Open for Business Featuring Cottage Grove Chamber of Commerce
by Jeanne Engle

COTTAGE GROVE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Located minutes from Madison's east side and the Dane County Regional Airport, between major transportation routes of I90/94 and Highways 12/18, Cottage Grove is home to a growing number of businesses. "The Chamber of Commerce (411 W. Cottage Grove Road, Cottage Grove) celebrated its 30th birthday last fall and at the end of 2019 was 205 business members strong," reports Paula Severson, Executive Director.

"There are about 15,000 residents between the Village and the Town of Cottage Grove. We are asking the community to stop and think about local options before going outside the Cottage Grove area to make their next purchase. It's a matter of discovering what our businesses here have to offer, connecting with them, and repeating a purchase," Paula points out. The business directory on the Chamber's website is the hub starting place to find financial services, chiropractic care, grocery and liquor stores, restaurants, veterinarians, and so much more."

When local businesses are thriving and growing because of community support, the community can invest more in roads and parks and develop new services and amenities. An increase in local spending is a win/win/win for residents, local businesses, and the community as a whole. In addition to its focus on shopping local with existing chamber members, Chamber leadership also wants people to know that Cottage Grove has plenty to offer those considering relocating their businesses to Dane County. Cottage Grove has easily accessible transportation routes to Madison, Milwaukee, and Chicago and we invite businesses to look at us for a relocation opportunity," states Amy Dauer, Chamber president.

Recently the Cottage Grove Chamber partnered with an advanced marketing class at Monona Grove High School, Door Creek Garnet, the Cottage Grove Fire Department, and the Chamber itself worked with students to develop real world marketing plans. "The experience was great for the students since it went beyond just theory or making plans for non-existent businesses. It was especially valuable for the Chamber because we were able to see what our business community is doing well and learn how businesses would appeal to their demographic," says Paula.

The Cottage Grove Chamber, with its volunteer leadership, has become a community hub for Cottage Grove bringing together town and village government, service clubs, churches, schools, and, of course, businesses. The Chamber hosts a variety of projects through its Community Outreach initiative and it is the home of the Cottage Grove Community Foundation. Chamber members participate in the Fall Festival, the Kid2Kid Fair and the Fireman's Festival to support the volunteer fire department, the Bay Scouts, the Cottage Grove PTO, and disaster relief.

Even though it's still winter, it's not too early to think about the spring golf season. Paula is inviting the public to join Chamber members for the Cottage Grove Golf Scramble on May 27, 2020, at Deer Creek Golf Course. "We utilize the funds from this golf outing to fund scholarships for Monona Grove seniors as well as other chamber programming. We invite everyone to join us for this fun event." Registration will open after April 1st on the Chamber's website.

Check out the Chamber's event calendar and facebook page to find presentations and offerings from its business members. Cottage Grove is open for business. Stop out and visit. You'll be pleasantly surprised!

I believe in supporting Dane Buy Local members who support Dane Buy Local. A few years ago, I joined my condo association board of directors. One of my goals was to move our substantial funds to a locally owned, Dane Buy Local member bank. I was successful in doing so. About 18 months ago, that bank dropped their membership citing they weren't seeing any results because they couldn't attend the events (breakfast, sample, etc). I reminded them they have current customers who are banking with them because of their connecting to DBL. They didn't feel this was a strong enough reason to renew their membership. The Condo Association recently moved all our accounts to **Park Bank**.

I believe in support our members who believe in supporting the buy local movement and Dane Buy Local.

Colin Murray
Executive Director | Dane Buy Local | 608-729-7342
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