford guys and we had some engine problems early on. They could've given up but they didn't give up on me and I didn't give up on them and at the end it all showed," said Wilberg. "We'll be back to do this next year (2008)," added Wilberg. Wilberg finished with 1108 points by setting fast time a division-high eight times, winning three heats and three features, and picking up eleven top five finishes. Running a strong season in his first full season in a limited late model at MIS, Stoughton, Wisconsin, driver Scott Broughton finished as runner-up and led the points race for several weeks. Broughton totaled 1069 points with two fast times, two heat wins, three feature wins, and twelve top five finishes. Completing the top five were Ryan Goldade of Stoughton, Wisconsin, with 971 points, Brady Liddle of Oregon, Wisconsin, with 857 points, and Mark Miller of Columbus, Wisconsin with 766 points. Drivers rounding out the top ten were Chad Stevens of Orfordville, Wisconsin, John Baumeister of Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, Cliff Rucks of Cottage Grove, Wisconsin, Verona, Wisconsin's Todd Schmitz, and Michael Bilderback of South Beloit, Illinois. Bilderback became the youngest driver in MIS to win a feature on the half-mile at the age of fifteen. Goldade was recognized as both the Rookie of the Year and Fan Favorite. In addition to those honors, his car was all selected by the fans as "Best Appearing Car of 2007." The Rockweiler Insulation Limited Late Models will be back in 2008 as a weekly division.

For the second time in three years, Bobby Wilberg took home championships in two different divisions by also winning the Weaver Auto Parts Madison Late Model title. All in all, Wilberg now has nine track championships at Madison.

In what was likely one of the most exciting point races in the United States, the track championship not only went down to the final night but literally the final lap. Three drivers, Wilberg, Tom Gille, and Andrew Morrissey all had a mathematical shot at winning the crown. In fact, all three drivers led the points race at one point or another during their fifty lap feature on Season Championship Night in August. Morrissey did everything he could do by winning the feature. All he needed was for Wilberg and Gille to finish further back in the pack. But all eyes would be on Wilberg and Gille who battle lap after lap including the caution filled final eight laps of the event. In the end it would be Wilberg finishing fourth, one spot ahead of Gille, and winning his third track championship in the division.

Continued on page 4.

Wilberg's final totals in the division found him with 894 points, three fast times, three heat wins, and one feature win. Wilberg also added nine top five finishes. "I have to say that last night was one exciting night. Tom and I know each other well and have raced along time together. That was a great race," added Wilberg. Finishing a strong second place was Tom Gille of Winnebago, Illinois. Gille finished with 889 points, three fast times, one feature win, and eight top five finishes. "I really want to thank my car owner, Dave Beighley, for really setting up the car and making sure we had a car there every Friday night that was capable of winning. I also have to thank Bobby Wilberg for that race the last Friday night. We've raced a lot together and that was the funnest," said Gille. Morrissey of DeForest, Wisconsin, finished in third place with 885 points, six heat wins, five feature wins and nine top five finishes. Rounding out the top five were Zack Riddle of Cottage Grove, Wisconsin, with 769 points and one feature win and Rockton, Illinois, driver Jeremy Miller with 756 points and three feature victories. Earning top ten finishes were Nathan Haseleu of Pardeeville, Wisconsin, Jason Tyler of Stoughton, Wisconsin, Jason Erickson of Cambridge, Wisconsin, Brent Brevak of Ashland, Wisconsin, and Waukesha, Wisconsin's Kevin Knuese. Zach Reining of Forreston, Illinois, won Rookie of the Year honors with Haseleu selected as "Fan Favorite."

Wayne Forsythe of Wayne's Custom DIECAST was on hand to present both the Hard Charger and Wayne's Dash Series award to Scott Broughton. In a very close race, Broughton edged out Brady Liddle for the title in the six race dash series for the limited late models. Broughton was presented with a beautiful diecast replica of his #97 car. "Wayne is really a great ambassador of racing," said Broughton. Forsythe indicated that his program will return in 2008 with both the Hard Charger and Dash Series program along with the Wayne's Custom DIECAST 40 for the limited late models.

Dave Grueneberg presented the 2007 "Friend of MIS" Award to Jim Steinke, a long-time supporter of the speedway who filled in for announcers Scotty Ernst and John Wells during the season. Hundreds of door prizes were also taken home by those in attendance including a Lefthander chassis won by Scott McGettigan and Five Star Stock Car bodies won by Jeremy Miller and Bobby Wilberg.

The 2008 season opener is set for Sunday, May 4th when the ASA Midwest Tour and Big Eight Series come to MIS. Friday night racing is set to begin on May 9th.

For more information about Madison International Speedway please checkout our website at madisoninternationalspeedway.com. Madison International Speedway is proud to be an ASA Member Track.



Giving Your Worst Season a Boost

This is another in a series of monthly articles discussing different marketing strategies. This article is brought to you by Pilch & Barnet, Inc., a marketing partner of the Stoughton Chamber of Commerce. www.pilchbarnet.com

Every business has its busy season. For many retail businesses, sales start picking up as the mercury starts falling in anticipation of the holiday season. Businesses that provide services and rentals for weddings and graduations tend to get very business in the spring. For other businesses, such as tourism-related businesses, the summertime is prime time for sales.

The ups and downs of the calendar year for any particular business type remain pretty consistent from year to year. But that doesn't mean you have to just sit out your "down" times, biding your time until the calendar rolls around. As a business owner, you should be constantly finding ways to increase business during slow periods. There are a number of strategies to accomplish this:

- *Diversification of products or services*—Expand what you offer as a business to provide good or services that are either sought after year-round or are especially in demand during your currently slow calendar months. You might be able to expand your business with minimal investments in your existing equipment and personnel.
- *Offer special discounts to boost sales during slow periods*—Smart bicycle shops, car dealerships and marine dealers all know that the doldrums of winter are a great time to have a clearance sale. In many cases, off-season discounts special promotions can help to boost sales during your slowest time of the year.
- *Host a special event*—This is a simple exercise in creating some hype that will bring people in the door. A "Winter Sales Blowout," "10th Anniversary Celebration," or "Valued Customer Event"—anything that will help to stir up some interest in your product or service and generate buyers.
- *Pre-selling*—Many businesses, such as roofers, landscapers, and marine dealers know that the winter can be a great time to sell in anticipation of the coming spring. Offer early-bird discounts to those who buy now for delivery of the product or services in the spring. In the snowy Upper Midwest, people like to break up the long winter by making plans for spring and summer – so bank on that desire and start pre-selling.

Not every trick on this list will work for all businesses. In fact, for a few businesses, the best course of action is to use the downtime to further research your market, plan year-long sales strategies and improve your product or services. But the worst thing you can do is nothing. Next time things aren't so busy, start doing things to make sales happen.

MEMBER PROFILE

BUSINESS NAME: Clock Tower Gifts

Member's Name: Becky Greiber & LouAnn McHugh

Phone: 873-6699

Address: 120 E. Main St.

Describe your Business: Retail Gift Shop

Employees: 1 part-time

Years in Business: 15 year anniversary this year

Years as Chamber Member: Soon after opening.

Why choose Stoughton?: We both moved here when our husbands started their teaching careers in Stoughton.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your business? Whelping a customer find the right gift or suggesting something out of the the ordinary and uniquely different for that special gift.

What is your least favorite part of the business? All the bookkeeping and inventory.

Of what business accomplishments are you most proud? Being in business 15 years and helping to make Stoughton a unique shopping destination.

Do you have any plans for expansion? We are always adding new lines and giftware to constanly have new, freich and unique items.

What are your future goals or long-range plans? To continue to provide our customers with high quality products and superb customer service.

What would you like your fellow Chamber members to know most about your business? We can provide the right gift for any occasion for those hard-to-buy-for people on your gift list.



SPOTLIGHT ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Linda Schaefer



How long have you been employed at your current place of employment: I have been at Stoughton Hospital for 3 years and I love it!

How many years have you served on the Chamber Board? One. I was appointed after a board member was unable to complete his term.

Why did you choose to be on the Chamber Board? It's a great oppourtunity to serve the community.

What do you like best about serving on the Chamber Board? I enjoy learning about the Chamber and contributing my time and talent to this great organization.

Business Philosophy or Motto? Always follow through on what you say you will do

Last book read, and would you recommend it or not? I read Catching Genius, by Kristy Kiernan, which I have recommended to several people. I even e-mailed the author to tell her how much I enjoyed it!



STOUGHTON MESSAGE GETTING OUT!

The Chamber of Commerce has recently received inquiries about our community and our Syttende Mai celebration from Norway. Word about our Norwegian community here in the Midwest is getting out around the world. It is expected that we will have some Norwegian visitors during the Syttende Mai celebration in May of 2008.

