

BUSINESS BRIEF

JULY/AUGUST 2024



OWATONNA
AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Development Numbers Strong 1st Half 2024

Brad Meier, President/CEO

Through the first 6 months of the year, building numbers are pacing last year in the City of Owatonna. Through June, more than \$56M in permit value over 930 projects compared with \$59M in value in 2023. The investments this year are mainly in the Commercial and Industrial construction projects. The Ascend project, which is also known as the Riverfront development, is helping drive this year's numbers.



Ascend Project

New Dealership Coming to Owatonna

A new auto dealership plans to break ground in Owatonna in August. Marthaler Honda plans to build its new dealership building on I-35 and 26th Street just south east of the roundabout. They will sell new and used vehicles and the building includes 16 service bays.

Wine Bar Opening Downtown

Stacy and Jeff Hanson will be opening Grapeful Wine Bar will be opening at 306 N. Cedar Avenue. Once renovations are complete, they plan to open the doors in August.

Meat Market Expanding to Owatonna

A long-standing business in New Richland is expanding their operations to Owatonna. Neighbor's Meats will open at 216 W. Bridge Street late summer/early fall of 2024.

Scooter's Coffee plans to break ground on 18th Street (near Hy-Vee) in late July/August.

What is Most Important to the Distinct Identity of Owatonna?

Answers from Branding Survey (Without _____ Owatonna would lose its essence):



JULY/AUGUST 2024

WORKFORCE

Brad Meier, President/CEO

High School Graduates Entering Local Workforce

Congratulations to the 20 high school graduates who recently signed to enter directly into employment with a local business, as a result of the SteeleCoWorks program.



Kyra DeWitz signs with Bushel Boy.



Owen Moore and Payton Mahlum sign with Climate by Design International.



Ayden Evenson and Dakota Mahlum sign with Federated Insurance.



Jacob Busho signs with R & K Electric.



Erika Avalos and McLain Mogen sign with Wenger.



Kayden Glynn signs with From the Ground Up.



Mason Brown signs with Central Farm Services.



Grant Wencil signs with House Chevrolet Buick Cadillac.



Ariah Mowers signs with Kibble Equipment.



Raeghen Murry signs with Steele County Times.



Kayd Bush signs with Curt's Truck & Diesel.



Felix Kelzer, Christian Marshall, Logan Sackett, Owen Thurnau, and Owen Moore sign with Hy-Vee Food Store



Carly McIntosh and Kelly Averhoff sign with Metal Services of Blooming Prairie, Inc.

MAINSTREET

Lisa Cochran, MainStreet Director

Main Street and EDA are giving away \$20,000

In an effort to continue to enhance the vitality of our downtown, the EDA is funding an "Upper-Level Challenge" for businesses in the Main Street District. If you own a building in the Main Street District, and you want to update or add usable space in your 2nd or 3rd story, you can apply for the \$20,000 grant.



The project must:

- Promote the Vitality and Economic Development of Main Street
- Be for a new business or enhance/expand the business already in the building
- Draw people to downtown and create more traffic in the Business District
- Be completed by December 31, 2025

Find link at Owatonna.org

WORKFORCE

Brad Meier, President/CEO

Chamber Recognizes Retiring Rep. Petersburg

Thank you and best wishes to Representative John Petersburg for serving six terms for District 19B from 2012 – 2024. Representative Petersburg was the Republican Lead for the Transportation Finance and Policy, Ways and Means and Housing Finance and Policy. Petersburg, along with Senator Jasinski, spoke at the June Chamber Growth Breakfast. After the event, Petersburg was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for his service to Owatonna and surrounding area residents. When asked, what his most notable accomplishment was "Petersburg indicated the completion of Highway 14 of course." Congratulations!



OWATONNA

AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024

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Steele Waseca-Cooperative Electric

Deb Gillard, Vice Chair
RE/MAX Venture

Mike Herman, Past Chair
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Doug Meier
Christian Bros. Cabinets

Sammy Miranda
Lakeside Foods

Scott Mohs
Mohs Contracting, Inc.

Rich Pettet
Must Love Dogs

Christy Tryhus
Riverland Community College

Celebrating Service & Success in Owatonna's Hospitality Industry

Group tours, state-wide meetings, and exciting festivals have kept Owatonna's hospitality businesses buzzing this spring! We recently recognized 22 of our outstanding members during **National Travel & Tourism Week** for their dedication to exceptional service. Check out a glimpse of what happened in Owatonna just this past month. We look forward to welcoming even more visitors throughout 2024!

Mark your calendars! July of 2025, Owatonna will be revving up for a week-long celebration welcoming over 200 Model T Ford cars, drivers, and passengers.

Be sure to follow our **Facebook & Instagram** pages to keep up on all upcoming events!



Recognizing our hospitality businesses during National Travel & Tourism Week



United Way of Minnesota Summer Conference



Model T Ford International at Downtown Thursday



Tourism bingo at Foremost Brewing Co-op National Travel & Tourism Week



Mark Cameron Band at Smokin' in Steele



Air Race Classic at Degner Airport



Syttende Mai at Village of Yesteryear



Owatonna FAM tour with Twin Cities CVB's



Juneteenth at Steele County Fairgrounds



The "New Sociables" group tour

visit OWATONNA
24-Hour Visitors Center



Owatonna Chamber of Commerce & Tourism opened its 24-Hour Visitors Center May 1. Stop by for local information, as well as state and regional brochures to help plan your next trip!

SMTA brings together 36 counties to collectively market Southern Minnesota

Owatonna and Steele County represent one of 36 counties working together through the Southern Minnesota Tourism Association to promote Southern Minnesota's tourism opportunities, businesses and attractions. The group meets quarterly to discuss and implement the marketing activities.



SPOTLIGHT MEMBER | WENGER CORPORATION



Enabling and Inspiring Great Performances



Wenger's roots run deep in Owatonna. Founded here in 1946 by Harry Wenger, then a band director in the local schools, the company has grown to become a world leader in providing innovative, high-quality products and solutions for music education, performing arts and athletic facilities.

A recent example of Wenger's capabilities is on display at the new Owatonna High School, where Wenger provided specialized equipment and furnishings. In the Harry Wenger Music Suite, Wenger provided custom staging, choral risers, posture chairs, music stands, instrument storage cabinets, music library systems, and classroom equipment, all designed to create a welcoming and organized space for both students and teachers.

Student performers can showcase their hard work in the state-of-the-art Wenger Performing Arts Center, which includes a custom Diva® Acoustical Shell for a superior concert experience, and J.R. Clancy rigging and controls systems, giving students hands-on experience with both manual and automated rigging.

In the OHS team rooms, Wenger provided durable AirPro® lockers in Owatonna Husky blue, promoting team unity while ensuring sanitation, security, and organization. Our GearBoss® high-density storage solutions make it easy to keep the athletic equipment in order and maximize space.

At Wenger, we're proud to support our community with quality products that make a difference, at the new Owatonna High School, as well as at other facilities across the country and around the world. The company's success and longevity are a credit to its team members who strive daily to deliver on Wenger's core values: **Motivation, Unity, Success, Innovation, and Customer Commitment.** *(These values spell out "music", highlighting the original spark that ignited the company.)*

Wenger's 600+ employees are a wealth of skills and product knowledge. We believe in fostering creativity and innovation on every team and encourage collaboration on new ideas to improve our processes and better serve our customers. Through our annual United Way fundraiser, company-wide blood drives, charity motorcycle rides, mentorship programs, and many other community events and sponsorships, Wenger employees are committed to the Owatonna community.



After nearly 80 years in business, Wenger looks to the future with optimism and a renewed dedication to enriching lives by enabling and inspiring great performances in music education, performing arts and athletics.

You can find out more about Wenger Corporation on our website **WengerCorp.com**, or follow us on social media. **You can contact us at (507)455-4100 and find a new career with Wenger at WengerCorp.com/careers.**

EVENTS Update

By Julia Seykora, Events Director

Are You Looking to Boost Employee Morale? Strengthen a Relationship with a Client?

For decades, businesses have participated in the Chamber golf outing to successfully grow relationships with customers, employees, and other community business leaders.

Your chance to get in this year's event is now. Spaces are filling. Join us on August 6th!

Go to Owatonna.org to get your team registered today. Or contact Julia Seykora, jseykora@owatonna.org.



Owatonna Community Leadership Academy (OCLA) Graduates 18 Participants!



Front row (l to R):

Jennifer Thiele
Steele County Historical Society
Rachel Boss
City of Owatonna
Darcy Kubat
Fastenal

Second row (L to R):

Annie Priebe
Federated Insurance
Sammy Miranda
Lakeside Foods
Lauren Kozelka
Kottke Jewelers

Lisa Simon

Riverland Community College

Julie Klein Jacobs

Sputtering Components, Inc.

Becky Hermanson-Hill

*Berkshire Hathaway
HomeServices Advantage
Real Estate*

Lindsey Schultz

Daikin Applied

MaryJo Robbins

*Owatonna Area Chamber of
Commerce & Tourism*

Sara Pichner

HomeTown Credit Union

Third row (L to R):

Andrew Kline

Viracon

Elliott Herdina

*Owatonna Hospital - Allina
Health*

Jessy Grove

KOWZ & KRUE Radio

Kyle Kriener

Profinium Financial

Matthew Kern

RE/MAX Venture

Not Pictured:

Kendra Myrom

*Mayo Clinic Health System -
Owatonna*

ADVOCACY EVENTS

Brad Meier, President/CEO

Have You Considered Running for Local Office?

There are some key spots up for election on both the City Council/Mayor and School Board this year.

Filing period for these seats starts on **July 30 - August 13.**

City-Mayor Kuntz has announced that after 20 years of service to the City, he will not be seeking re-election. Likewise, City Council president Greg Schultz, Ward 2, has announced that he will not seek re-election. Doug Voss, At-Large and Kevin Raney, Ward 4 will seek re-election.

School-Three seats are up for election, incumbent Eric Schuster, Tim Jensen, and Deb Bandel are up for re-election.

The Chamber will be holding a Running for Office event on Wednesday, July 17th at 5:30vpm at the Chamber's Ringhofer Conference Room 120 S. Oak Avenue.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DOWNTOWN THURSDAY

July 11

5:00 – 9:00 PM

Location: Central Park & North Cedar AVE, Owatonna

RUNNING FOR OFFICE INFORMATIONAL MEETING

July 17

5:30 – 7:00 PM

Location: Ted G. Ringhofer Conference Room, 120 South Oak AVE, Owatonna

BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

July 23

5:30 – 7:00 PM

Sponsor(s): Eagles Club Aerie #1791 and Welker Custom Homes, Inc.

Location: Eagles Club Aerie #1791, 141 E Rose ST, Owatonna



DOWNTOWN THURSDAY

August 1

5:00 – 9:00 PM

Location: Central Park & North Cedar AVE, Owatonna

CHAMBER GOLF BIG CUP "White OUT"

August 6

9:00 AM – 6:00 PM

Location: Owatonna Country Club, 1991 Lemond Road, Owatonna

Title Sponsor: Culligan ULTRAPURE



BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

August 9

5:30 – 7:00 PM

Sponsor(s): Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Advantage Real Estate, Block Plumbing & Heating, Cash Wise Foods, Steele County Free Fair
Location: Steele County Fair Grounds (Beer Garden)



DOWNTOWN THURSDAY

September 5

5:00 – 9:00 PM

Location: Central Park & North Cedar AVE, Owatonna

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS "BIG FOR A DAY" MINI GOLF

September 10

5:30 – 7:00 PM

Location: Waters Edge Mini Golf, 175 Landmark DR NE, Owatonna



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



ADOBE
Ellen Smith
345 Park AVE, San Jose, CA
408-753-5826
Cit465323@adobe.com



IN THE BLACK
Jamie Tiedemann
707 17th ST NE, Owatonna
507-456-8674
Jtiedemann2020@gmail.com



JUAN VILLARREAL JR. MEMORIAL FUND- CHUBB'S BREW -BQ
Amy Villarreal
400 Will Creek DR, Owatonna
507-686-0777
Amy.villarreal@pearson.com



KAMP AUTOMATION
Katie Nelson
2540 Lemond ST SW, Owatonna
612-460-0983
Katie.nelson@kampautomation.com



NORTHWESTERN MUTUAL – KATLA MICHAELSON
Katla Michaelson
1515 3rd AVE NE, Owatonna
507-676-5219
Katla.michaelson@nm.com



OWATONNA GUN CLUB
Becky Wolfe
10749 SW 37th AVE, Ellendale
507-451-4498
Bekywolfe077@gmail.com



PILLSBURY COLLEGE PREP & CAMP
Vonda White
315 S Grove AVE, Owatonna
507-214-2200
Vondawhite26@yahoo.com



STEELE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH
Ethan Rindfleisch
635 Florence AVE, Owatonna
507-444-7650
Ethan.rindfleisch@steelecountymn.gov



T3 MARINE
Derek Terpstra
3673 Austin Road, Owatonna
507-456-2652
Dterpstra20@gmail.com



TAQUERIA JALISCO
Oscar Sanchez
206 W Rose ST, Owatonna
507-200-8650
taqueriaajalisco@gmail.com



UNIQUE ABILITIES
Jennifer Lenz-Cassidy
208 Main Street E, Owatonna
612-756-1804
directors@uniqueabilitiesmn.com



CHAMBER PACK DEADLINE

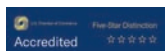
Supply 550 copies of your promotional insert by for September/October mailing; \$150 by **August 28th**.

Chamber office will be closed on **Thursday, July 4th** to let staff celebrate their independence with family and friends. We will re-open on Friday, July 5th.



OWATONNA
AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

120 South Oak Ave | Owatonna, MN | owatonna.org
P: 507.451.7970 | E: oacct@owatonna.org
Hours: Monday–Friday, 8 AM–5 PM



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COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Success
Starts **Here.**

www.riverland.edu