

Chamber News • Business publication of the LaGrange County (IN) Chamber of Commerce • Phone (260) 463-2443 • Nov. 2023

## Nominations for the 2024 LaGrange County Legacy Award Now Open!

The LaGrange County Chamber of Commerce is now accepting nominations for its 2024 LaGrange County Legacy Awards. The outstanding businesses, organizations, and individuals nominated for this award will be recognized at the LaGrange County Chamber's Annual Meeting held on January 11, 2024.

There are six categories for which nominees can qualify: Member of the Year, Educator of the Year, Small Business of the Year, Non-Profit of the Year, Young Professional of the Year, and Professional of the Year. Each category's qualifications can be found on the application form found on the Chamber's website at [lagrangechamber.org/legacyawards](http://lagrangechamber.org/legacyawards). Paper applications will also be available at the Chamber Office, 901 S. Detroit Street in LaGrange.

Businesses and organizations must be Chamber members in good standing to be eligible for awards. Nominations can be made by and are welcomed by both members and non-Chamber members. All nominations must be submitted to the LaGrange County Chamber of Commerce by 8:00 pm on Friday, November 24. The online nomination portal will automatically close at midnight on Saturday, November 25.

## Pizza Party @ Topeka Pizza

The Chamber's monthly luncheon event allows area business professionals to network, gain invaluable insight into different topics, and enjoy incredible meals from businesses around LaGrange County.

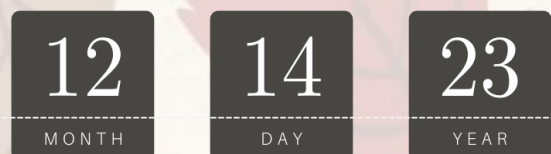
The November 9th luncheon will be hosted at Topeka Pizza, a locally owned and operated casual dining establishment. Topeka Pizza is located at 118 S. Babcock Street in Topeka.

Are you interested in learning more about your customers' experience(s) or how to stay connected with them pre-during, and post-visit? Sonya Nash, Executive Director, of the LaGrange County Conventions and Visitors Bureau will be talking to us about Customer Journey Mapping.

October's luncheon is sponsored by Crossroads United Way, a regional United Way serving Elkhart, LaGrange and Noble Counties. Crossroads has a mission to "fight for the health, education, and financial stability of every person in our communities".

Members can register themselves and their guests for \$15.00 per person, and non-members for \$20.00. Please call 260.463.2443, or visit [lagrangechamber.org](http://lagrangechamber.org).

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**Thanks for your continued support!**

## Chamber Directors & Staff



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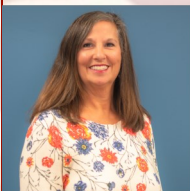
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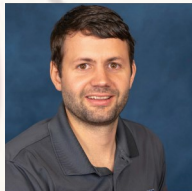
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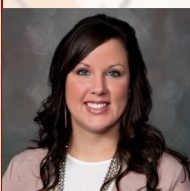
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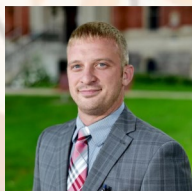
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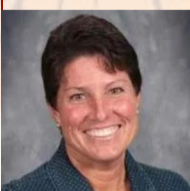
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**The Chamber News is a member publication and is distributed free of charge to businesses in LaGrange County and surrounding areas. Advertising is available only to Chamber members who invest in the business community by supporting the Chamber.**





## First Presbyterian Church, LaGrange

This month, the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church will be praying specifically for the staff and participants at the following groups.

**November 2:** Jo Jo's Pretzels

**November 9:** Michiana Door

**November 16:** Emma Warehouse

**November 23:** Hostetler and Young Insurance

**November 30:** Kathy's Oil Painting Studio

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## Polish Girl Collectibles Opens New Storefront in LaGrange

Growing up as a child, Polish Girl Collectibles owner Jennifer Engle, antiquing and collecting was a family adventure. "By three years old, I had already started my first collection," Engle shared with the Chamber Ambassadors. So when her father approached her about the possibility of starting an antique and collectible business, the decision was easy to make.

In 2019 Polish Girl Collectibles was born in a small 400 sq-foot booth. Quickly they outgrew the space and knew that they needed a more reliable and bigger space to call their own, that's when the old Nazarene Church in LaGrange became available and they jumped on the opportunity. "We're hoping to draw in some of the clientele that come to the flea market in Shipshewana to show them that there's more to LaGrange County."

You can find Polish Girl Collectibles at 502 S. Poplar Street in LaGrange or at [polishgirlcollectibles.com](http://polishgirlcollectibles.com)



*Pictured left to right: Kourtney Jackson, Lake City Bank; Gary and Jennifer Engle, Polish Girl Collectibles; Sara Patrick, LaGrange County Chamber; Denise Landers, Crossroads United Way; Mareen Barton, Lake City Bank; and Lauri Couture, Farmers State Bank.*

## Knotty Pine Trading Post Joins the Chamber Ranks

Florida transplants Melisa and William Kitson knew they wanted to create a space of their own in Northeast Indiana. Having been in the cosplay industry for years, it was a no-brainer for the Kitsons to bring some of that to the area, while also wanting to serve as a lakeside convenient store.

The name Knotty Pine came from the interior of the building, adding Trading Post because they want to be able to offer a variety of products to their customers.

Some specialty items that Knotty Pine carries include items made by local artisans, woodworking items made by William, a U.S. Navy Veteran, and handmade, designed and decorated hats by Melisa. One of their biggest sellers are corsets. "A lot of women don't know how to properly wear them. I'm able to do a private fitting for them and get them sized properly," Melisa share during their ribbon cutting.

You can visit Knotty Pine Trading Post at 8040 E 500 S in Wolcottville.



*Pictured left to right: Denise Landers, Crossroads United Way; Joe Walter and Lauri Couture, Farmers State Bank; Mareen Barton, Lake City Bank; Melisa Kitson, Knotty Pine Trading Post; Sara Patrick, LaGrange County Chamber; and Kourtney Jackson, Lake City Bank.*




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## LaGrange County Sheriffs Office Groundbreaking for New Storage & Training Building



*Pictured left to right: Sara Patrick, LaGrange County Chamber; Erin Olinger, Farmers State Bank; Harold Gingerich, LaGrange County Council; Peter Cook and Terry Martin, LaGrange County Commissioners; Andrea Howe, Farmers State Bank; Sarah Clarkson, Tire Star of Wolcottville; Tracy Harker, LaGrange County Sheriffs Office; Chris Miller, Camp Lutherwald; Juan Arroyo, LaGrange County Sheriffs Office; Tony Schneider, LigTel; Cliff Hibbs, LaGrange County Sheriff; Denise Landers, Crossroads United Way; Jeff Campos, LaGrange County Council; Andy Linder, Trading Post Outfitters.*

## First State Bank Opens Remote Office in Shipshewana



*Pictured: LaGrange County Chamber Ambassadors along with First State Bank Employees celebrate the opening of their remote office location at 8100 US-20 in Shipshewana.*

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## LaGrange County YPN Lunch-&- Learn: Personal Financial Freedom

Have you ever been in a place where finances make you want to pull your hair out? Come to this lunch-&-learn to learn about best practices to implement into your personal finances. Personal Financial Freedom is a personal and professional development opportunity to get your finances in working order, as well as connect with peers from across the county.

The Young Professionals Network will be hosting a Lunch-&-Learn on Tuesday, November 28th from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm at the Van Buren Hotel in Shipshewana.

SheSnapped Photography will also be present and offering professional headshots for just \$15. Pre-registration is required. You can register online at [lagrangechamber.org](http://lagrangechamber.org) or by calling 260-463-2443.

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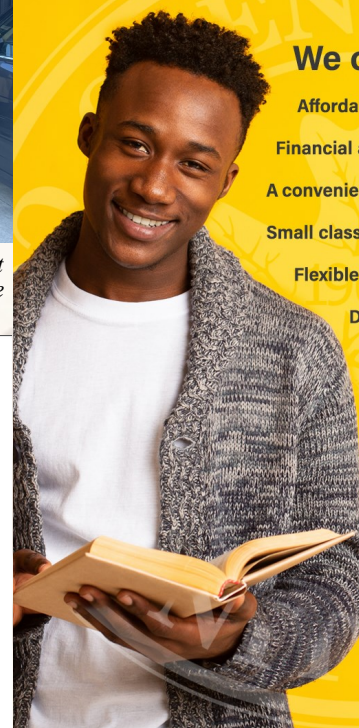
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# Employment Aid Readiness Network (EARN) Indiana

*Adapted from U.S. Department of Labor*

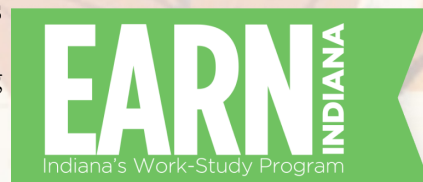
EARN Indiana is a program implemented by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education and Work and Learn Indiana. It is designed to assist employers with paid internships for qualified Hoosier students.

Students participating in the EARN Indiana program must have the opportunity to complete work tasks that provide career awareness, exploration and preparation. For this reason, the Commission will provide reimbursement only for positions that it determines involve experiential learning. While the definition of experiential learning varies across different sources and fields, the Commission is providing the following guidance to assist employers in crafting positions that provide experiential learning.

Internships that provide experiential learning opportunities will likely display the following:

- The intern is exposed to a variety of departments, operations, people and business settings within the organization.
- The internship supervisor provides the intern with a list of competencies or professional skills the intern should learn during the course of employment and assigns tasks that help the intern gain those competencies.
- Assigned work is at a difficulty level equal to or slightly higher than the intern's skill and knowledge level.
- Assigned work requires the intern to research answers to questions and apply skills and problem solving abilities.
- Short term assignments the intern completes contribute to the organization's long-term results. The intern is provided context with assignments to understand how the project fits into long-term plans.
- The intern has the opportunity to work with a team of employees on one or more projects.

You can learn more about the EARN Indiana program by visiting [workandlearnindiana.com](http://workandlearnindiana.com)



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This newsletter was prepared by: Brandi Lehr, Joy Abalgore, Lisa Harter, Mary Miller, Ryan Eaton, and Teye Reves,  
Chamber Ambassadors from The ARC of LaGrange

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