



ERIE COUNTY CHAMBER of COMMERCE

An Affiliated Partner of Greater Sandusky Partnership

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 6TH, 2024



Dear Chamber Members,

My name is Alissa Fisher, and I am eager to serve our Chamber and GSP business community as the Director of Marketing & Creative Services. I hope to take care of your communications needs through newsletter, email, social media, and our Chamber website. I have a background in art and writing and have been working in the economic development and small business space for the last two years as the RISE Coordinator for Erie County Economic Development Corporation, overseeing the RISE program which seeks to support entrepreneurs and small businesses. I have recently moved to Erie County with my husband, Jack, and two dogs, Storm the Husky and Cinnamon the Aussie Shepherd. Please reach out if you have special announcements or upcoming events! I want to make sure your voice is heard. Reach me at afishere@greatersandusky.com.

Sincerely,
Alissa

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Upcoming Events

Thursday, Feb. 8
9:00am

Total Solar Eclipse Meeting

Join Shores & Islands, Ohio and Destination Sandusky for a discussion on the 2024 Eclipse and local community events

[Learn More](#)

Friday, Feb. 9
12pm - 1pm

Webinar: Workplace Safety

Julie Reynolds, from Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation will share programs available to increase workplace safety

[Learn More](#)

Feb. 3 - 10

Cards for Caring

Come to Center Court at the Sandusky Mall to make a Valentine's Day Card or craft for your loved one, then make one for a senior in elderly care.

[Learn More](#)

Friday, Feb. 16
12pm - 1pm

Webinar: Economic Development Tools

Erika Roitblat-Bowers, Project Manager at Team NEO, will be discussing programs offered by JobsOhio

[Learn More](#)

Feb. 16 - 25

Auto Show at the Sandusky Mall

Over 50 new cars on display! Vehicles will be lined up all around the mall for your viewing pleasure!

[Learn More](#)

Thursday, Feb. 22
5:30pm - 7:30pm

Wine & Whiskers

Wine, Dine & Make a Difference - Fundraiser for the Humane Society of Erie County

[Learn More](#)

Friday, Feb. 23
12pm - 1pm

Webinar: Recruiting & Training Employees

Trudy Riddle, Ohio Means Jobs, will share programs and resources to assist you in the recruitment and training of employees.

[Learn More](#)

Friday, Mar. 1
12pm - 1pm

Webinar: Cybersecurity

Frederick Remenyi from Spectrum Enterprises will discuss all ways to protect your business in the digital world.

[Learn More](#)

Mar. 4 - 10

Sandusky Restaurant Week

Dine local and taste the vibrant flavors of our city! Celebrate all week long with your favorite local eats.

[Learn More](#)

To view all events and for more information, please visit:

<https://business.eriecounty.chamber.com/events>

Upcoming Events

Friday, Mar. 7
9:00am

Total Solar Eclipse Meeting

Join Shores & Islands, Ohio and Destination Sandusky to learn how to stay safe during the 2024 Total Solar Eclipse!

[Learn More](#)

Thursday, Mar. 28
9:00am

Total Solar Eclipse Meeting

Join Shores & Islands, Ohio and Destination Sandusky to ask your last-minute questions about the 2024 Solar Eclipse!

[Learn More](#)

Tuesday, Apr. 2
9:00am

Total Solar Eclipse Meeting

Join Shores & Islands, Ohio and Destination Sandusky to ask your last-minute questions about the 2024 Solar Eclipse!

[Learn More](#)

Friday, April 12
8am - 1pm

BGSU Firelands Small Business Symposium

Learn about Connecting Value to Values: Aigning Purpose with Profit at this annual professional development event

[Learn More](#)

To view all events and for more information, please visit:

<https://business.eriecounty.chamber.com/events>



Stories you may have missed...



One business at a time: the remarkable renaissance of downtown Sandusky

DAN ANGELO | WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2024

The decline of downtown Sandusky coincided with the city's loss of manufacturing jobs and population, along with a corresponding rise in development on U.S. 250 in Perkins Township. And it happened despite the city's picturesque waterfront.

It slowly began to change in 2007 when restaurateurs Cesare Avallone and Andrea Crawford took a chance and opened [Zinc Brasserie](#) on Columbus Avenue, near the [Sandusky State Theatre](#).

"Where we came from in New York, there were small river towns that were having these resurgences," Crawford says. "These small cities that were industrial in their day and had gone through this huge depression, but were being renovated.

CRUSH Wine Bar is located at 145 Columbus Ave. "Money was being put into them by people who believed and offered a multitude of things, not just culinary. We'd seen that, so when we came here we wondered how could this not be happening here yet."

[Read the full story at www.thehelmsandusky.com](http://www.thehelmsandusky.com)

WELCOME TO THE TEAM



ALISSA FISHER

Director of Marketing & Creative Services

Alissa recently transitioned to her new position with the GSP from RISE program Coordinator with the Erie County Economic Development Corporation, a GSP affiliated partner. In that role, she assisted local entrepreneurs in finding the resources they needed to start and grow. She has a Bachelor of Arts from Bluffton University where she received Distinguished Scholar in Art & Writing and worked as intern for the University's Public Relations Department.



JEFFREY KERR

Director of Planning & Land Development

Jeffrey R. Kerr is a seasoned urban visionary and accomplished landscape architect and urban planner with over 30 years of experience in the industry. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Landscape Architecture from The Ohio State University and has studied urban planning at the Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University. As a registered Landscape Architect in Ohio and a certified AICP planner, Jeffrey was instrumental in leading various successful regional projects throughout his career.

MEET THE FULL TEAM AT

WWW.GREATERSANDUSKY.COM/GSP-TEAM



Firelands Federal Credit Union Community Impact 2023

BELLEVUE, Ohio – Firelands Federal Credit Union (Firelands FCU) has been contributing to the communities it serves since 1957, and 2023 marked another successful year for giving back.

In 2023, Firelands FCU donated \$131,247 to 143 local organizations, prioritizing financial wellness, education, and resource accessibility. Employees notably contributed \$16,397, underscoring their commitment to supporting the communities they work and live. The funds directly benefited the following organizations:

- The Norwalk Area United Fund
- The Bellevue United Selective Fund
- The United Way of Erie County
- The United Way of North Central Ohio



Brett Montague, President & CEO

In addition to extending financial support, Firelands FCU upheld a strong commitment to community service. In 2023, credit union employees self-reported 1,209 volunteer hours as part of Firelands FCU's volunteer program. Simultaneously, Firelands FCU expanded its Financial Literacy program, Finances 101, by organizing five events that reached nine schools and positively impacted approximately 1,000 students.

"Reflecting on 2023, we're reminded that a single person can spark positive change, and a collective effort can generate significant impact. Looking ahead, our commitment propels us to continue making a difference together, enhancing the well-being of our vibrant communities," said Brett Montague, Firelands FCU President/CEO.

To learn more about how Firelands FCU promotes financial wellness, visit www.firelandsfcu.org.

About Firelands FCU: Firelands Federal Credit Union had its humble beginnings in 1955, when seven Nickel Plate Road employees joined together to form a financial savings club. When officially chartered in 1957, the credit union was open only to railroad employees, but in 1970, opened its membership to include anyone who lives or works in Erie, Huron and Crawford counties. Today, Firelands FCU serves over 35,499 members.

As a member-owned credit union, the earnings on Firelands FCU's business activities are returned to the member-owner in the form of higher earnings on savings, lower rates on loans, and a wide range of related financial services at the lowest possible cost. Learn more by visiting: www.firelandsfcu.org.



Welcome Home Program 2024

BELLEVUE, Ohio – Firelands Federal Credit Union, in cooperation with The Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati (FHLB Cincinnati), is pleased to announce the return of the Welcome Home Program (WHP).

The WHP offers grants to fund reasonable down payment and closing costs for low- and moderate-income homebuyers. In 2023, a total of 23 Firelands FCU members received \$236,000 in grant funds to assist them in securing mortgages.

This year, honorably discharged veterans, active-duty military personnel, reservists, or surviving spouses of service personnel may receive grants up to \$25,000, and all other homebuyers may receive grants up to \$20,000. WHP funds will be available for reservation beginning at 8:00 AM ET on March 1, 2024, and will remain open until all funds have been reserved. Reservations may not be submitted in advance. Funds are offered on a "first-come, first-served" basis.



Angela Grimmer, VP of Mortgage Lending

“The Welcome Home program shines as a beacon of hope for countless aspiring homeowners and we are proud to be an annual participant in this transformative program” said Angela Grimmer, Firelands FCU’s VP of Mortgage Lending.

Details and other WHP requirements are identified online at www.firelandsfcu.org.

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HAVE YOU RECEIVED YOUR FREE ELECTRIC & GAS BILL REVIEW YET?

THEY HAVE...

Kathy Stidham, Blust Motor Service Inc.

Kathy Elseser created an easy-to-understand quote for us. The rates were lower than our current rates. After agreeing to the change Kathy made the process very simple. I would recommend a quote. We felt no pressure to switch energy providers but the cost savings are worth it.



Mary Dearing, HAVAR

It was easy to sign up. All questions and issues were answered quickly. I hope in the long run it will save us some money being a non-profit we need all the help we can get.



Kirstie Mack, Defiance Development and Visitors Bureau

We saved \$650 in the first month of the program. This is a great benefit to our chamber membership!



Marsha Eastwood, Emy's Marketplace

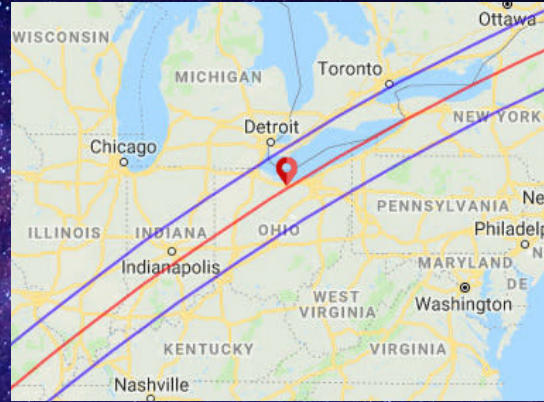
This program has made all the difference in the world, helping my small business survive!



**VISIT CHAMBERENERGYPROGRAM.COM
TO REQUEST YOUR FREE BILL REVIEW TODAY!**

Save the Date!

Solar Eclipse
**SHORES &
ISLANDS**
OHIO **04.08.24**



Learn fun facts, plus stay informed on local events & safety protocols.



Businesses, be prepared for this stellar experience!

On April 8, 2024, the moon will completely block out the sun for a rare total solar eclipse. Due to our global position directly in the path of totality, our communities in and around Shores & Islands Ohio will enjoy incredible, unobstructed viewing time of approximately four minutes. With this exciting event, comes a need to prepare. **Join us Thursday, February 8th, at 9am to learn what community events and programs will be happening that weekend!**

Join the meeting here:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82962717351?pwd=UzbdjCS38TeaZFsW9PzsWNJKqazj8R.1>

Or Scan the code:



Meeting ID: 829 6271 7351
Passcode: 298362



9 a.m.



Thursday,
February 8th



Zoom

What's going on at the Mall?



SWEET DEAL for Valentine's Day



February 1st - 14th

Spend \$100, Get \$15 Mall Gift Card and a Sweet Surprise!

Spend \$100 in **same day** receipts from February 1st through February 14th, at any Sandusky Mall stores and Complex stores (including Pavilion, i.e. Target, Dicks, Old Navy, etc.) and receive a FREE \$15 mall gift card and a sweet surprise. While supplies last. Only one gift card per person, per day.



SMS CRAVINGS GIVEAWAY



February 1st - 29th

Chance to Win a \$250 Mall Gift Card!

It's so easy! Here's how:

1. Sign up for our mobile club by texting "SHOP" to (855) 788-0642.
2. Spend \$10 or more from any Sandusky Mall restaurants: (including Texas Roadhouse, Cracker Barrel, Another Broken Egg, Cheers (no alcohol purchases accepted), Asian Express, Mrs. Fields and Auntie Anne's)
3. Take your receipt and phone showing the SMS message to the Information/Security Booth.

Already an SMS member? No worries! Just take your receipt and phone showing an SMS text message you received between Feb. 1st and Feb. 29th and be entered to win!



CARDS FOR CARING - VALENTINE'S WORKSHOP

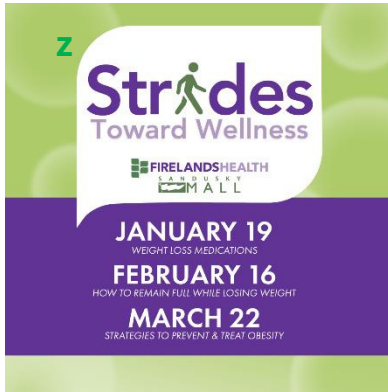


**February 3rd - 10th
Center Court**

Send some love to the elderly this Valentine's Day!

Be the reason someone smiles! Show your support to the community and bring a smile to the elderly this Valentine's Day! Come to Center Court at the Sandusky Mall and let your creative juices flow! Make a Valentine's Day Card or craft for your loved one, then make one for a senior in elderly care. All cards/crafts will be delivered to an elderly care facility on Valentine's Day along with a sweet treat! Supplies provided while they last.





STRIDES TOWARD WELLNESS

Feb. 16th at 9am

Get moving and learn with our monthly doctor-led walks, focusing on a variety of health topics. Sponsored by Firelands Health. The doctor will speak at the beginning and end of the walk and be available for questions throughout. We encourage walkers of all ages and abilities. The topic this month will be "How to remain full while losing weight".



AUTO SHOW at The Sandusky Mall

Feb. 16th - Feb. 25th Open During Mall Hours

Sponsored by the Sandusky Automobile Dealers Association

Firelands Toyota, Firelands Honda, Ken Ganley Buick GMC, Mathews Ford and Foster Chevrolet

Over 50 new cars on display! Vehicles will be lined up all around the mall for your viewing pleasure! Stop out any time during normal mall hours and get an up-close look at all the new models proudly on display from our local dealerships.



NOW LEASING - The Villas at Sandy Creek

126 one-and-two-story townhouse apartments just steps from shopping, dining and entertainment, exclusively at the Sandusky Mall Complex in Sandusky, Ohio. Call today for your personal tour!

419.719.0449

Manager@VillasatSandyCreek.com



Sports Card Show - March/April TBD

Easter Bunny - March 15th - March 30th

Breakfast with the Easter Bunny & Family Fun - March 23rd

Sensory Bunny - March 17th from 9am - 11am

Pet Photos with the Easter Bunny - March 18th & 25th from 4-8pm

Senior Expo - April 19th from 10am - 2pm

Spring Craft and Vendor Show - May 11th from 10am - 6pm

FEBRUARY 3-10 CENTER COURT

SEND SOME LOVE TO THE ELDERLY
THIS VALENTINE'S DAY!

cards for caring

Valentine's Day
Workshop

Make a Valentine's Day Card for your loved one,
then make one for a senior in elderly care. All
cards will be delivered to an elderly care facility
on Valentine's Day, along with a sweet treat!

S A N D U S K Y
 M A L L



SanduskyMall.com • MallGiftCards.net

10am to 9pm, Mon.-Sat. • 11am to 6pm, Sun. • 4314 Milan Road Sandusky, OH 44870 • 419-626-8575

Auto Show

AT THE

Sandusky Mall

FEBRUARY 16-25

**FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
DURING MALL HOURS**

**SPONSORED BY THE
SANDUSKY AUTOMOBILE
DEALERS ASSOCIATION**

FIRELANDS
TOYOTA

FIRELANDS
HONDA

Ken Ganley
BUICK GMC SANDUSKY

Mathews
Ford

FOSTER



S A N D U S K Y
M A L L



SanduskyMall.com • MallGiftCards.net

10am to 9pm, Mon.-Sat. • 11 am to 6pm, Sun. • 4314 Milan Road Sandusky, OH 44870 • 419-626-8575



GOOD FOOD FOR A GREAT CAUSE

15% OF YOUR TICKET
PROCEEDS GOES TOWARDS
Firelands Historical Society

WHEN YOU PRESENT OR MENTION THIS FLYER WHILE ORDERING.

Firelands Historical Society

Feb 15, 2024

From 11 am to 9 pm

Chili's 1845
5200 Milan Rd
Sandusky, Oh

Tax ID#:34-4471422

MENTION OR SHOW THE GIVE BACK FLYER WITH EACH CHECK TO RECEIVE CREDIT FOR THE SALE. SALE CANNOT BE INCLUDED IN DONATION AMOUNT WITH FLYER. OFFER ONLY VALID ON THE DATE AND LOCATION STATED ABOVE. DONATIONS WILL NOT BE GIVEN ON SALES MADE PRIOR TO OR PAST THIS DATE.

WINE & WHISKERS

FUNDRAISER

Feb. 22, 2024
5:30-7:30



\$60

Wine, Dine & make a Difference!

- 🐾 5 3oz wine pours with tasting notes
- 🐾 Small bite pairings from Sweet Potato Catering
- 🐾 Virtual silent auction - closes at 7:00



Purchase tickets online today!
[Humanesocietyoferiecounty.org](https://humanesocietyoferiecounty.org)
Click on event tab or scan QR code



FUNDRAISER LOCATION

Venue
634

634 Columbus Avenue • Sandusky, Ohio



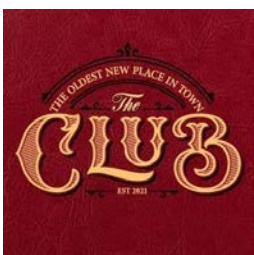
Sandusky

RESTAURANT WEEK

March 4-10, 2024

DINE LOCAL

during this week-long celebration of the vibrant flavors of our city. Savor the taste of Sandusky with specialty Restaurant Week Menu items at each of these great eateries.





FREE Webinar Series Feb - Mar

Erie County Economic
Development

February 9th from 12:00 to 1:00

[Julie Reynolds](#) from [Bureau of Workers' Compensation](#) to discuss the various programs available to business to increase workplace safety including the Safety Grant.

February 16th from 12:00 to 1:00

[Erika Bowers](#) from [TeamNEO](#) to discuss the various programs offered by JobsOhio. Ranging from the Inclusion Grant for small business to Economic Development Grants for large business and everything in between.

February 23rd from 12:00 to 1:00

[Trudy Riddle](#) from [Ohio Means Jobs](#) to discuss programs that assist in recruiting and training employees offered by the State of Ohio such as Job Creation Tax Credits, On the Job Training Dollars, etc.

March 1st from 12:00 to 1:00

[Fred Remenyi](#) from [Charter Communications](#) to discuss various ways companies can protect themselves in the cyber space.

Register now at <https://bit.ly/2024-Webinars>





nami

National Alliance on Mental Illness

**Erie County
Ohio**

NAMI of Erie County hosts TWO free mental health support groups!

- **Family Support Group (For loved ones of individuals with a mental illness)**
- **Connections Support Group (Peer led - for anyone diagnosed)**

Our support groups are held on the **third Thursday of every month at 6 pm**. They give individuals the opportunity to speak about their experiences with mental illness and give/receive support.

Both of our support groups are free of charge with no registration required!

At NAMI of Erie County we respect your privacy and our groups are safe spaces to share.

Follow us on
social media!

 Nami Erie

 nami.in.erie@gmail.com

 419-370-6352



138 E Market Street
Sandusky, Ohio 44870

Dates of our next 6
meetings:

11/16/23

12/21/23

1/18/24

2/15/24

3/21/24

4/18/24





Membership Benefits: Small Business Health Benefits



Greater Cleveland
 Partnership

COSE



MEDICAL MUTUAL®

The Erie County Chamber of Commerce has partnered with the Council of Smaller Enterprises (COSE) and Medical Mutual to offer a new type of health insurance coverage for our member businesses, titled the Multiple Employer Welfare Arrangement (MEWA). This coverage is available for businesses with 50 or fewer employees, including business owners with no employees.

What the COSE Benefit Plan Offers:



Attract & Retain Talent

Ensure your most valuable employees are satisfied with both their job and their compensation package to increase longevity and retention.



Gain Tax Savings

Employers and employees pay less for health insurance when it is purchased at a group level because it is paid for with pre-tax dollars.



Network Access Benefits

Group health plans often have access to large networks of doctors and hospitals compared to an individual plan on the public exchange.



Get Broker Help

A broker can guide you through the process and help you find the best health plan for you and your employees.



One-Stop Shop

Dental, vision, group life, accidental death and dismemberment insurance and short-term disability can be added to your health insurance plan.



Cost Savings

In addition to health insurance, as a Chamber member, you can take advantage of savings on electricity and natural gas, office supplies, workers comp and more.

To learn more or sign up for this benefit package, contact the Erie County Chamber of Commerce at info@eriecountychamber.com



ERIE COUNTY CHAMBER *of* COMMERCE

An Affiliated Partner of **Greater Sandusky Partnership**

604 W. Washington St.
Sandusky, OH 44870
(419) 625-6421
<https://eriecountychamber.com>
info@eriecountychamber.com

Eric Wobser

CEO, Greater Sandusky Partnership
ewobser@greatersandusky.com

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



Follow Us on Social Media!

