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May 2017

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## Feature Business: Baumann & DeGroot Heating & Cooling



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*Pictured: Baumann & DeGroot Sales/  
Marketing Manager Chad Baumann*

*Cover photo by deVries Photography*

# Expert Contributors

featured in Connect



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# Letter from Jane Clark

President, Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce



May is National Small Business Month, an event that is particularly significant to Chambers of Commerce across the country. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, more than half of Americans either own or work for a small business, and they create about two out of every three new jobs in the U.S. each year. Those statistics ring true among our membership, with over 90% of our members meeting the standards of being classified as a small business, and we see the impact of these businesses on our community every day.

Publications like *Connect*, and awards such as Small Business Person of the Year, Minority Business Award, and Business Leadership Award give us the opportunity to highlight the impact of outstanding entrepreneurs and small business owners. This month you will read about Baumann & DeGroot Heating & Cooling and INONTIME, both home grown businesses with a history of enriching the lives of their teams and of our community. But the reach of small business contributions to our community extends far beyond the pages of our magazine, and every day we strive to share the stories of all our small businesses as they grow, create jobs, drive innovation and keep commerce throughout the west coast of Michigan competitive and thriving.

Best Regards,  
Jane Clark



## Vision:

Building successful businesses that lead to a thriving community.

## Mission:

Connecting businesses to each other and the resources they need to grow and succeed.

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## Feature Business:

# Baumann & DeGroot Heating & Cooling

By Chelsea Hall



Photo credit: deVries Photography

Chad Baumann

In 1994, while working for the same heating and cooling company, Jeff Baumann and Larry DeGroot realized they could be more efficient and maintain quality control better if they started their own company. 23 years later, Baumann & DeGroot Heating & Cooling has grown to over 38 employees and 24,000 customers. Baumann & DeGroot provides residential and light commercial heating and cooling installation and service to the West Michigan area.

When Larry retired in 2010, Service Manager Josh Johnson became a partner with Jeff Baumann, CEO. Jeff's sons Chad Baumann and Alex Baumann, Sales/Marketing Manager and Installation Manager respectively, round out the management team. *Connect* sat down with Chad to learn more about this Holland family business.

### Chad Baumann

Chad has been working fulltime for Baumann & DeGroot for five years, but the family business has always been in his blood. "My father Jeff started the company, so I have been around heating and cooling my entire life," he said. "After college and jobs in other fields, I found my niche here." Chad said that while some folks might be hesitant to work with family, he loves it. "I have so much respect for my father, what he has built here and the integrity with which he has done it. Working alongside someone like that is very inspiring."

Chad's favorite part of his day-to-day duties is making house calls to new customers, and his gregarious nature means he's well-suited for his role as Sales/Marketing Manager. "On average I get to meet five new people a day in their homes to provide quotes," Chad shared. "I love this part of my job." He went on to explain that he has had many conversations with prospective customers about their hobbies and passions, which are usually showcased in their homes. Said Chad, "I have learned about hot air balloon racing, the benefits of flying two engine small air craft as opposed to single engine and the ins and outs of Wall Street. I become more well-rounded with every quote I do."

Beyond getting to meet people from all walks of life, Chad said that the business has impacted his life by adding tremendous value in the form of personal fulfillment and happiness. "I don't dread Mondays and rarely have a bad week," he said. "I have tried my hand at a few different careers, and it was never a joy going to work like this is."

### Quality and Recognition

When the company slogan is "Quality you can afford," there must be a delivery on that promise. To do this, Baumann & DeGroot provides high end installation and service while aggressively managing their expenses. Said Chad, "This results in very competitive pricing with no compromise on performance or attention to detail. We want to continue to adhere to high end quality without excessive pricing."

Chad pointed out that ongoing education and training are crucial in the heating and cooling industry, and it's something to which Baumann & DeGroot are committed. "There was a sharp reduction in the skilled trades workforce during the recession and most of those workers never came back," said Chad. "Thus, the industry is very top heavy, with a large portion of the workforce quickly approaching retirement age. Our company has embraced hiring great young people with good work ethics and we provide ample opportunities to get hands on training and education in the HVAC trade."



The unwavering pursuit of both quality work and people has not gone unnoticed by customers. Baumann & DeGroot was voted best heating and cooling company in the *Holland Sentinel* in both 2015 and 2016.

### Family Business

As Baumann & DeGroot grows, they are cognizant about retaining the family feel and small company atmosphere. “We operate like a family and take care of each other,” Chad said. “I have never seen 30 plus people whose only common bond is working at the same place gel as well as our company has from top to bottom.” Even though heating and cooling can be a stressful field, Chad is proud that the entire team comes together to put customers first. “Yes, we work together, but we also enjoy spending time with each other outside of work,” he pointed out. “Working with friends makes it much more enjoyable.” This camaraderie is evidenced by the Baumann & DeGroot company softball team, which is made up entirely of staff.

### Company Culture

15 years ago, Baumann & DeGroot began hosting a breakfast for their builders and contractors at Christmas in the shop. “The first year we hosted 35 contractors and in 2016 we served over 200,” Chad proudly shared. Originally catered by local restaurants, the staff has since gotten involved and now produce the event. “Everyone helps with cooking (Tim Tamminga is famous for his pancakes!), set up and clean up,” said Chad. “We also hand out hoodies that get a lot of wear and exposure. It is a great way to say thank you every year.”

To show appreciation to staff, Baumann & DeGroot hosts two outings per year—one being for employees and their families. “In past years, this event has involved a weekend trip to Indianapolis for a Colts game, Tigers and Lions games, golfing as well as full family events to a White Caps game,” said Chad. The annual Christmas party is the other big to do and takes place in Grand Rapids. “It’s always a big hit! We rent every couple a hotel room at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel and do dinner somewhere downtown.” Afterwards, they hit the town for some fun.

### Giving Back

*“We are constantly involved in sponsorships throughout the community. We work with local charities and utility companies to identify and provide free or steeply reduced cost furnaces to families in need around Thanksgiving. We also have regular gift card giveaways on Facebook. We try to come up with company-centric trivia questions and let everyone guess the answer and reward the winner with a gift card to a local restaurant or Meijer.”*  
*–Chad Baumann*

As a Christian company, Chad said Baumann & DeGroot is proud to offer a tithing discount to all the local churches in the area. “In addition, we sponsor everything from youth sports teams to mission trips,” he said.

### Chamber Involvement

Chad shared that he makes an effort to never miss a Chamber Early Bird Breakfast. Furthermore, Baumann & DeGroot support local Chamber businesses and take advantage of the Chamber business development classes.

*“The connections that the Chamber creates are invaluable. I have attended networking events and sat down at a 10-person table and realized we did work for six of the people sitting there already. I have had discussions about comfort issues in a member’s home and ideas for how to solve it. These connections turn into meaningful leads and help our business. The Chamber also makes it easy for me to find qualified businesses to help with our day to day needs. Plus, the speakers that are brought in for Early Bird Breakfasts are fantastic! It is a great use of time.”*  
*–Chad Baumann*

A small family company feel and attention to detail and customer service are the pillars upon which Jeff and Larry built their business, and Chad said future goals include maintaining those standards. “We would like to continue to grow our client base without sacrificing anything that has gotten us to this point,” he said.

*Baumann & DeGroot Heating & Cooling is located at 116 E Lakewood Blvd. in Holland. Visit them online at [www.396heat.com](http://www.396heat.com).*



# Maximizing Your Workers' Compensation Coverage

By Andy Spears, Farm Bureau Insurance

Unless your business is in Texas or Oklahoma, you are required to purchase workers' compensation coverage, sometimes known as "workman's comp" or "workers' comp" insurance. Michigan is one of 11 independent states that utilizes its own classification and rating system.

Once a business owner has an employee and sets up payroll, they're legally required to have workers' compensation insurance. Many business owners may not think about insurance at all or, if they do, understand the rules and regulations surrounding workers' compensation insurance. Unfortunately, this oversight may result in all sorts of fines, penalties, and even worse, gaps in the coverage and protection for your business.

## What is it?

Workers' compensation ("workers' comp" for short) is a type of insurance that protects your employees if they're injured on the job. In exchange, the employee gives up the right to sue the employer. The state conducts annual audits on your payroll and workers' comp, and this can result in hefty fines if it's not been done properly or not in place.

## Considering Your Policy

A lot of factors go into pricing a workers' comp policy, and most of them aren't subject to much discretion. In general, a policy is priced based on your 1) Amount of payroll, and 2) Classification of jobs. Considering these two factors, you can see why a construction company and a comparably-sized IT company could have two very different prices for their respective policies.

The risk profiles of the two companies will be very different as construction jobs are relatively more dangerous than IT jobs. The accuracy of your workers' compensation premiums depends largely on the accuracy of your payroll calculations. By reviewing your payroll on a regular basis, you can reduce or avoid mistakes from being carried over to your workers' compensation premiums. As you review payroll, keep in mind:

- Certain items (such as gratuities) should be reported separately from your payroll.
- Independent contractor wages — don't lump them in with payroll.
- Spot check your payroll report regularly to make sure all data is being correctly inputted and processed.

## Classifications

Incorrectly classifying employees' jobs is a common mistake that can impact your costs. Evaluating classifications regularly can help verify the accuracy of current positions and new hires as well as jobs that may have been eliminated since your policy took effect.

Common misclassifications include:

- A clerical employee who is listed as working in your warehouse.
- An administrative assistant who occasionally fills in as a delivery driver.
- A seasonal hire listed as a permanent employee.
- A worker who recently switched to part-time hours.

## Correct level of coverages

Many small businesses make their business and livelihood vulnerable by underinsuring their business.

Workers' Compensation, Part II covers a business in the event of a lawsuit. A legal trial and negative verdict presents a huge, perhaps even existential risk, for businesses. Make sure that you're carrying an amount of coverage that accurately reflects the worth of your business and protects it accordingly. Most of the time, your business should be covered at a \$500,000 per person/\$500,000 per occurrence or the maximum \$1M/\$1M.

It doesn't matter what coverages you have, if it's not accurate and tailored to meet the needs of your business. Lastly, make sure to regularly review your coverages with an agent familiar

with Michigan laws and workers' compensation coverages.

Without the proper coverages, your business is vulnerable to needless fees, fines, and risks that a considered and customized workers' compensation policy is designed to prevent.

*Andy Spears owns a local insurance agency in the Holland area. His passion is to serve, and provide protection and peace of mind to his clients. Andy can be reached at 616-396-3333, [aspears@fbinsmi.com](mailto:aspears@fbinsmi.com), or through his website — [www.InsureWestMichigan.com](http://www.InsureWestMichigan.com).*

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# How Did I Get Hacked and What Can I Do To Prevent It From Happening Again?

By Mark Kolean, Shoreline Technology Solutions

It seems like lately there has been an increase of reported issues of networks getting hacked and it isn't exactly clear why. Most of the time it appears that once a system has been compromised the requested funds are to be wired to some random place overseas or the intruders want payment in bitcoins (a bitcoin is worth around \$1000 currently). Here are a few suggestions on how to keep your computers clean:

1. Stay away from software that is "fun" or "free." Kids' games are often loaded with spyware, key-loggers and malware. Once a PC has this software loaded it can often be difficult to get it fully removed. A computer can always be backed up and reloaded to factory default to make sure it is clean. Symptoms of a computer with spyware are random pop ups all the time or the computer just starts talking to you randomly.
2. Be careful when searching for legitimate downloads in Google; make sure they are not sponsored ads. I have seen several users look for downloads on websites for items such as Adobe Acrobat or Microsoft Office readers only to download from non-company websites that have the software they want plus 12 other programs they don't want. When looking to download a free program, make sure you download it from the actual website from the company that makes the software – such as Adobe for Acrobat – and not a random website.
3. Consider using third party software for remote access into the office. One of the most common ways a network system can get hacked is if remote access to a server is left on. Often an IT group or a business owner may want to use the server as a workstation for programs in the office and open up remote access into the network from the outside. The problem is that if you can get into



the system so can anyone else in the world. Consider using software such as TeamViewer, LogMeIn, or GoToMyPC as a replacement for RDP into the network. As a second option VPNs (virtual private networks) can be set up which allows users to log in using a separate security system before being able to log into the network. Most of the time when a system is hacked it is because the server password is too easy to figure out.

4. Backup, backup, backup! Backups are the most important item to help recover from a hacked system. Many computer users assume that the system auto backs up their data and many times it does but just hoping it is happening behind the scenes isn't enough. Most of the time when a system is hacked, the hackers do not encrypt all the backups and a simple server recovery can be done to undo the damage. Here are a few suggestions to help make sure your data is protected if something were to happen:
  - a. Manual backup of files to a flash drive.
  - b. Automated system image to an external hard drive using either the Windows / Mac backup software or a purchased backup software.
  - c. Offsite backup software such as Carbonite or Microsoft Azure Backup.

Most everyone knows someone that has had a computer compromised, by checking some of these basic items you can make sure you are not one of them.

*Shoreline Technology Solutions is located at 828 Lincoln Avenue in Holland. Reach them by calling 616-394-1303 or visiting [www.shorelinepc.com](http://www.shorelinepc.com).*

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# Creating Your Marketing Strategy and Budget

By Tim Haines, Symposia Labs

Your business is a functioning machine. Think of your strategy as its blueprint. Creating a digital marketing strategy requires understanding the pieces that hold it all together. Knowing your sales funnel, mapping your customer's journey, using your budget wisely – these will enable you to create a well-oiled machine.

Developed from real experience, this is an outline for those trying to build and execute their own strategy – all while not having control over the budget.

## 1. Sales Funnel

Whether you call it a funnel, cycle, pipeline, or process, you have one. It's the route a prospect takes in becoming a customer, and is critical in building a successful strategy. Optimize your sales funnel and you optimize your customer's journey. Developing your best sales funnel begins with understanding your current one. Sales funnels are often broken up into three stages: cold, warm and hot. For each of these stages, consider how your site or social media channels work together to push a prospect toward the next action. Step by step, they are ideally walking the path you've paved toward becoming your customer.

Let's look at these stages of the funnel and what they mean:

### COLD

You see this person around and you think they're cute. Why not introduce yourself?

"Cold" prospects are people who may not even know who you are or what you do. Efforts to grab their attention are usually driven by Facebook ads, Google AdWords, organic search traffic, word of mouth, and other channels.

### WARM

You've gone on your first date, which went well. What next?

A "warm" prospect has heard of you – and you have piqued their interest. So, what next? Answer a few questions about them. What actions do they take when they visit your website? Do those actions signal interest in taking further steps? If you're a retailer, this might mean the prospect signs up for your monthly coupon via text. If you're a B2B, it could mean they're downloading a white paper or toolkit. Your prospect has heard the question and raised their hand to say, "Yes, I'm interested!"

### HOT

Things are getting serious. You're ready to pop the question. At this stage, we know we're close. This prospect is informed, engaged and hungry for more. How do we convert them into a customer or client? Common methods include email marketing drips, retargeting with Facebook ads, and even snail mail. This is the final stage of the funnel.

## 2. Personas and Content Buckets

Most digital marketing strategies are driven by content in one way, shape or form. Personas are your different "types" of potential customers. By putting your content into a series of categories (or "buckets"), you'll be able to develop a strategy based on which content type works best for which persona.

### Step One: Personas

Some of your prospects are cat people while others are dog lovers. Some think with the left side of their brain, and others are right brain thinkers. Come up with a minimum of two groups that we can divide our prospects into. Example: Are



Symposia Labs team

you looking for a customer who wants one bouquet of flowers, AND someone who's supplying for a wedding florist? Those are two different customer types, two different personas. Many organizations will have three, four, or even five groups, but two is a great start.

### Step Two: Content Buckets

The cat lovers are going to be naturally drawn to different content than the dog lovers. Start by making a list of all the content you currently have – photos, videos, and other assets. From there, research your audience on- and offline to develop a list of content opportunities. Start broad (e.g. videos) then get specific (e.g. 10-second funny cat videos that work well on Instagram).

## 3. Constraints

### Time

Consider how much staff time you can commit to digital marketing. Is someone doing this part time or full time? Do you have one person or many people that will be contributing to execution? Simply put, take a hard look at your real numbers. Don't bother with hypotheticals; plot out the actual amount of time on a daily, weekly and monthly basis to dedicate to digital marketing.

### Cost

No-brainer, right? In addition to time, it's critical to take budget into consideration. Do you have \$5 to spend or \$5,000? Find the right tools for your budget and use them wisely. By focusing on what you can afford, you'll do the most you possibly can with your current budget (This will also enable you to ask for more marketing funds when next year's budget is being planned).

Your strategy will no doubt further develop and grow as you move forward. Your vision will sharpen and you'll adjust your digital marketing strategy with more specific campaigns and exciting plans.

Just remember to track your progress – and bring it to the budget meeting.

*Tim Haines of Symposia Labs will be the presenter for the popular summer Digital Marketing Series. Learn tips on email marketing, paid social media marketing, and more. Go to [www.westcoastchamber.org](http://www.westcoastchamber.org) to register.*

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# Jon Lanning Recognized as the 2016 Michigan Small Business Person of the Year



## State Winners from the West Coast Chamber

<u>State Winners</u>	<u>Year</u>
Pat Thompson, Trans-Matic	1984
Gail & Alan Hering, API	1987
Don Heeringa, Trendway	1989
Boyd Berends, ProLight	1991
Tom Bos, AD Bos	1994
Jay Keuning, Lighthouse Keuning Ins.	1998
Dan Driesenga, Driesenga & Associates	2001
Dean Smith, Specialty Heat Treating	2003
Keith Malmstadt, Great Lake Woods	2005
Noel Cuellar, Primera Plastics	2006
Chuck Reid, Charter House Innovations	2009
Doug Hekman, Quincy Street, Inc.	2012
Pat LeBlanc, EBW Electronics, Inc.	2015
Jon Lanning, INONTIME	2016

Last fall, the Chamber's Small Business Person of the Year selection committee recognized Jon Lanning of INONTIME, Inc. as the Chamber's 2016 Small Business Person of the Year, presenting him with the award at the November Early Bird Breakfast. The committee recognized that INONTIME exemplifies the best of small business in our community, and that nominating Jon Lanning for the Michigan State Small Business Person of the Year Award should follow. After several months of awaiting the decision of the Michigan State Small Business Association, Jon received a letter of congratulations that he was the recipient of the 2016 state award! Cheers resounded throughout the Chamber as he shared the news, and plans were immediately made to attend the award presentation event in Lansing, which will be held on May 4. Jon commented, "We are humbled to be able to represent for the West Michigan business community." Congratulations Jon and the entire INONTIME team!

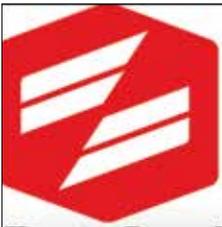
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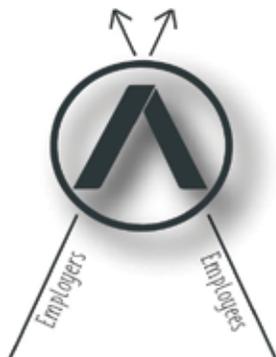
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# May Calendar of Events

Tuesday, May 2

## Employer Internship Training

@Hope College, 141 E 12th St, Holland

West Michigan colleges and universities have teamed up with internship expert, Cindy Brown of Hello West Michigan to provide you with this free training opportunity to help your internship program succeed. This event is ideal for organizations looking to enhance or grow their current internship program.

Time: 8:30-10am

Cost: Free

Friday, May 5

## Professional Lakeshore Latinas Gathering at LAUP Fiesta

@The Shops at Westshore, 12331 James St, Holland

The Professional Lakeshore Latinas mission is fostering relationships and empowering Latinas through advocacy, service, and professional development. Please join us at LAUP's Fiesta and feel free to bring your family and friends.

Time: 5:30-7:30pm

Cost: Free

Tuesday, May 9

## Early Bird Breakfast

@Haworth Inn & Conference Center, 225 College Avenue, Holland

Please join us as we welcome former White House domestic policy adviser Karl Zinsmeister, as he sketches the unappreciated scope of charitable giving, and argues that without it there would be no America as we know it. Arrive at 7am to power network before breakfast.

Time: 7:30-8:30am

Cost: \$20 per Chamber member (\$25 if registered after May 7) / \$35 per non-member

Monday, May 15

## Governmental Affairs Breakfast

@Alpenrose Restaurant, 4 E 8th St, Holland

Access to elected officials is a special Member Benefit for you! Join us for breakfast with our elected state and federal legislators. Arrive at 7:15 am for a brief networking session before the breakfast begins.

Time: 7:30-8:30am

Cost: \$20 per Chamber member (\$25 if registered after May 12) / \$35 per non-member

Tuesday, May 23

## SMART Lunch

@West Coast Chamber of Commerce Learning Lab, 272 E. 8th Street, Holland

Elevate Your Business! Are you looking to take your business to the next level but aren't sure how? At this event, you will take away tips for enhancing your marketing strategy, mitigating risk in your office and more.

Time: 11:30am-1pm

Cost: \$25 members (\$30 if registered after May 15) / \$45 non-members



For a full listing of events, visit [www.westcoastchamber.org/events](http://www.westcoastchamber.org/events).



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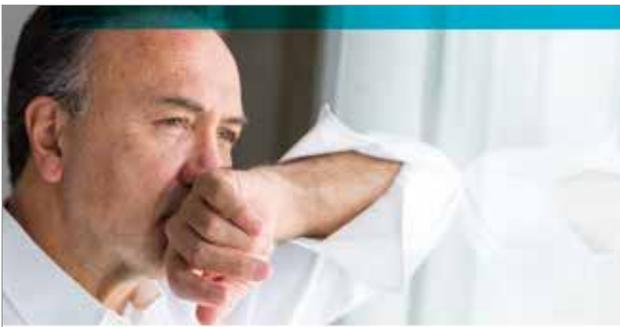
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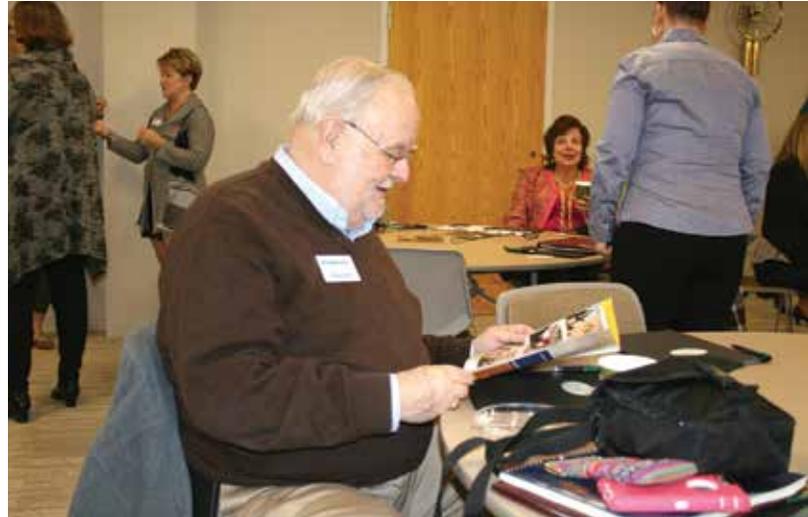
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# Happenings at the Chamber



The competitive spirit was alive and well at the Avoiding Burnout Seminar.



George Waden of Homebodies catches up with the April issue of Connect.



Anne Reilly-Clegg makes a new friend at Leadership!



Ribbon Cutting at Klingman's Furniture.



Smiles for the winning team at the Avoiding Burnout Seminar.



Deborah, Pat and Cheryl really like meeting at Network at Lunch!



Making connections at Network at Lunch!



< Dan VanTil shows off the facility for furry friends at Chow Hound.



Ribbon Cutting at Farm Bureau Insurance / Andy Spears Agency.



< Congratulating Robyn Allison of The Rental Company at the Top Women Owned Business Awards.



Ribbon Cutting at Vista Springs.

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