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Ozark Federal Credit Union Ribbon Cutting

JANUARY 21ST 2020 BY DEE LOFLIN

Ozark Federal Credit Union Ribbon Cutting

Dexter, Missouri - Ozark Federal Credit Union recently celebrated their grand opening of their new location at 1117 West Business Highway 60 with a ribbon cutting, military flag raising ceremony and a catered meal.

US Army Private First class Les Barker and retired US Marine Corp Captain Tom Love raised the American Flag in a beautiful ceremony to honor our great country. Barker, who is also the Chaplin for Kenady-Hanks American Legion Post #59 lead everyone in prayer after the flag was raised.

Pictured front row from left to right are: Interim Chamber Director Ed Dust, Mayor Jason Banken, Shawn Huffman, Ozark Federal Credit Union Board Member Jerry McVey, Kirk Mondy, Chairman of the Ozark Federal Credit Union Board, Ed Ervin, Ozark Federal Credit Union Board Member, Tim Darnell, First Vice Chairman of the Ozark Federal Credit Union Board, Sharron Payne, Branch Manager, Lisa Gleason, Mortgage Loan Officer Ozark Federal Credit Union, Melissa Francis, Loan Officer Federal Credit Union, Kim Crockett, Ozark Federal Credit Union, Chad Wolfram, Ozark Federal Credit Union, Katrina Hopson, Carol Mondy, Brett Dille with Dille Traxel Architects, Ronnie Monehan, Navy Veteran Earl Reed and Dale Monehan.

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County Wide Strengthens Partnership with Stafford and Stafford Insurance

JANUARY 20TH 2020 BY DEE LOFLIN

County Wide Strengthens Partnership with Stafford and Stafford Insurance

Dexter, Missouri - County Wide Insurance Agency, with locations in Dexter and Advance, has grown by merging with their long-time partner, Stafford & Stafford Insurance of Harrisonville, Missouri.

Partners for the past 15-years, Alan Hedrick of County Wide and Darrin Stafford of Stafford and Stafford have operated their agencies independently and have shared ownership of Byrum Culp Davis and Dell Insurance Agency for the past 12 years.

“Darrin and I met at an insurance meeting in 1996 and became instant friends,” said Hedrick. “We’ve worked together in all areas of insurance from client policies and agency technology to service at our state association.”

As the local insurance scene continues to face challenges from national insurance companies, this trio of agencies has strengthened their position by combining their business interests. To improve service, broaden company selection, and create more efficiency, the merger of the agencies just made sense. Hedrick and Stafford were similar

in many aspects of their operations, and this reorganization will streamline their business.

Alan

This merger delivers many positives to Stafford and Stafford clients at all their locations. Many clients coming from County Wide and Byrum Culp Davis and Dell will find great service because of the multiple insurance markets that they are now able to access as part of Stafford and Stafford.

Stafford and Stafford Insurance is part of Leavitt Group, one of the largest privately-held insurance brokerages in the nation, and provides clients with greater insurance market access and a wide range of value-added services and resources. Clients receive employee benefits solutions, property and casualty insurance, risk management, and other services. Clients also benefit from the consultative approach to employee benefits and risk management found within the culture of each office and the unique flexibility that comes with local, on-the-ground agency owners. For more information about Leavitt Group, please visit www.leavitt.com.

Pictured front row from left to right are Cherie Wallace, Jennifer Laird, Kara Gibbins, Laura McClain, Stacey Smith, Sharon McCord, and Kay Davison.

Back row from left to right are Russ Lacy, David Ellinghouse, and Alan Hedrick.

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DexterFirst Extremely Successful Thanks to the Dexter Tourism Committee

JANUARY 13TH 2020 BY DEE LOFLIN

DexterFirst Extremely Successful Thanks to the Dexter Tourism Committee

It has always been a goal of the Dexter Tourism Committee to not only shop local, but to inspire people from other communities to come to Dexter. Tourism money comes from taxes and city of Dexter is committed to the Tourism Committee's ideas and supports the DexterFirst initiative.

Tourism is an important sector that has had a great impact on the development of our local economy.

The DexterFirst Great Christmas Giveaway was an idea created by Alan and Tracy Hedrick. Tracy vowed to only shop at local Dexter retail establishments during the Christmas holidays and not purchase anything online or outside of Stoddard County. She not only shopped local, but discovered what great retail shops Dexter had to offer.

The following Christmas, Alan, who was serving on the Dexter Tourism Committee, asked if they could help with funding and promotional materials to get even more people involved. DexterFirst became even more popular with the help of the tourism committee and for the past two years it has become even more successful.

Alan knew that the benefits of tourism created income and generated jobs locally and wanted to make an impact on the community.

Mary Worley who leads the Dexter Tourism Committee was instrumental in the 2019 Great Christmas Giveaway helping promote the contest by contacting numerous businesses in town and hanging posters throughout Dexter. The ShowMe Times ran tons of entries and several were from out of town guests traveling to our community who participated. Without the help of local businesses this project also would not have been successful. It truly takes everyone's involvement to promote DexterFirst.

The goal is to develop a brand for out-of-town people to know and think, "I should be shopping in Dexter and eating at their restaurants!" The idea is once they come to Dexter they will see what we have to offer and will want to return annually to shop and perhaps even come during the non-holiday season and eat at our wonderful restaurants as well.

"Tourism is the backbone of our community and brings a sizable amount of dollars every year," commented Mary Worley. "Tourism boosts our economy and enriches our businesses. The money generated pays for important public services as well such as education and law enforcement."

"We have several other projects in the works as well," Worley continues.

If you participated in the Dexter First Great Christmas Giveaway or helped by sharing on Facebook and Twitter you are a part of the tourism team! Thank you to the Tourism Committee for all the volunteer hours helping our community be successful. Also a big thank you to the city of Dexter who oversees the Tourism Committee and allows them to be successful with their projects.

[Check out the DexterFirst Facebook page and get ready for another exciting year! Click Here!](#)

Pictured from left to right are some of the Tourism Committee Members: Matt Myers, Leslie Ackman, Mary Worley, Dona West, and Ashley Miller.

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2020 Regional Healthcare Foundation Fitness Challenge

JANUARY 07TH 2020 BY DEE LOFLIN

2020 Regional Healthcare Foundation Fitness Challenge

Dexter, Missouri - The Regional Healthcare Foundation will once again sponsor the “TRI” Team Fitness Challenge!

The first Fitness Challenge began in 2007 and has been a very popular event within the community. This is the 13th year for the annual weight loss tradition!

Many people enjoy the holidays and all the fine dining and special treats knowing they will get serious about losing those extra holiday pounds by participating in the Fitness Challenge! There are many, many success stories from people who have improved their health and found a better of quality of life by following their regiment used for the challenge in their daily life after the challenge.

The main focus of people who participate is to improve their health. People are very conscious that diabetes, heart disease/high blood pressure are on the rise for our population. The Fitness Challenge offers weekly accountability for weight loss. Team support serves as reinforcement for shedding pounds.

Each week handouts will be provided about health and nutrition. Blood pressure checks will be made at the beginning of the Challenge and then at the end of the Challenge for comparison.

The 2019“TRI” Team Fitness Challenge begins Wednesday January 8 and continues until Wednesday April 22nd.

Teams may sign up for the Challenge on January 8, January 15 and January 22.

The teams will consist of 3 people. Teams must have a team name selected before signing up.

Individuals who do not have a team may sign up. Individuals will be combined in teams of 3.

Weekly charts for the “Tri” Team Fitness Challenge will be available to show the progress of each team. Charts will list team names and the percentage of weight loss for the team.

Weights are completely confidential.

Prizes For Fitness Challenge:

Prizes are based on the greatest percentage of weight loss of the team.

1st Place Team - \$1,000

2nd Place Team - \$500

3rd Place Team - \$250

There will be a \$250 cash prize for the individual who loses the greatest number of pounds.

Participants weigh in weekly on Wednesdays from 7:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. Team members are not required to weigh in at the same time of day.

For additional information, please call the Regional Healthcare Foundation at 573-624-1607

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New Dexter Chamber Directors Recognized

DECEMBER 17TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

New Dexter Chamber Directors Recognized

Dexter, Missouri - Three new Dexter Chamber Directors were recognized at the annual winter membership dinner. The new members are Dustin Mayer, Mark Whitehead and Tiffany Wright.

Dustin Mayer was born and raised in Dexter. After graduating from Dexter High School, he graduated Summa Cum Laude from Southeast Missouri State University. While at law school at the University of Missouri School of law, he met his future wife Ashley. They have three children: Lillian age 5, Abigail age 3, and Louis age 5 months. Prior to opening his own law practice in 2014 he worked at the Missouri Attorney General's office and as an assistant prosecuting attorney in Pemiscot County. Dustin has also founded his own title company, Stoddard County Title and Escrow. He is the elected council member for the young lawyer's section of the Missouri Bar for District 14 and the president of the Stoddard County Bar Association.

Mark Whitehead currently serves as Customer Service Manager for Newwave Communications with offices in Dexter, Poplar Bluff, and Piggott, AR. This is Mark's 14th year with Newwave. Mark's wife, Kristi is a third-grade teacher at Central Elementary and they have three sons. He and his family are members of Risen Church, where Mark is a trustee. He graduated from Southeast Missouri State University and is an ardent supporter of Dexter Bearcat activities.

Tiffany Wright has been working in the Dexter community for almost six years for the Gill Group and Gill Family Properties. In March of this year she moved over to be the Director of Gill Family Properties. Tiffany enjoys being involved in local charities, such as Relay for Life. Tiffany and her husband, Chase have a nine year old son, Ryker, three dogs, and two cats.

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