



Chamber News • Business publication of the LaGrange County (IN) Chamber of Commerce • Phone (260) 463-2443 • March 2024

ConnectHER Conference Returns: Secure Your Spot for EmpowHERment!

We are excited to announce the second annual ConnectHER Women's Conference, set to take place on March 20th at The Blue Gate Garden Inn in Shipshewana. This local one-day, empowering event aims to bring together women of all backgrounds, positions, and seasons of life to celebrate achievements, foster connections, and inspire personal and professional growth.

"We are delighted to host a local Women's Conference, providing a platform for women in our community to come together, learn from one another, and empower each other," said Sara Patrick, Executive Director at the LaGrange County Chamber. "This event is a celebration of the diverse talents, experiences, and accomplishments of women in Northeast Indiana, especially LaGrange County, and we look forward to fostering a supportive environment where attendees can connect, grow, and make a positive impact."



Highlights of the conference include:

Inspirational Keynote Speakers: Distinguished speakers will deliver motivating addresses, sharing their insights and personal anecdotes to inspire attendees on their journey to success.

Interactive Breakouts: Practical sessions led by local experts will cover a range of topics, including "Building a Brand", "Work-Life Balance", and "Brain PowHER".

Panel Discussions: An engaging panel that will reflect on the past year's Women2Women roundtables that were birthed out of the inaugural ConnectHER Conference.

Networking Opportunities: Attendees will have the chance to connect with like-minded individuals, forge new relationships, and expand their professional networks, creating opportunities for collaboration and support.

Vendor Fair: Admissions to the conference also includes access to over 30 women-centric retailers and resources.

The ConnectHER Conference is open to women of all ages, backgrounds, and professions who are passionate about personal growth, community involvement, and women's empowerment. Whether attendees are seasoned professionals, aspiring entrepreneurs, or dedicated activists, there will be something for everyone at this inspiring event. The Conference will take place on Wednesday, March 20, at the Blue Gate Garden Inn, located at 800 S. Van Buren St., Shipshewana. Doors will open at 8:30 AM with the event beginning at 9:00 AM and concluding at 4:00 PM.

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First Presbyterian Church, LaGrange

This month, the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church will be praying specifically for:

March 7: Brethren Retreat at Shipshewana Lake

March 14: Custom Steel Designs, LLC

March 21: LaGrange Monument Works

March 28: Topeka Pharmacy



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Shipshewana Popcorn Co. Pops into Chamber Membership

After selling her Pretzel Business in 2018 when she and her family relocated back to Shipshewana, owner Carolyn Herschberger had the opportunity to pop into the world of deluxe popcorn through Dutch Kernel. This past month at the Shipshewana Ice Festival, Herschberger took her business into the next chapter of its life through a rebranding as Shipshewana Popcorn Co.

At Shipshewana Popcorn Co. they specialize in over 40 different flavors of gourmet popcorn. Their mission is to make the world happier, one bag at a time. From sweet to savory, their popcorn is popped in small batches, coated with buttery caramel, and dipped or drizzled with the finest chocolates and added goodies. They make popcorn so tasty; that you can't help but smile with every bite.

You can visit Shipshewana Popcorn Co. at 100 S. Van Buren Street in Shipshewana, on Facebook at Shipshewana Popcorn Co., or online at shipshewanapopcorn.com.



Pictured left-right: Back-row: Tony Schneider, LigTel; Mareen Barton, Lake City Bank; Erin Olinger, Farmers State Bank; Cassy Zuver, LaGrange Church of God; and Cheri Perkins, LaGrange County Council on Aging. Front-row: Sara Patrick, LaGrange County Chamber; Kourtney Jackson, Lake City Bank; Jamie Fennell, LaGwana; Employees of Shipshewana Popcorn Co. along with owner Carolyn Herschberger; and Sabrina Miller, Horizon Bank.

Shipshe Automotive Service & Shipshewana Towing Service Crash into Chamber Membership

After working at an auto dealership's service center for over 20 years, Brent Hochstetler knew he was ready for something different. He began working for a local auto repair shop in Shipshewana. This led to Hochstetler purchasing the shop in 2016. At Shipshe Automotive Service, work on a wide range of issues, from your typical oil changes to the complete replacement of an engine. You can also count on Shipshewana Towing Service with their 24/7 roadside assistance and towing services. Whether it's major or minor, Shipshe Automotive Service & Shipshewana Towing has you covered.

You can visit Shipshe Automotive Service online at www.shipsheautomotiveserviceinc.com or at 890 IN-5 in Shipshewana.



Pictured left-right: Sara Patrick, LaGrange County Chamber; Tony Schneider, LigTel; Joey White, Interra Credit Union; Jamie Fennell, LaGwana; Brent Hochstetler, Shipshe Auto Service and Shipshewana Towing Service; Denise Landers, Crossroads United Way; Mareen Barton and Kourtney Jackson, Lake City Bank; Erin Olinger and Lauri Couture, Farmers State Bank.

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Chamber Kicks-Off 2024 at Chamber Ambassador Event

The 2024 Chamber Ambassadors are in full gear. During the Kick-Off event at the end of last month, Chamber Executive Director Sara Patrick welcomed all ambassadors and thanked them for wanting to further involved and an influence in the Chamber. She also shared the goals of the Chamber for 2024 and gave a brief overview of what Ambassadors do and are. If you'd like to become a Chamber Ambassador visit the Chamber website and under "About Us" click "Ambassadors". Are you ready to take your business to the next level? Become a Chamber Ambassador by calling the Chamber at 260-463-2443



Chamber Ambassadors participated in the Chamber Feud. Each team played in a Family Feud style game guessing the top answers for each question. The team with the most points at the end won.

Chamber's First Quarterly Coffee with the County—State of the Schools

The first quarterly Coffee with the County event was a smashing success. This event was held on February 16th in the Commissioners Room and focused on the State of our Schools. The three county school corporation superintendents were present to give an update on their current school systems, current state legislation, and how the education system works. They were able to give an in-depth understanding of how schools are funded, what students are expected to know, and how current proposed legislation will effect the education system; both negatively and positively.

The next Coffee with the County event will take place on May 17th at the Commissioner's Room located at 114 W Michigan Street, Ste #11 in LaGrange, featuring state legislators and more.

Chamber Directors Elect 2024 Executive Board

The 2024 Chamber Board of Directors gathered on February 15th for their annual Chamber Board retreat. During the Annual Meeting in January, two new Board members were elected by the membership: Brittany Sams, LaGrange County REMC, and Ben Martin, Lake Country Landscaping. Lauri Couture, Farmers State Bank, was reelected for a second 3-year term.

As a result of the Board Retreat, the following were elected as the 2024 Executive Committee: President, Andy Linder; Vice President, Andrea Howe; Treasurer, Lauri Couture; and Secretary, Sabrina Miller. Miller was also renominated as the Chamber Ambassador liaison for the board.

The 2024 Events were officially unveiled and can be found on our website at lagrangechamber.org.



Andy Linder



Andrea Howe



Lauri Couture



Sabrina Miller



Pictured: School superintendents, Jeff Reed, Traci Blaize, and Randy Miller give updates on their school corporations and how the educational system works.

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‘Tis the season for ‘job cuffing.’ How to avoid the trend

Adapted from Human Resource Executive

When it comes to buzzwords, the HR industry never seems to run out of new concepts.

With that, another new and timely buzzword has emerged: “job cuffing”—a variation on “relationship cuffing,” or staying “handcuffed” in a coupling for a defined period of time, particularly through the holiday season and cold winter months.

While job cuffing involves a delay in “breaking up” with an employer, it also suggests that during this time, workers decelerate into slowdown mode, doing as little work as is acceptably possible—similar to the Great Resignation-driven “quiet quitting” phenomenon—which, experts say, can have long-term impacts on an organization.

What’s driving job cuffing?

While employers are typically more likely to sit tight in unhappy jobs until after the start of a new year, this year may have even more workers being willing to stay put because of ongoing economic uncertainty, says Joe Galvin, chief research officer at Vistage, a global executive coaching advisory firm.

“Mainly, the concept of job cuffing stems from the idea that enduring the winter months might lead to a more thriving job market during the spring,” he says.

Employees may also be more willing to stick it out to secure end-of-year bonuses, raises and promotions, which often happen in Q4 or the beginning of the calendar year. The desire to use up PTO for the holidays is also a consideration, he adds.

Job hunting typically decreases in December, as candidates prioritize the “life” aspect in their work/life balance equation, and certain companies scale back hiring toward year’s end. Also, many workers place a premium on stability during this high-expense time of year.

Instead, Galvin says, “Spring is often associated with ‘new,’ and employees may feel ready to ‘spring clean’ their resumes and seek a new position that better matches their career goals.”

Reducing the risk through EX investment

As employees bide their time to make a move, job cuffing can actually have significant effects on the workplace. In particular, he says, workforce dynamics, productivity and organizational operations can all take a hit, as disengaged employees just keep reporting to work while waiting to resume a job hunt.

What can HR leaders do? First, he says, understanding that this seasonal slowdown may be happening in job activity is crucial.

To address the retention risk before springtime arrives, HR should evaluate the employee experience workers want and ensure it’s delivered, such as by offering more flexible working agreements. This could ultimately increase employee morale and loyalty and dissuade top performers from looking elsewhere once the calendar turns.

They should also look to the long-term—beyond these slow winter months. For instance, professional development and training programs, particularly offered during this period of time, can help “keep employees engaged and motivated,” Galvin says, as can performance management conversations.

“Timed to end-of-year reviews, now is the perfect time to assess employees’ goals and ensure they are in a role or working on projects that they are invested in.”

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Tony Isa Realtor with RE/MAX Joins Chamber Membership

Tony has been a realtor with RE/MAX Results for the last 6 years, after spending a majority of his adult life in the restaurant business. When he's not helping people find their dream home or selling their current homes, Tony loves spending time sharing his love of ice cream at his business Scoops in Angola.

If you're in the market for a new home or would like to put yours on the market, you can contact Tony by visiting www.tonyisa.com or by calling him at 260-319-0633.



Pictured left to right: Erin Olinger, Farmers State Bank; Jennifer Neff, Lakeland Title; Tony & Desi Isa, RE/MAX Results; Mike Howard; Mike Howard with Hosler Realty; Mack Grobis, Lima Elevator; Mareen Barton, Lake City Bank; Joe Walter, Farmers State Bank; Sara Patrick, LaGrange County Chamber; Tony Schneider, LigTel; Jessica Rawlins, LaGrange County Council on Aging; Sabrina Miller, Horizon Bank; Kourtney Jackson, Lake City Bank; and Matt Miller, Farm Credit Mid-America.

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