

Annual Report

January 1-December 31, 2018



LETTER FROM THE CHAMBER PRESIDENT



When I was considering Maplewood as a potential home for the next Kakao storefront, one of the first things I did was check out our Chamber of Commerce. Was it an active group, helping businesses to grow, or was it just a passive organization hosting monthly meetings?

From the moment I cut the ceremonial ribbon to meeting my business neighbors over a beer at my first Mix and Mingle, I experienced a welcoming and energetic vibe and an authentic community of business and community leaders! I hit the ground running and took advantage of as many activities as I could...by getting involved. In

2013, I was honored to be nominated and serve the Chamber as a member of the Board of Directors. Over the last six years, I have had the privilege of working with my fellow Board Members in developing two strategic plans, shaping and growing events like the Taste of Maplewood Street Festival, Christmas Tree Walk, Holiday Punch Card program, and Auction Galas, etc.

While the time investment has been significant, I have reaped the reward in business connections, many of whom I call my friends. I've come to know many community leaders, residents, and business owners — and we've been able to help each other grow our businesses together!

It has been an honor to serve the Chamber over the last 6 years, especially as President of the Board. I look forward to continuing to be involved in the years to come and lending my support to a new generation of leaders taking the helm. I hope it's you!

Sincerely,

Brian Pelletier

QUICK GLANCE

- 196 Chamber Members.
- 7,000+ visitors brought to town with events like the Taste of Maplewood Street Festival and the Christmas Tree Walk.
- 30 Ribbon Cuttings performed welcoming new businesses to town.
- 55 + member events held for the purpose of education, networking, and promoting businesses.
- 300+ businesses directly served by the Chamber.
- 12,000 pounds of electronics kept out of landfills as a result of the Chamber Community Electronic Recycle Drive.

(OVER)

Chamber Board of Directors

Paul Barker
Premier Insurance Source

Christy Byrd
Clarity Street Realty

John Edwards
EZ Web Marketing

Mike Klaus
Forward Fitness

Dio Maranan
Citizens National Bank

Vivian McBride
The Legacy Law Firm

Dana Merritt
Maya Cafe

Brian Pelletier
Kakao Chocolate

Chris Peoples
Pitzman's Company of Surveyors

Jennifer Ridgeway
Edward Jones

Neil Suthar
Foundation Grounds

Ex Officio Members

Marty Corcoran
City of Maplewood

Amy Hamilton
City of Richmond Heights

Karen Hall
Maplewood Richmond Heights
School District

PROGRESS AND GROWTH

- Relocated the Chamber office to a bigger, more visible, and functional work space for staff, volunteers, and members of the Chamber.
- Continued to build resources to ensure organizational growth and sustainability in the future.
- Increased awareness and drove profits to local businesses with the Taste of Maplewood Street Festival, Christmas Tree Walk, and the Shop Local Holiday Punch Card.



MEMBER SUPPORT, EDUCATION, AND ADVOCACY

- Created a catering guide to promote area restaurants and specialty food stores as a top choice for catering and/or venue for party/facility rentals.
- Maintained informative website with weekly updates on Chamber news, Member news, and Community events and happenings.
- Engaged with Chamber members through personal visits and phone calls from the Board, Ambassador Committee, or Staff.



- Promoted and encouraged member to member business transactions via the Chamber Advantage Program. This provided financial incentives and savings when shopping, dining, or utilizing the services of a fellow member.
- Board leaders proactively kept informed on relevant business issues by regularly attending City Council meetings to represent the interests of the business community.
- In addition to the printed business/community directory delivered to all residences in Maplewood and Richmond Heights, a quarterly mailing program directed at new residents was launched to promote and create awareness of the local business community.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP RECOGNITION

- Assisted and/or provided support to local groups and organizations including the MRH Weekend on Wheels Food Pantry, Professional Fire Fighters of Maplewood, Boy Scout Troop 362, and MRH Career Connections. A college scholarship was also awarded to a MRH High School student.
- Provided (5) free outdoor concert events throughout the summer for members of the community to gather and enjoy live entertainment with friends and neighbors.
- Facilitated a Community Recycling Drive that took in 13 pallets of electronics and appliances equaling 12,000 pounds.
- Recognized the efforts and contributions of the Public Works Departments, Police Departments, and Fire Department in Maplewood and Richmond Heights by providing a meal and message of support from the community.
- Recognized leaders serving in our communities: Citizen of the Year-*Bill Kelly (RH)* and *Karen Wood (MW)*, Educator of the Year-*Joe Spinks (MRH)*, Business Person of the Year-*Kay Basta (RH)* and *Anita Vom Ballmoos (MW)*, and the Business of the Year-*Clarity Street Realty*.

