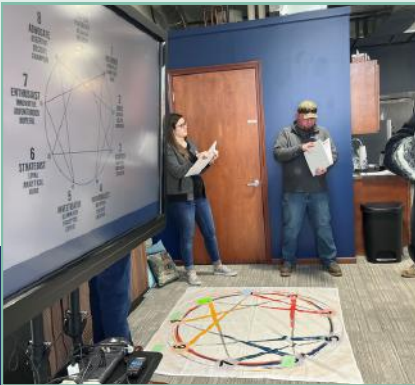


MEDINA MEANS

business

MAGAZINE




THE COMPASS PROGRAM

Find Your Direction,
Strengthen Your Impact



Chart Your Next Move >>> Page 10



feature
Fechko: Partnering
In Progress

resources

Workforce, Advocacy, AI Tech & More!
Call for ATHENA Nominations

ADVOCACY

● CONNECTION ●

GROWTH



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



message:

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 1

THE OFFICAL GREATER MEDINA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PUBLICATION

Connection. Growth. Momentum.

“The future of our business community is built through shared vision, meaningful partnerships, and continued investment in one another.”

As the days grow longer and the energy of spring returns, we're reminded of the power of fresh starts and renewed connections. This season naturally invites us to step forward, re-engage, and strengthen the relationships that make our business community so vibrant.

It's been an exciting and productive start to the year for the Chamber. We're especially proud of the success of our first Compass Program class. Watching participants grow, collaborate, and invest in their professional development has been both inspiring and a testament to the strength of our local talent.

We've also been thrilled to see such strong engagement with our new space. From meetings and workshops to networking events, it's been wonderful to watch businesses take full advantage of the rental opportunities and truly make the space their own. It's quickly becoming a hub for connection, innovation, and collaboration.

As we move further into the year, we look forward to building on this momentum, continuing to support our members, foster meaningful connections, and create opportunities for growth. Thank you for being part of this journey with us.



Jaclyn Ringstmeier

Executive Director
Jaclyn@medinaohchamber.com

T O G E T H E R W E A C H I E V E M O R E



47% of U.S. adults view chamber member businesses more favorably.



64% of adults are more likely to buy from chamber member businesses.



48% are more likely to recommend chamber member businesses.

CONNECT WITH US!

Our Contact Information:

📍 139 N. Court St., Suite A
Medina, OH 44256

📞 (330) 723-8773
✉ office@medinaohchamber.com

🌐 medinachamber.com
🖱 Member Info Hub

✉ Membership & Events Coordinator, Stephanie Mueller: stephanie@medinachamberoh.com

Your Business Resource!

GUIDING CHAMBER MEMBERS TOWARD SUCCESS

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Top 5 Smarter
Spaces



6 Marketing:
Social Media
Made Simple



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USE MEMBER INFO HUB



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- Advertise member deals
- Share member news
- Post job openings

REGISTER FOR EVENTS!



- Member Meetings
- Eggs & Expertise
- Safety Council
- AND MORE!

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**FOR
RENT**

NEED SPACE *for a meeting?*

The Chamber is excited to offer our new professional meeting spaces—perfect for hosting trainings, seminars, client meetings, or small group gatherings. Conveniently located one block from the Historic Medina Square with easy, free parking and first-floor access, our spaces are designed for comfort, flexibility, and productivity.

AMENITIES INCLUDE

- Tables & Chairs
- Wi-Fi
- Flat-Screen TV
- White Board

Availability: Monday through Friday - 7:30am - 5:30pm

Parking: On-site attached lot and nearby City Hall parking garage (free parking)



FIND US JUST NORTH OF THE SQUARE
139 N. Court St., Suite A, Medina
Next to Police Department

CONFERENCE ROOM ✨



A private, closed-door meeting space featuring a distinctive vault door, the Vault provides a quiet, professional setting ideal for board meetings, team collaborations, or client presentations.

*special
pricing for
members!*

TRAINING & SEMINAR SPACE ✨



Our spacious main room offers flexible table configurations to accommodate meetings, workshops, and seminars of all kinds. (Seats up to 50)

Questions? Ready to Book!

We may be the solution you're looking for, based on your specific needs. Call us at (330) 723-8773 or email office@medinaohchamber.com for availability! Find more details & rental rates on MedinaChamber.com ✨





Favorite Top 5 SMARTER SPACES

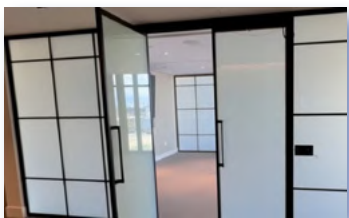
At **The Interior Design Studio**, we're always looking for the latest innovations to make your home both beautiful and functional. With advancements in home decor technology, creating a smarter, more convenient living space has never been easier. From motorized blinds to AI-powered paint tools, here are six products we recommend for elevating your home's design and functionality. Explore how these innovations can transform your space, then give us a ring so we can help you bring them to life!

1. MOTORIZED BLINDS: Imagine controlling your window coverings with just a tap on your phone or a voice command to Alexa. Motorized blinds can also enhance privacy and security by allowing you to set timers to open or close them when you're away from home. You can also position them based on the time of day or temperature. We love these blinds as a child-safe option. No more worrying about the dangling cords!

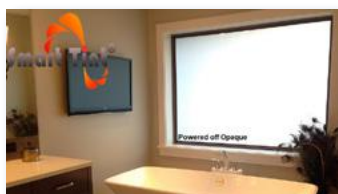


Lafayette's Motorized Blinds offer a seamless blend of style and convenience. Whether you're looking to optimize light control or enhance privacy, these blinds from Lafayette are a game changer for any modern home.

2. PRIVACY SCREENS WITH A FLICK: Elevate your bathroom, front entry, or office with Smart Tint technology. These innovative privacy screens allow you to switch from clear to frosted glass instantly. Frosted privacy screens create a partition that offers privacy while still maintaining an open, airy feel. They're perfect for adding a sleek, high-tech element to your home while maintaining functionality and seclusion.



3. SMART TINT GLASS FOR COMMERCIAL USE: For ultimate versatility, consider Smart Tint Glass. This innovative solution allows you to transform transparent surfaces into frosted ones with the flip of a switch. Ideal for office doors, sidelights, conference rooms, and even schools for additional security. Smart Tint glass is both practical when in use and chic. This glass can go basically anywhere



you can imagine it. The Smart Tint can be applied to glass that is already installed to make it Smart Glass!

4. SMART FURNITURE: Furnish your home with pieces that work as hard as you do. Palliser's Apex Sectional includes built-in lighting, motorized reclining, and charging options for your devices. Universal Furniture's nightstands offer wireless charging built right into the design for the bedroom. These innovative furniture solutions combine technology with the usual products you purchase for a home. Smart furniture is designed to adapt to contemporary lifestyles, offering convenience, without compromising on design.



5. SHERWIN-WILLIAMS COLOR EXPERT APP: Choosing the perfect paint color has never been easier. Sherwin-Williams' AI-powered Color Expert app creates personalized color palettes based on photos of your room. It's a fantastic tool for achieving a cohesive and stylish look throughout your home. The app even suggests complementary colors and design ideas, making it an invaluable resource for any home project.



These innovative products are just the beginning of what's possible in interior design. From integrating high-tech solutions for everyday problems to designing timeless spaces to entertain guests, we're here to bring your vision to life. Whether you're updating a single room or reimagining your entire home, our expert team is ready to make it happen. Ready to start your smart home transformation? Let's Connect at thestudio.ids@gmail.com or call us at (330) 725 - 7623!

Built on creativity, collaboration, and unparalleled service, The Interior Design Studio experience is focused on crafting the ideal environment for each client. With over 40 years of combined design practice, their highly skilled and accredited interior designers are equipped to undertake projects of any size, including both Commercial and Residential.



By **Katie Heinz**
The Interior Design Studio
www.interiordesignstudiooh.com

SOCIAL MEDIA MADE SIMPLE:



Let's Take the Pressure Off

If there's one thing I hear over and over again from small business owners, it's this: "I know I should be showing up on social media...I just don't know what to post (or where to start)." **And honestly? I get it!**

That's exactly what I covered in my Social Media Made Simple workshop for the Medina Chamber—to take all the noise, trends, and pressure surrounding social media and bring it back to what actually works.

Because here's the truth: **social media doesn't have to be complicated to be effective.**

During the workshop, we talked a lot about shifting the goal. It's not about going viral or posting every single day. It's about building trust, staying visible, and creating real connections with your audience over time.



One of the biggest mindset shifts I shared was this: **you don't need to be on every platform.** In fact, trying to be everywhere is usually what leads to burnout. Instead, I always recommend choosing one or two platforms where your audience is already spending time—and showing up there consistently. For many businesses, that's Facebook and Instagram.

Then we tackled the big question: **what do I actually post?** I like to keep it simple with three types of content that work for any business: educate, connect, and promote.

- Educational content positions you as the expert.
- Connection-based content helps people get to know and trust you.
- Promotional content is where you share how people can actually work with you.

The key is balance. If you're only selling, people scroll right past. But when you lead with value and connection, everything else becomes easier.

We also talked about something I'm really passionate about...being human on social media! People don't connect with perfectly polished brands. They connect with people.

Whether you're a small business owner or part of a larger team, **showing the face, personality, and story behind your brand goes a long way.**

And let's talk about consistency, because this is where I see so many people get stuck. You do not need to post every day. For most businesses, two to three times per week is enough. What matters is creating a rhythm you can actually stick to. When you have the capacity or manpower to do more, great!

At the end of the day, success on social media isn't just about likes or followers. It looks like people recognizing your business, engaging with your content, and knowing exactly what to do when they're ready to buy!

SO IF YOU TAKE ANYTHING AWAY FROM THIS, LET IT BE THIS:

**You don't need to do everything.
You just need a simple plan and the consistency to follow through.**

xoxo, Kristen




**MEDINA CHAMBER
EGGS & EXPERTISE WORKSHOP
NEXT: CANVA 101 - JUNE 23RD**



I'm Kristen, the face behind Simply Social Kristen, and I help small business owners & entrepreneurs simplify their approach to social media so it actually supports their business (without taking over their life). I specialize in Facebook & Instagram and love helping people show up online with clarity, confidence, and a plan that feels doable!



**By Kristen McShane
Simply Social Kristen
@simplysocialkristen**



Exploring Ethical Challenges of AI Hiring Tools: Expert Insights

Artificial intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing recruitment, promising faster, smarter hiring decisions. However, this technology also brings significant ethical challenges that HR professionals must address head-on.

Some of the biggest headlines surrounding AI have all come from ethical and compliance issues, including:

- A lack of transparency around how AI systems arrive at the decisions they do
- Accountability concerns when employers want to avoid answering for biases and/or misuse of AI tools
- Data privacy of AI tools that could be white-labeled LLMs (aka ChatGPT with a fancy interface)

The Promise and Peril of AI in Hiring

AI hiring tools can quickly sift through thousands of resumes, schedule interviews, and even conduct initial candidate assessments. Here are some of the efficiency gains: AI is here to help you do a better job. It can handle repetitive tasks a thousand times faster than a human, freeing up time for higher-value work.

However, you should be aware that AI's effectiveness depends heavily on the data it learns from. If your data is dirty or biased, your AI will reflect that bias. It's not magic, it's math finding patterns, and if those patterns are flawed, so are the outcomes. (Vensure Employer Solutions)

How Does AI Reinforce Hiring Biases and Discrimination?

While the future of hiring might seem automated, it's also one filled with extensive biases.

Why? Because most people don't realize that biases slip into everything, even baseline data.

Is There a Lack of Transparency in AI?

Transparency is essential for trust. Many AI tools operate as black boxes. Candidates and even employers don't always know

why a decision was made. We need AI systems that can explain their reasoning clearly.

Ensure Transparency and Explainability

There are several main challenges in achieving large-scale transparency in AI algorithms - including "black box" decision making, proprietary methodology, and adaptive models.

Choose AI tools that provide clear explanations and communicate openly with candidates about AI's role in the process.

Looking Ahead: Ethical AI Hiring as a Competitive Advantage

AI isn't going away. The companies that embrace it responsibly will gain a competitive edge by building fairer, more inclusive workplaces.

Ongoing learning is encouraged: Lean in, read, and experiment with AI tools cautiously. It's not about fearing job loss—it's about upskilling and working smarter.

KEY TAKEAWAY: AI hiring tools hold great promise but come with ethical responsibilities. By addressing bias, transparency, privacy, and maintaining human oversight, HR leaders can harness AI to make smarter, fairer hiring decisions.

For more expert insights on AI and HR innovation, contact Don Hicks, Vensure Employer Solutions and/or follow us on LinkedIn for more content. Ready to take the next step and schedule a no-cost business consultation, request a call at don.hicks@vensure.com, or call (216) 307-6695.

Note: Contributions made possible by Tom Lindsay and Sami Mian, Vensure Employer Solutions



By Don Hicks, Area Vice President
Midwest Region,
Vensure Employer Solutions
www.venture.com

Safety Took the Spotlight

Personal Protective
Equipment Fashion Show



Safety Can Be Practical
and Still ALOT of Fun!

Transformed PPE Education Into An Unforgettable Runway Experience

The runway was ready, the music was pumping, and safety personal protective equipment (PPE) took center stage! Your Medina County Safety Council brought safety to the spotlight with a PPE Fashion Show that turned the catwalk into a runway of hard hats, gloves, goggles, and gear for all kinds of hazards. Members joined in and showed off their best looks, proving that safety can be practical and still a lot of fun. The energy was great, the laughs were plenty, and the creativity was impressive from start to finish.

It is easy to assume OSHA tells us exactly what PPE to use, but OSHA actually expects employers to look at their own workplaces and identify what hazards might require protection. This review should be documented, and while it does not have to be a group effort, involving employees helps with accuracy and buy in. You will need a certification statement that shows who completed the assessment and when it was done. If you need a template for this process, reach out to your BWC Safety Consultant, Cari Gray. Once the hazards are clear, it is all about

choosing the right PPE, training people, ensuring it fits, and making sure it gets used.

When we talk about PPE, we also need to look at where it fits within the hierarchy of controls. This hierarchy is a practical way to make a workplace safer by addressing hazards in order of effectiveness. The hierarchy of controls shows that eliminating, substituting, or reducing hazards through engineering and administrative measures should always come before PPE, because PPE does not remove the hazard and only protects the wearer. When employers follow this approach, PPE becomes the final layer of protection rather than the first solution.

Events like this are what make our council more than a meeting. We are a community, and this group has a way of making safety fun instead of forced. If you were not part of the runway this time, we would love to have you join the excitement and see for yourself.

ANYONE can attend Safety Council meetings, find topics on our website MedinaChamber.com

 WATCH THE
RUNWAY REPLAY



hazard assessment

OSHA expects employers to identify workplace-specific risks.

right PPE

Choose gear based on hazards, fit, and proper training.

final layer

PPE should support the hierarchy of controls — not replace safer systems.

JOIN THE NEXT SAFETY COUNCIL EVENT

Immerse yourself in learning, networking, and enjoyment!

Why A Human Capital Strategy Matters

for Small & Midsize Businesses

For small and midsize businesses, people are the single most important driver of growth. Yet many companies invest in operations, technology, and products while overlooking a core element of long-term success: a defined human capital strategy. Intentional plans to recruit, develop, and retain talent yield stronger performance, lower costs, and greater resilience.

The Financial Impact of Human Capital

Human capital strategy is a financial imperative, not just an HR issue. Research shows organizations with effective people practices outperform peers: the Society for Human Resource Management found such companies can achieve up to a 3.5% higher profit margin and 2.1% higher profit per employee. Gallup reports highly engaged teams deliver 23% greater profitability and 43% lower turnover.

Turnover alone is costly—Work Institute estimates replacing an employee costs about 33% of their annual salary. For a 50-person company, modest turnover can mean tens or hundreds of thousands in losses annually. A clear human capital strategy stabilizes these costs by creating career pathways, better management, and a supportive culture.

Key Challenges for SMBs

- **Talent acquisition:** Smaller firms often lack brand recognition and struggle to compete for skilled workers; 75% of employers report difficulty finding qualified talent.
- **Leadership gaps:** Rapid growth frequently promotes employees into management without training, causing inconsistent leadership and higher turnover—82% of employees say poor leadership makes them consider leaving.
- **Engagement and retention:** SMBs often rely on a few key people, yet only about 32% of employees report being engaged at work.
- **Skills and development:** Industry changes demand new skills,

but over 70% of SMBs lack internal training resources to upskill employees effectively.

Building an Effective Human Capital Strategy

A strategic, focused approach to talent turns people into a predictable engine of performance and resilience. Implementing clear, practical practices ensures you attract the right talent, accelerate capability, and retain the people who drive your growth.

- **Clarify roles and workforce needs:** Map current skills, organizational goals, and future talent requirements to prioritize recruiting and development.
- **Invest in leadership development:** Even basic management training—communication, coaching, accountability—improves team performance and reduces turnover.
- **Improve recruitment:** Use streamlined job postings, structured interviews, and defined hiring criteria. Employee referral programs can cut hiring costs and time-to-fill.
- **Implement performance and development plans:** Set clear expectations, growth pathways, and regular feedback to keep employees motivated and engaged.
- **Focus on culture and experience:** Recognition programs, flexible work options, and transparent communication build loyalty and improve retention.

People aren't a line item—they are the competitive advantage. For SMBs, a deliberate human capital strategy converts talent into durable value: lower costs, higher productivity, and stronger adaptability.

Prioritize your people now, and your business will be better equipped to grow, innovate, and endure.



By Zack Pittman, LIC, President
iCOR
www.icoradvantage.com



It's Time to Find YOUR Direction!

NEW

THE COMPASS PROGRAM

Every career reaches a point where growth matters most. It's when it's time to build new skills, better understand yourself, and make a stronger impact. That's exactly where the Medina Chamber's new Compass Program comes in.

The Compass Program is a professional development experience designed for individuals at every stage of their career. Whether just starting out, stepping into leadership, or looking to sharpen skills, this program creates space to grow in meaningful and practical ways.

What makes Compass Program different is its balance of personal development and real-world application. Participants don't just sit through presentations. They take part in a guided experience built around reflection, conversation, and hands-on learning.



WATCH SESSION TWO RECAP!

*"It's different, new and the best part it fits today's busy professional's schedule."
- Jaclyn, Executive Director*

Through five interactive sessions, participants build skills in self-awareness, communication, and leadership. Participants learn to better understand their work style, communicate with clarity, and navigate challenges with confidence. Local leaders are part of the experience, helping connect each topic to real business situations.

At its core, the Compass Program is about more than professional skills. It's about helping individuals become stronger contributors to their workplace, their teams, and the Medina County community. Participants leave with tools they can use immediately and a clearer sense of direction in their work and personal growth.

The first class is already underway, bringing together professionals from across the community who are investing in their growth. If this sounds like something you've been looking for, keep an eye out. Another opportunity to be part of Compass Program is on the horizon.

who should attend

- New professionals building strong foundations
- Mid-level staff ready for growth
- Experienced contributors wanting to deepen skills
- Team members employers want to invest in

It is open to all who want to reflect, learn, connect, and bring new energy to their work and community.

Discover additional information and details about the upcoming class!
REGISTRATION COMING SOON



Chart Your Next Move!



Ohio Expands E-Verify REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYERS

Certain Ohio construction companies may need to prepare for recent changes to state law that impose new requirements for verifying worker eligibility. The **E-Verify Workforce Integrity Act** took effect on **March 19, 2026**, and requires many non residential construction employers to verify new hires through the federal E-Verify system.

Who Is Affected?

All contractors, subcontractors, and labor brokers, regardless of size, who hire employees to perform work on public or **private non-residential construction projects in Ohio are covered by the Act.**

A non-residential construction project is defined as “the construction or renovation of any building, highway, bridge, utility, or related infrastructure.” The Act does not apply to residential buildings, manufactured or mobile homes, or buildings or structures constructed on agricultural land and used for agricultural purposes.

In practical terms, **unless a company exclusively constructs or renovates houses, apartment buildings, or farming facilities, it is likely covered by the Act.**

What Is Required?

The Act primarily affects hiring and onboarding procedures. Covered employers must take additional compliance steps shortly after hire and ensure required documentation is properly completed and retained. Even unintentional errors may result in penalties.

Beginning March 19, 2026, covered employers must:

- **Register as an E-Verify employer** if not already enrolled
- **In addition to completing Form I-9**, create an E-Verify case for all new hires within the applicable federal timeframes
- **Promptly terminate** any new hires who receive a final non-confirmation result
- **Maintain E-Verify records** for the later of three years from the date of hire or one year from the date of termination
- **Comply with contract provisions**, as state agencies must include E-Verify requirements in applicable contracts

What Is Not Required?

Employers who have not previously used E-Verify are not required to verify existing employees. Federal regulations permit verification only once and generally require it to occur within three days of hire.



Potential Ambiguity

Federal law generally prohibits re-verifying employees after the initial verification at hire. However, the Act appears to require re-verification in certain situations when an employee’s work authorization document—such as a temporary visa—is subject to expiration. Additional guidance is expected, and employers should consult legal counsel if these circumstances arise.

Enforcement and Penalties

The **Ohio Attorney General** may investigate suspected violations through complaints, audits related to public contracts, or referrals from other agencies.

Noncompliant employers may face:

- **Civil fines ranging from \$250 to \$5,000 per violation**
- **Debarment from future state contracts**
- **Suspension or revocation of business licenses**

Employers should review hiring practices, train personnel involved in onboarding, and ensure E-Verify procedures are consistently followed.

About Critchfield

Critchfield, Critchfield & Johnston, Ltd. is a full service law firm serving Medina County and Northeast Ohio for more than 150 years. The firm represents businesses, families, and individuals across a wide range of legal matters, including business and corporate law, employment and labor issues, estate planning, real estate, litigation, and regulatory compliance.



By Lyndsey N. Krownapple, Associate
Critchfield, Critchfield & Johnston, Ltd.
www.cj.com

PARTNERING IN PROGRESS: 38 Years of Building Medina County



By Justine Fechko-Sheehan

Since the company's inception in 1988, the Fechko Family has built a trusted reputation for *craftsmanship, quality, and integrity*. For 38 years, we have been proud to **play a role in the growth and development of Medina County**. Looking ahead, Fechko remains committed to laying the groundwork for continued progress—supporting families, businesses, and future generations while helping shape the community we call home.

PROJECTS THAT MATTER

Fechko Excavating consistently challenges **industry standards and pursues innovative solutions** for our customers. Our work can be found in many of the places that bring our community together. We've helped construct foundations for local schools, including Cobblestone & Reagan Elementary, Wadsworth High School, and the University of Akron Medina Campus—projects that support education and opportunity for thousands of students.

We've also contributed to the **development of well-known commercial and industrial spaces**, including Home Depot, Sandridge Food Corporation, Medina Healthcare facilities, and Acme. These projects have strengthened the local economy and created jobs in our community.



Infrastructure improvements have been another key part of our story. From widening Route 18 to installing roundabouts in Medina and Wadsworth, and completing



improvements on Foote and Lake Road, our team has worked to enhance safety, accessibility, and efficiency for everyone traveling throughout the county.

COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

Beyond project work, Fechko is **deeply committed to supporting the local community**. Supporting the *Medina County Jr. Fair and Livestock Auction* for more than eight years, purchasing large fair animals and sponsoring livestock departments—demonstrating a **strong commitment to youth, agriculture, and community tradition**. This support extends to *Medina County Fair Friends*, creating a one-day event with inclusive experiences at the fair for children with developmental differences, and serving as the Presenting Sponsor of the *Outdoor Sportsman Raffle*, which benefits fairground improvements. The company is also a proud supporter of the *Litchfield Funfest* since 2022 and will continue as a Platinum Sponsor for 2026, with proceeds supporting *Litchfield Ballpark*, the *Medina County SPCA*, and the *Bluecoats of Medina County*.

SAFETY FIRST

At Fechko Excavating, **safety is more than just a policy**. It's a core value. We aim for zero accidents through strong leadership, team accountability, and ongoing training


to keep every job site safe. Working with *Safety Controls Technology (SCT)*, we make sure every project meets safety standards. As active members of the *Medina County Safety Council* and the *BWC Drug-Free Safety Program*, we are dedicated



to protecting our team, clients, and the community. We also take steps to keep residents and neighbors safe near our construction sites. This includes clear signs, secure barriers and fencing, and careful coordination with local authorities to minimize disruptions. By putting safety first, we protect our workers and help keep residents, visitors, and neighborhoods safe. Our efforts reduce risks and support a safer, more vibrant community for everyone.

LOOKING AHEAD

Our work is guided by the core values that define who we are. We lead by example, hold our reputation to the highest standard, and believe excellence is the minimum expectation. We build better together—supporting one another, our partners, and our community, and we’re always working toward what’s next.

To learn more about who we are and what we stand for, we invite you to watch our video highlighting our company. 

 **THANK YOU MEDINA!**

At the heart of it all, Fechko Excavating is honored to contribute to the growth of communities across Medina County. Every job completed represents more than infrastructure—it represents families building futures, neighbors connecting, and communities thriving.

We are grateful to have been part of Medina County’s progress for 38 years and look forward to continuing to build, support, and grow alongside this incredible community.

OUR CORE VALUES

Lead by Example
.....

Working for the Next Project
.....

Excellence is our Minimum Standard
.....

Building Better, Building Together
.....

FIND US ON



**Career Opportunities Go To:
www.Fechko.com**



Protecting the Future of Your Business:

The Role of Buy-Sell and Key Person Insurance

For many small business owners, the day-to-day focus is on growth, operations, and serving customers. But one of the most important aspects of long-term success is often overlooked: planning for the unexpected. Two essential tools that can help safeguard a business's future are buy-sell agreements and key person insurance.

A **buy-sell agreement** is a legal contract that outlines what happens to an owner's share of a business if certain events occur, such as death, disability, or retirement. Without a clear plan in place, ownership transitions can become complicated, emotional, and even contentious—especially in closely held businesses.

For example, if one unexpectedly, their may transfer to a spouse no involvement in the create tension between



partner passes away ownership stake or heir who has business. This can remaining owners

FUTURE

and the new stakeholder. A properly structured buy-sell agreement helps avoid this scenario by establishing who can purchase the departing owner's interest, how the business will be valued, and how the transaction will be funded.

This is where insurance often plays a critical role. Life or disability insurance policies are commonly used to fund buy-sell agreements, ensuring that the remaining owners have the financial resources to purchase the departing owner's share without placing strain on the business's cash flow.

Equally important is **key person insurance**, which protects a business against the financial impact of losing a critical employee or owner. Many small businesses rely heavily on one or two individuals whose knowledge, relationships, or leadership are vital to ongoing operations. The sudden loss of that person can disrupt revenue, delay projects, and create uncertainty for employees and clients.

Key person insurance provides a financial cushion during that transition. The policy is owned by the business and pays out a benefit that can be used to cover lost income, recruit and train a replacement, or stabilize operations while the business adjusts. In some cases, it can even help reassure lenders or investors that the business has a continuity plan in place.

While these strategies are often associated with larger organizations, they are arguably even more critical for small and mid-sized businesses, where fewer people carry greater responsibility. Without a plan, the financial and operational impact of an unexpected event can be significant.

Business owners are encouraged to review their current agreements and risk management strategies regularly. Working with legal and financial professionals can help ensure that plans are properly structured, adequately funded, and aligned with the long-term goals of the business.

Planning for the unexpected may not be the most exciting part of running a business—but it is one of the most important steps in protecting everything you've worked to build.



By Mark Herwick,
Homestead Insurance Agency
www.homesteadins.com

EQUIP YOURSELF TO MAKE YOUR WORKPLACE SAFER



Medina County
SAFETY COUNCIL



No Cost to Join
as a Medina
Chamber Member

Attend Meetings
to Improve Your
Safety Strategies

FIND A SAFETY MEETING TOPIC OF INTEREST - ANYONE CAN ATTEND!



2026-2027 Rebate Program Highlights

- ✓ Earn a 3% rebate on your workers' compensation premium by meeting participation requirements* and registering by September 30, 2026.
- ✓ Eligibility Requirement: Earn a total of 10 credits during the fiscal year. Credits can be earned as follows:
 - Monthly Meetings: 1 credit per month
 - External Training: Up to 2 credits (BWC-approved programs)
 - Onsite Safety Consultation: Up to 2 credits (once every 3 years)

Safety Council Monthly Meeting Details

- WHEN:** Every third Tuesday of the month from 11:30AM - 1:00PM
- WHERE:** Williams on the Lake
(787 Lafayette Rd., Medina, OH)
- COST:** \$24 per person
(includes networking, lunch buffet & presentation)
- AGENDA:** 11:30AM to 12PM - Check-in, Networking, Lunch; 12PM to 1PM - Announcements & Guest Speaker

Registration required by 5PM the Friday before the meeting (no walk-ins allowed).

BWC SAFETY COUNCIL CAN HELP YOU:

- Learn techniques for increasing safety, health, and wellness in your workplace.
- Network and share best practices with other employers in your community.
- Identify resources to assist you in your accident prevention efforts.
- Access risk management information and strategies to reduce your worker's compensation costs.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to improve workplace safety and save on your workers' compensation costs!

Questions?

Contact safety@medinaohchamber.com
to learn how the program works!

Congressional Update from Congressman Max Miller



While the year has been off to a busy start, I remain focused on delivering for our communities with every step I take both in Washington and at home. Now that I have joined the House Foreign Affairs Committee, that work extends to the global stage. I am excited to further serve the interests of Northeast Ohio by fighting for America First foreign policy.

This year, House Republicans promised to cut down on waste, fraud, and abuse in federally funded programs, and that is exactly what I am doing. I introduced the CLOSE Act (Clawing back Lapsed Obligations from State Emergency programs) to rescind leftover COVID-era unemployment funds that can no longer be responsibly distributed and would instead expose taxpayers to massive fraud. The bill responds to ongoing litigation that could force Ohio to distribute nearly \$1 billion in pandemic unemployment assistance years after the programs ended. State records are outdated, many recipients are no longer eligible, and attempting to restart these programs would create an enormous opportunity for criminal fraud networks.

Ensuring fairness in our tax code has also been top of mind. That's why I introduced the Facilitating Useful Loss Limitations to Help Our Unique Service Economy (FULL HOUSE) Act, bipartisan legislation to restore the long-standing rule allowing the 100 percent deduction of gaming losses against winnings. Americans should not be taxed on money they didn't actually take home. By restoring the full deduction for gaming losses, this bill ensures the IRS treats taxpayers honestly and consistently.

Through the Ways and Means Work and Welfare Subcommittee, I introduced the Foster Youth Workforce Opportunity Act to make sure young people aging out of the foster care system aren't left behind. Right now, education and training vouchers are too limited. They don't give these young adults access to the full range of career pathways available in today's economy. My bill expands those vouchers so they can be used for short-term workforce and vocational training programs, apprenticeships, and remedial education, helping foster youth earn the certifications they need for in-demand jobs and build stable, independent futures.

Thank You Congressman For Speaking at the Chamber's April Luncheon!

Returning federal resources to the communities they are intended to support is just as important as policy. That's why I've prioritized Community Project Funding, fighting to bring meaningful investments home to Ohio. In FY 26, I brought back over \$18 million in federal dollars to our district, supporting critical infrastructure and public safety upgrades. For FY 27, I submitted 20 CPF requests to improve roads, purchase new police cruisers and body cameras, and fund equipment that keeps our first responders safe.

Ultimately, these investments make communities safer and fuel economic growth. Improved infrastructure attracts new businesses, strengthens neighborhoods, and creates more opportunities for Ohio families. That's how we build a stronger, more prosperous future for everyone in our district.

My top priority will always be to deliver real results for the people of Ohio's Seventh Congressional District. I will continue working to ensure fairness in the tax code and expand opportunity for those working to build a better future.

Editor's note regarding Congressman Miller:

Congressman Max Miller represents Ohio's Seventh District, which includes Medina and Wayne counties as well as parts of Cuyahoga and Holmes counties. Miller serves on the House Committee on Ways and Means and the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. The Republican sophomore members selected Miller as their representative to the Republican Steering Committee. He is a member of the Republican Study Committee and the Western Caucus. Before joining Congress, Miller spent six years in the Marine Corps Reserves and served in several senior positions for President Donald Trump. Please visit <https://maxmiller.house.gov> for more information.



**Medina Office: (330) 661-6654
By Appointment**



Why More Small Businesses Are Turning to Branded Digital Publications



In today's fast-moving digital environment, small businesses are constantly looking for better ways to communicate their value clearly and professionally. While websites and social media remain essential tools, many business owners are discovering that a single post or webpage often does not provide enough space to fully tell their story.

This is where branded digital publications (and print versions if budget allows), such as mini-magazines, brand story flipbooks, and membership guides, are becoming increasingly valuable.

A branded mini-publication is a professionally designed resource that combines key business information into one easy-to-share format. Rather than relying on scattered messaging across multiple platforms, it brings together your story, services, visuals, team information, customer highlights, and educational content into a cohesive presentation.

For small businesses, this format offers a practical way to organize information that customers frequently need. Service overviews, pricing structures, event schedules, seasonal offerings, testimonials, and frequently asked questions can all be presented in a polished, easy-to-navigate format.

One of the biggest advantages is convenience. Digital flipbooks can be embedded directly on a website, allowing visitors to browse through content in an interactive format that feels more engaging than a standard PDF or flyer. They can also be linked in email campaigns, shared in social media posts, or used as downloadable resources via a Qr code (YES, they are still commonly used and useful) during networking events and presentations.

For membership-based organizations, associations, and clubs, professionally designed membership guides serve a similar purpose. These publications can outline member benefits, annual events, committee information, sponsorship opportunities, and important contact details in a format member are more likely to reference throughout the year.

Beyond convenience, these publications help elevate professionalism. When a business presents information in a structured, visually cohesive format, it strengthens brand credibility and creates a more confident first impression. Pro-

spective customers often make quick decisions based on how clearly a business communicates its expertise and offerings.

Another benefit is longevity. Unlike individual social posts that may only be seen briefly, a digital publication can remain an evergreen resource on a website or in ongoing marketing campaigns. In a digital-first world, businesses need content that goes beyond single posts or one-page flyers.

For businesses looking to strengthen their communication strategy, branded mini-publications offer an informative and highly versatile tool—one that helps educate audiences, improve clarity, and present the business in a more refined and memorable way.

In many cases, it is not about creating more content but about organizing existing content to better serve the audience.



Look at this video of a Membership Packet!

CLICK THIS LINK TO SEE SAMPLE FLIPBOOK FOR A MEMBERSHIP INFO PACKET



By Kelli Wagner, Chief Creative Officer, WJ Creative Studio
kcole@womens-journal.com

ANNUAL GOLF OUTING



DRIVING BUSINESS

forward

JULY 20, 2026

 REGISTER NOW

Join Us for the Greater Medina Chamber Golf Outing!

We're thrilled to invite you for an unforgettable day of golf, networking, and friendly competition. Treat your employees or top customers to an exceptional day at Westfield Country Club — an opportunity to experience the unparalleled golf and exclusivity of one of Northern Ohio's most desirable private clubs. Strengthen relationships, reward hard work, and enjoy a premier course!



DATE: Monday, July 20th

LOCATION: Westfield Country Club

Check-In at 9:30AM & Mimosa or Custom Bloody Mary
Shotgun Start at 11:00AM - Limited Spots Available!

18 Holes of Golf & Cart

Pre-Golf Morning Drink

On-Course Contests & Beer Tickets

Boxed Lunch & Post-Golf Cocktail Hour & Dinner

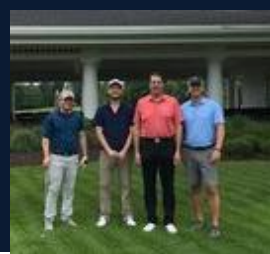
This event sells out every year, so don't wait — Register Today!

MORE DETAILS & TO REGISTER AT MEDINACHAMBER.COM 



Major Outing Sponsor

Email Stephanie for Sponsorship Opportunities: stephanie@medinaohchamber.com



Accepting Nominations



DO YOU KNOW AN INDIVIDUAL WHO...



Supports Women in Achieving their Full Leadership Potential,
Improves the Quality of Life for Others in their Community, and
Demonstrates Excellence in their Profession?

On November 10, 2026 we will present the prestigious International ATHENA Leadership Awards. The Awards were created in 1982 to illuminate individuals who excel in their professions, give back to their communities, and most importantly, actively assist women in achieving their full leadership potential.

PLEASE NOMINATE A NOTABLE PERSON!

Find criteria and nomination form plus a list of past recipient:



WWW.MEDINACHAMBER/ATHENA

DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS: JULY 31, 2026



2025 ATHENA® Leadership
Award Recipient,
Jill Butler

2025 ATHENA® Young Professional
Leadership Award Recipient,
Gabby Pagura

PHOTO CREDIT: BROOKLYN MEDIA, LLC

HELP US IDENTIFY THESE INDIVIDUALS WHO GIVE BACK TO OUR COMMUNITY!

Honoring them fosters an atmosphere of inclusion where all are invited to celebrate. Nominations are now being accepted for these awards to honor exemplary leaders who serve our community in a meaningful way. Let us know who these remarkable individuals may be in Medina County.

Presented By:  **MEDINA
CHAMBER**



Email Kelli for questions on nomination or sponsorship at kcole@womens-journal.com

BRAIN FOG

Is Costing Your Business More Than You Think

For a small business owner, the most critical piece of equipment isn't your laptop, your CRM, or your delivery van—it's your brain. When you are the visionary, the strategist, and the customer service department, your cognitive clarity determines your bottom line.

However, "founder's fatigue" often leads to the dreaded brain fog: that sluggish, scattered feeling where making a simple decision feels like wading through molasses.

Here's how to optimize your neural hardware for peak performance and clear the fog of overload. You do it for your equipment. You deserve (at least) the same level of care.

1. Master the "Context Switching" Fee

Every time you jump from an invoice to a marketing tweet to a customer complaint, your brain pays a switching fee. Research suggests this can lower productivity by up to 40%.

The Fix: Time-Batching. Group similar tasks together. Dedicate Tuesday mornings solely to social media content for the month and Thursday afternoons to invoicing. This allows your brain to stay in one "mode" and reduces the cognitive load of pivoting between these very different tasks.

2. Fuel the Biological Machine

Your brain represents only 2% of your body weight but consumes about 20% of its energy. If you fuel it with erratic caffeine spikes and skipped lunches, it will underperform.

The Fix: Prioritize neuro-protective fats (like Omega-3s) and complex carbohydrates that provide a steady stream of glucose. Most importantly, hydration is non-negotiable; even 2% dehydration can significantly impair tasks that require attention and memory.

3. Implement an "External Brain"

Brain fog is often the result of Open Loop Syndrome—the mental exhaustion caused by trying to remember ten different unfinished tasks. Just like on your computer when you have too many tabs open, performance decreases.

The Fix: Use a Capture System. Whether you use a digital app or a physical notebook, get every "to-do" or concern out of your head the moment it appears. When your brain knows the infor-

mation is recorded safely elsewhere, it can stop using energy on that thought, freeing up bandwidth for deep work.

4. Optimize Your Sleep Architecture

Sleep isn't just downtime. It's when your brain's glymphatic system flushes out metabolic waste (essentially "washing" your brain). For a business owner, a missed hour of sleep is a direct hit to your emotional intelligence and decision-making speed, not to mention it often impacts your personality and desire to do the difficult work.

The Fix: View sleep as a non-negotiable business appointment. Aim for a consistent "wind-down" period 30 minutes before bed where screens are banned.

Quick Tips for Immediate Fog-Clearing

When you hit a wall in the middle of the workday, try these easy pattern interrupters:

- **The 10-Minute Walk** - Increases blood flow to the hippocampus and resets focus.
- **Box Breathing** - Inhale for 4, hold for 4, exhale for 4, hold for 4. Calms the nervous system.
- **Single-Tasking** - Close every tab except the one you're currently working on.
- **Cold Exposure** - A splash of cold water on the face triggers the diving reflex, slowing heart rate and increasing alertness.

You don't need to work more hours. Instead, make the hours you work more effective. By treating your brain with the same respect you give your business finances or equipment, you'll find that the fog lifts, leaving room for the clarity and innovation that started your business in the first place.

*Christina Metcalf is a writer and women's speaker who believes in the power of story. She works with small businesses, chambers of commerce, and business professionals who want to make an impression and grow a loyal customer/member base. She is the author of *The Glinda Principle*, rediscovering the magic within.*

By Christina Metcalf,
 Facebook: @tellyourstorygetemtalking
 Instagram: @christinametcalfauthor
 LinkedIn: @christinagsmith

A Successful Event Reflecting the Growing Popularity



Nearly **300 business leaders, entrepreneurs, and community members** gathered at Foundry Social for an evening centered on connection and visibility. The event began with a **VIP access hour**, giving attendees the opportunity to connect early at the **Business Circuit**, sample from eleven **local food and beverage vendors**, and take part in the **Foundry Faceoff**, including go-karts, duckpin bowling, and Skee ball.

When the event **opened to the public**, the room quickly filled. More than **40 businesses** participated in the sold-out Business Circuit Expo, each one engaging directly with attendees from across the community. Conversations took place throughout the space, with businesses sharing what they do and visitors learning more about the services and resources available right here in Medina.

Social Connect is designed to bring businesses and the community into the same room. The continued growth of the event reflects strong engagement from both, and a shared interest in supporting local businesses.

 **LOOK**
WHAT YOU MISSED!

We're already looking ahead to next year!

 **CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR
FOUNDRY FACEOFF CHAMPIONS:**

- 1st - Gavin Lincione - Fire-Dex
- 2nd - Dan McNamara - Fire-Dex
- 3rd - Keith Miller - One Hour Heating & Cooling Medina

Special thank you to the Chamber member restaurants for providing delicious food and desserts, enhancing the experience for attendees:

Aladdin's · Buehler's Catering ·
Chick-fil-A Medina · City BBQ · Cool Coffee
Dominic's Pizzeria & Italian Restaurant
Gridirne Cookery · Quaker Steak & Lube
· Sincerity Baked Goods · Williams on the Lake · Z's Cream & Bean

THANK YOU TO THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF OUR SPONSORS:

FOUNDRY SOCIAL - Presenting Sponsor & Host Venue
WESTERN RESERVE MASONIC COMMUNITY & TITAN CONSTRUCTION AND REPAIR - Foundry Faceoff Sponsors
CITY OF MEDINA/AMERICA 250 - Community Champion Sponsor

Thank you to our planning committee for their hard work behind-the-scenes:

Laurin Jeffers, Foundry Social · Danielle Litton, National Process Systems · Jimmy Smith, Anderson Biro Staffing · Brittney Esser, Title Select LLC
Sam Pietrangelo, Armstrong · Kimberly Valco, Western Reserve Masonic Community · Alana Carver, Williams on the Lake · Dee Schippel, Romancing the Walls

How Can the CHAMBER HELP YOU?



Maximize your success by taking advantage of exclusive member benefits and discounts on vital business services and operations.

POWERFUL ADVOCACY



We represent your business interests in local, state, and federal policy discussions.

EDUCATION & RESOURCES



Learn to sharpen your skills and stay ahead of industry trends.

MARKETING EXPOSURE



Increase visibility through our member directory, sponsorships, and social media.

NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES



Meet business leaders at various events, including casual meetups, golf outings, and more!

EXCLUSIVE SAVINGS



Enjoy member-only discounts on business services, group health insurance, and more.

[CLICK HERE](#) ✨
[FOR A LIST OF
UPCOMING EVENTS!](#)

SAVINGS PROGRAMS

- ✓ Businesses have the opportunity to utilize exclusive corporate membership discount rates at the Medina Recreation Center. [LEARN MORE HERE](#) ✨
- ✓ Access the MEWA, a self-funded health insurance option through Anthem. [LEARN MORE HERE](#) ✨
- ✓ Join workers' compensation programs through Hunter Consulting. Employers can get Group Experience Rating to pool risk with similar businesses and receive premium discounts set by the Ohio BWC. [LEARN MORE HERE](#) ✨
- ✓ Businesses and homeowners can take advantage of the Chamber Energy and Sustainability Programs to lower energy supply rates and maximize returns on efficiency projects. [LEARN MORE HERE](#) ✨
- ✓ **MEDINA COUNTY SAFETY COUNCIL**
Attend meetings to learn techniques for increasing safety, health, and wellness in your workplace. Earn a 3% rebate on your workers' compensation premium by meeting participation requirements* and registering by September 30, 2026. [LEARN MORE HERE](#) ✨



NEW
ENROLLMENT
9/30/26

Questions?

Contact memberservices@medinaohchamber.com to learn more or to become a member!

CHAMPIONS OF LOCAL BUSINESS: OUR KEY INVESTORS



The Visionaries Helping Shape Medina's Economic Future

These leading organizations are more than members - they're the cornerstone of our mission to advocate, connect, and empower Medina's business community. Our investors provide the strategic support that amplifies our voice in government, creates powerful networking opportunities, and drives initiatives that help local businesses thrive. Their commitment to Medina's prosperity makes our work possible and strengthens our impact.



We have the best members!



Business Brew



Social Connect



Chamber Chat



ATHSMA Awards



Ribbon Cutting



NOT A MEMBER? Consider Joining the Chamber TODAY!

Discover a world of opportunities to get involved with YOUR chamber, there is a perfect fit for everyone! Unleash your potential and be part of a supportive business community. Together, let's shape the future of Greater Medina County. LEARN MORE AT WWW.MEDINACHAMBER.COM