

**WOW!**  
What can the chamber do to WOW  
you?  
Let us know!

### Friday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2017

Dear Chamber Member,

The Chamber staff is excited after coming out of our annual board retreat on Friday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> and we are busy working on our new goals for the year with better ways to serve you, our members! If you would be interested in serving on a Chamber committee, please contact our office.

You may have noticed a new look to the chamber and tourism websites! We are excited to have two new, user friendly websites. You should have received an email requesting you to set up a unique login for the exclusive Member Only Center on the chamber website. If you did not receive an email and would like to set up an account, please let us know!

We are excited to have the first Chamber Social of 2017 at the Morris GrandStay on Wednesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> from 7:30-9 a.m. Other chambers in our area have reported having a large turnout and great success with morning socials, so we thought we would change things up and try out doing some morning socials. Chamber Socials are open to all chamber businesses and their employees so please invite all of your staff! If your business would like to host or co-host a social this year, please contact us. See invitation later in this newsletter.

We want to give your business more visibility on Facebook! To help us do this, please tag the Chamber in any and all of your events and promotions so that your post gets more views! You can also feel free to email us your photos with a short caption.

As you can see, there's a lot going on at the chamber, but we couldn't do any of it without you, our loyal members. Thank you for your support!

**Andrea Koehntop**  
*Marketing Director*

#### NEW MEMBERS:

We are excited to have B Inspired and Just uS as new members at the Morris Chamber! Thank you for joining us, we are happy to have you!



#### REMINDERS:

Please contact the Morris Area Chamber of Commerce if your business has any change of address, email address, phone number, etc.

If you are interested in learning more about our different committees and/or becoming part of our committees, please contact us! We would appreciate the participation.

(320)-589-1242  
morrismnchamber@gmail.com

#### SEND YOUR PHOTOS!

In our efforts to better promote our chamber businesses, we are asking you to email your photos, or tag us in your Facebook posts! You will get more advertising for free by doing this and more people will see your posts! Please keep sharing with us and including you in your business events and photos!



The Morris Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism have new websites! Check out the new designs! We hope to continue to make our website more user friendly for our members and visitors to our area.

Check out the new Member Only Center Page on our website! If you would like to sign-up for this and did not receive an email, please contact our office.

# Membership Spotlight:

## Prairie Wind Players



Prairie Wind Players



Not many small towns these days can claim to have a community theatre, but that's exactly what the proud town of Barrett has with Prairie Wind Players. Based in the historic Roosevelt Hall, the theatre got started in the winter of 1978 when a group of people from Barrett and other towns in Grant County explored the possibilities of presenting a theatre production during the annual Old Settler's Reunion in June of 1979. The result was the organizing of Prairie Wind Players and the first community theatre production in Barrett with "Spoon River Anthology." Not only was the play a success, but so was the dinner that accompanied it, and the tradition of the dinner theatre continues on to this day.

Today, Prairie Wind Players is a non-profit community arts organization with an emphasis on community theatre. Like any small town non-profit organization, they have faced some challenges to keep the theatre going over the years. "The biggest challenge we have faced in these last years is the changing demographics of rural communities," says Kathy Ray, a long-time supporter of the Prairie Wind Players. "A lot of the people who have been involved in the growth and ongoing work of Prairie Wind Players continue to age and it's difficult to find younger people to take up the mantle." On a positive note, Kathy notes that they have several young, committed people involved in the leadership of the organization and there's a new enthusiasm for presenting high quality theatre productions for the community. Kathy also notes some years it has been difficult to cast even two shows, for lack of being able to find directors and actors. But they have truly made it work over the years and the productions that come out of the hall are works of art.

"It's so wonderful to have Roosevelt Hall to perform in," says Kathy, "It's like a playhouse for grown-ups. There have been major improvements and good maintenance of this beautiful and unique community arts building over the years." When I asked Kathy what her favorite production was over the years, she was hesitant to pick because there have been so many good ones! Kathy says her favorite would be "Fiddler on the Roof" in 1986 directed by Roger DeClerq with scene design by Professor Tap Payne from Morris. This was a fairly large production with over 60 people in the cast. "But that was just one show among so many memorable productions," Kathy adds.

With all of these productions, there have been many children who started with the plays at a young age over the past 38 years and are now grown and have children of their own participating in Prairie Wind Players today. Many of these now parents have noted that being involved in this theatre shaped their future in a positive way. "We believe that just because we chose to live in rural communities, does not mean we should miss out on being able to sing and act and dance on stage with our neighbors, while providing fun and sometimes thought provoking experiences for area audiences," says Kathy. "The more arts, the better"

The 2017 Season will kick off with "The Titanic: A Night to Remember" on April 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> followed by "Princess Diana, The Musical" presented by Plays in Morris in May. There are several other theatre productions in the works as well for this season so check out their website [www.prairiewindplayers.org](http://www.prairiewindplayers.org) or visit their Facebook page for a full list of shows, ticket information and ways to get involved in the theatre.

# Chamber Social

## Wednesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>



You're Invited to attend the

# Chamber Social

MORRIS GRANDSTAY

All Chamber Members and employees are invited to join us for a morning of networking, socializing and fun! Breakfast items and beverages will be provided.

Wednesday March 22nd

7:30-9 a.m.

There will be a short presentation from our sponsor and door prizes given out!

