

## Features



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# First Midwest Bank Holds Business Summit

FEBRUARY 22ND 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

First Midwest Bank Holds Business Summit

*Written by  
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Writer*

**Poplar Bluff, Missouri** - The weather forecast was grim and with dismissals, cancellations, and postponements throughout Southeast Missouri, the 10th Annual Business and Economic Conference was determined to continue.

The doors opened at the Black River Coliseum early Thursday to welcome area business leaders, customers, and attendees.

This event has created such a strong following that they were quite determined to beat the weather predictions and enjoy the strong lineup of business speakers slated for the conference.

Tucker Davis of First Midwest Bank stated, "It was our hope to bring a "big city conference" to our area so business owners and managers do not have to spend the time or money to go to places like St. Louis, Kansas City or Memphis to attend. We hope it's time well spent."

As the business community continues to face the pressures of a challenging economy, the conference has been designed to bring to the area quality speakers that are often only found by traveling to a specific industry conference or larger cities with much industry.

The idea of a Business and Economic Conference was spawned in 2003 as the First Midwest Bank President, Joey McLane, wanted to provide the bank customers with solid, current information relating to business.

/images/First Midwest 2.jpg

Joe Calloway was the introductory speaker who delivered an inspiring common sense approach to business operations. At a very interactive session, Calloway explored the positive characteristics of successful businesses such as Wal-Mart, Southwest Airlines, Federal Express, and others.

Offering five solid recommendations to attendees that would increase business performance, Joe shared that simplicity of process, a laser beam focus on the core business, sticking to the basics, continuous improvement, and creating relationships that are Win-Win were common traits of successful businesses.

By design, the second session focused on the overall economy. Dr. Lawrence Chimerine shared with the group a common sense, real world approach to understanding both the cause and effects of our Nation's present economic position. His optimistic approach pointed toward changes that have occurred in both the U.S. and world economies due to globalization, which offered awareness and opportunities to the business leaders.

“There is more competition in today’s marketplace than any other time in history,” stated Dr. Chimerine. “Today’s businesses must discover ways to be more productive using better cost effective methods.”

/images/First Midwest 3.jpg

Examples related back twenty-five years ago to a time when 95% of autos sold in America were from “The Big 3” auto manufacturers. Today, sales from Ford, GM and Chrysler only amount to a little over 50% of the total sales of cars.

Chimerine went on to share that the governmental decisions in the past are creating huge deficit numbers that must be addressed. He pointed to three specific items that have created an annual deficit of approximately \$600 billion from previous tax cuts, two “unfunded” wars abroad and the 2006 Medicare costs.

He shared the looming problems of social security have only begun as 10 million of the 75 million “Baby Boomers” have actually begun to draw from their

retirements. A system that was developed from a basis of life expectancy of only 63 year of age and is now destined for problems if additional planning is not done.

Overall, Dr. Chimarine expressed an optimistic view of the future of the economy stating that “January 2013 provided the strongest economic indicators of any recent report”.

The keynote speaker was Frank Abagnale, one of the world's most respected authorities on forgery, embezzlement and secure documents. Abagnale's life was portrayed in the movie “Catch Me If You Can” starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Tom Hanks and directed by Steven Spielberg.

Between the ages of 16 and 21, Abagnale posed as an airline pilot, an attorney, a college professor and a pediatrician, while cashing \$2.5 million in fraudulent checks in every state and 25 foreign countries. Following his parents divorce at the age of 16, Abagnale recounted in sequence his life of lies, deceit and manipulation that brought him the spoils of life.

With a unique storytelling character, the message reached a very serious tone as he shared the true value of both a mother and a father to the life of a child. Abagnale shared the devastation of his parents' divorce had upon his life, noting the immoral, unethical and illegal activities of his childhood were forced upon a young man trying to survive.

/images/First Midwest 1.jpg

“I always knew that I would get caught,” said Abagnale. “The law sleeps but never dies.”

Part of his sentencing was to work for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to catch other criminals and give insight on how to forge documents. He continued to work for the FBI for more than 26 years pasted his requirement and he shared his pride with the audience. Abagnale beamed as he spoke of God's gift to him and of his wife and three children. He encouraged the audience to “hug your momma and father”.

In essence, the expectation of a keynote speech about the do's and do not's of online security turned into a greater lesson on the value of family.

As attendees quickly enjoyed their wonderfully cooked and catered meal, they trudged out into the near freezing rain yesterday afternoon with a determined new focus on the basics of both their business, their life, and their family life. All three

speakers fulfilled the hope that First Midwest Bank designed the event to accomplish – to simply make life at work and home better.

"The weather this year hurt our attendance a little, but I was still pleased with how many people came out. I think it says a lot about what they have seen from our past conferences." stated Davis.

A big thanks to First Midwest Bank for giving the community an opportunity to attend such a great conference in our area.

[/images/First Midwest 5.jpg](#)

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## Kickin' Cats Provide Half-Time Entertainment

FEBRUARY 18TH 2013 BY UNKNOWN

[Kickin' Cats Provide Half-Time Entertainment](#)

*Written by*

*Jessica Snider, SMT Writer*

**Dexter, MO-** Although the Kickin' Cats haven't been around as long as some of the other sports in Dexter, the Dance Team is sure to bring much entertainment to the high school basketball games.

Slowly but surely, many schools are starting to add a Dance Team to their list of extra-curricular activities for students to choose from. Although a few schools in the area may have Dance Teams, none have as a unique of a name as the Dexter Kickin' Cats.

The Dexter Dance Team originated not very many years ago, and the "Kickin' Cats" part of the name has just stuck from the very beginning. The Dexter Dance Team is very well-known for the amount of kicks they do in each routine that they perform. Whether it be a country or a hip-hop routine, fans always know they can count on seeing those kicks at halftime.

One of the first few years of the Dance Team's existence there were shirts made that said "Halftime-It isn't just for popcorn anymore." Ever since the Dance Team has come along, halftime isn't just an opportunity for people to get up and take a quick visit to the concession stand; halftime is full of entertainment.

The Dance Team gives the fans something to look forward to while the basketball players venture off into the locker rooms during the halftime break.

The Kickin' Cats take the floor during the varsity halftime of every home game. The Bearcat Event Center becomes consumed with the music for the routine, and the fans are on the edge of their seat watching every twist and turn of the routine.

From country, to pom, or even a hip-hop routine, the fans love it all. The smiles on the dancer's faces and the sparkle of their vests show that they all love being apart of the Kickin' Cats Dance Team.

This year, the Kickin' Cats are under new direction. High school teachers Mrs. Everett and Mrs. Pulliam are the two Dance Team coaches.

This past Friday in the game against Scott City, the Kickin' Cats provided great half-time entertainment as they performed a hip-hop routine which highlighted senior Bethany Christian. Each year on senior night, the seniors have the honor of being highlighted throughout the dance being performed.

The Dexter Kickin' Cats have provided many entertaining half-time shows, and all the Bearcat fans hope to see the support for the Dexter Dance Team only grow each year.

The above photo is a snapshot of the dance which was performed at Friday night's game.

*Photo Courtesy of Dee Loflin*

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## Puxico Student Honored at Fine Arts Day

FEBRUARY 10TH 2013 BY BETH FARRAH

[Puxico Student Honored at Fine Arts Day](#)

**Jefferson City, Missouri** - Wednesday of last week, our state capital was swarmed with artists, fans, and advocates that were all there to support the annual Missouri Citizens for the Arts Day. This is a special day of the year hosted by Missouri's Citizens for the Arts

that includes guest appearances by legislatives, performances, and an awards ceremony.

February 6<sup>th</sup> was such an important day in Jefferson City because Missouri Senator Doug Libla attended the special event. The members of Missouri's Citizens for the Arts were thrilled to know he was coming and were even more thrilled to be able to show a member of the General Assembly how important the fine arts are in Missouri and their impact on both citizens and communities.

The funding behind the Missouri's Citizens for the Arts is well taken care of due to supportive advocates, but the members needed more than funds, they needed artists with strong voices that would prove just how important fine arts are to the state and its wellbeing.

The Missouri's Citizens for the Arts wanted around three hundred participants for this year's lobby, where they displayed a variety of artwork from a variety of artists. One of these participants was third grader from Puxico Elementary School. Kyle Holden and his family travelled to the state capital from their home in southeast Missouri to show off his great painting of four small birds surrounding an American flag. His work was both patriotic and colorful, making it a great piece in the lobby this year.

Not many people can say that they have attended such a prestigious event, especially when they are only in the third grade. Holden had the opportunity to visit the Capital Building and meet the state legislatives like the other advocates and participants for the Missouri Citizens for the Arts Day. It was a great honor for his work to be shown at such a widespread and well known event and the Puxico School District is very proud of his achievements.

Holden's work was a great success and his age and dedication to both his artwork and his fine arts classes at school spoke quite loudly. Holden was recognized by both Senator Doug Libla and the Missouri's Citizens for the Arts. Holden's family, school, and community are very proud of him and his hard work that enabled him to attend this year's Missouri Citizens for the Arts Day.

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## Taylor Owens February ShowMe Calendar Girl

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FEBRUARY 07TH 2013 BY UNKNOWN

Taylor Owens February ShowMe Calendar Girl

*Written by*

*Jessica Snider, SMT Writer*

This month's calendar girl is Taylor Owens. Taylor is a junior at Dexter High School and the daughter of Ken and Shannon Owens.

Aside from being February Calendar Girl, Taylor Owens is the reigning Miss Dexter, Miss Heartland, and Miss SEMO Fair. She is a member of the Varsity Tennis Team and Varsity Softball Team.

Taylor enjoys Cadet Teaching and the Rowdy Gals. During the summer, Taylor is a lifeguard with the Dexter Aquatic Center.

Taylor Owens had a very big year in 2012, and she will have another busy year in 2013 as she will be crowning a few pageants.

*Photo Courtesy of Shannon Putnam.*

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## Area Team At Work In Haiti

FEBRUARY 01ST 2013 BY STAFF WRITER

Area Team At Work In Haiti

<http://youtu.be/xOMv0soTMM0>


**Ti Agon Haiti** – Nothing is more satisfying to a person’s spirit than to travel the mountains of Haiti with Global Compassion Ministries. As many Dexter area residents can share, this is a trip not for the faint at heart as it involves grueling travel that is physically demanding. All team members are committed to their passion for serving others.

The Dexter group for 2013 is made up of six area individuals, 5 males and one female. A veteran to the mission field, David Fleming began to share with area friends about his intention of joining the Global Team for 2013. His heartfelt desires motivated additional traveling companion of Steve Kinder, Matt Kinder, Bud Griffin, Alan Hedrick and Tracy Hedrick.

The 2013 winter trip had a game plan to move into the area of Ti Agon, where they are partnering with Living Water Ministries to extend their Christian love to the people in the far Northwest of Haiti. The primary focus of Global Compassion’s trip is multi-fold building of 14 x 20 homes for the residents of Ti Agon, providing women’s ministries

with hygiene classes, Bible school for the kids, food and clothes distribution, as well as other personal expressions of love.

As shown in the YouTube video on the Global Compassion website ([www.globalcompassionministries.com](http://www.globalcompassionministries.com)), both groups endure a very hot and dusty first day of travel in the country of Haiti. In years past, team members have ridden the truck as long as twenty-two hours. With major improvements in portions of the roads, this year's group arrived after nine hours on the road.

The groups chariot is an Army  deuce-and-a-half personnel hauler, which is fully loaded with both construction supplies and each member's personal trunks. Best efforts are given to comfortable accommodations, but very few attempts truly bring relief throughout the long, dusty ride to the Northwest.

The Global Team is broken down into two separate travel teams, one three-week and the second group a two-week adventure. Team one left the U.S. on January 20th and group two traveled to meet them leaving St. Louis on January 27th. Both groups will return together on February 8<sup>th</sup>.

The mission team has adopted a focus on the Northwest Haiti region near Ma Rouge. With comparable beachfronts found in Cancun Mexico, the coastal beauty of Haiti is breathtakingly beautiful. Though not in the timeshares are , the area is surprisingly uninhabited

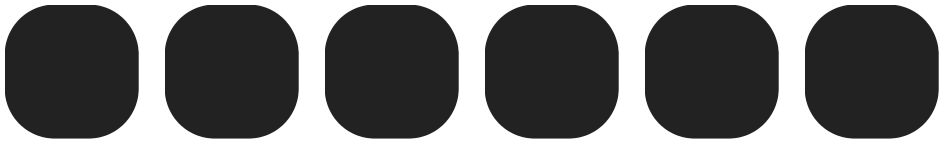
Many of the team members were initially involved with the building of Churches throughout this same area. The group offered hope, passion and opportunities to bless others and to be blessed on the trip.

This coming Sunday, some will lead songs and music while others will step to the stage to deliver the Word of God. The group will spend the remainder of their time developing relationships with the Haitian people in the Northwest and assisting them to deepen their own personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

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