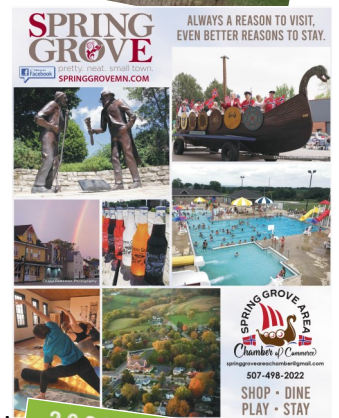


# 2023

## year in review

- Chamber membership continued to increase! 2023 had 44 business/organization members and 9 individual members.
- Planned and coordinated Relief. Recover. Rebuild. Event – A thank you and celebration event of local heroes who helped during the hardware store fire, as well as after the fire helping displaced victims.
- Participated in the Volunteers of the Year section of the Fillmore County Journal with an ad honoring the volunteer fire departments that responded to the hardware store fire.
- Secured another contract with Lamar for the billboard. Three member businesses took advantage of this advertising opportunity.
- Chamber Bucks continued to be available to the general public for purchase to use at local Spring Grove businesses.
- Continued coordination of the Welcome Bag project with the city. Businesses were encouraged to provide promotional items/information for the Welcome Bags that are given out by the city to new residents.
- Placed full-page ads in the Visit Bluff Country Visitor Guide (50,000 copies distributed to more than 1,000 locations in 33 counties in NE Iowa, NW Illinois, Southern Minnesota, and SW Wisconsin) and the Destination Driftless Visitor Guide (more than 10,000 copies distributed regionally). Each ad highlighted Spring Grove through photos and text and encouraged people to visit.
- Coordinated, created, and distributed a map for city-wide garage sales during Syttende Mai.
- Music & Market ran for 20 weeks beginning in mid-May. The Chamber coordinated food vendors/providers and live music entertainment. We worked to recruit farmer's market vendors. Advertising, via Facebook, posters, and grocery stuffers, was completed to encourage people to attend. The Chamber also served a meal one week.
- Conducted four ribbon cuttings for new businesses – Hidden Springs Peony Farm, JR's Tech Repair, Lions Pub, and Red's Liquor.
- Opened the Visitor Center during Syttende Mai, Uffda Fest, and for a time before Christmas. As part of the Visitor Center, we recruited and trained volunteers, purchased items from local businesses to sell in the Visitor Center, and collected informational brochures and pamphlets from local organizations / businesses.
- Hosted two Coffee Connect morning events giving members a chance to connect with other business and organization members in the community while enjoying a complimentary breakfast.
- Hosted two educational Lunch & Learn events. A catered lunch and beverages were provided free of charge to attendees. Topics covered included insurance and information on the many types of insurance available, especially fraud insurance and information and details and information about the major changes in HR laws that took effect Jan. 1, 2024.
- Promoted members' events and happenings by sharing their Facebook posts on our Facebook story.



- Promoted the Stuff the Bus event that was part of the Helping Hands Backpack Giveaway giving the bus a prominent location during Music & Market. The Stuff the Bus / Helping Hands event is an opportunity for people to donate school supplies and backpacks for youth in all of Houston County.
- Compiled a list of vacation housing options for visitors to Spring Grove and posted it on our website for visitors to access when planning a trip to the area.
- Encouraged members to use the Chamber building for meetings, trainings, and other events. Examples of how members used it – a remote work space, a butchering class, and an event gathering spot.
- Member businesses contacted us with job opportunities that were posted on our webpage.
- Coordinated, promoted, and hosted a “Meet Emergency Personnel” night during Music & Market. The night included a special demonstration by the Houston County K-9 unit.
- Created an Every Door Direct Mail piece (“Find all the services you need right here in Spring Grove.”) for our service industry members.
- Hosted a rest stop for the Bicycle Around Minnesota (BAM) ride. Secured a location plus found providers of snacks, beverages, music and sound system, and also a presentation by Spring Grove Soda Pop.
- Took on the large task of coordinating UffDa Fest and all the many activities. Advertising and promotion of the event were done across the surrounding area helping make the event a successful weekend. Advertising included newspaper ad, posters, grocery stuffers, Facebook, and an Every Door Direct Mail piece that was delivered with information on the event as well as a Shop to Win opportunity. A website specifically for Uffda Fest was created to have a platform to include all of the activities and information about the weekend event.
- Created a new holiday event – Brunch & Be Merry. This event included a catered brunch and holiday beverages, an opportunity for local businesses and organizations to sell gift cards, and special coupons from area businesses. There were free activities for children including visiting with Santa and Mrs. Claus as well as photo opportunities with them and at a photo booth. Free holiday movies were also available at the Cinema. It was promoted with radio ads, grocery bag stuffers, Facebook, and posters.
- Holiday flyer created with local businesses’/organizations’ ads promoting “Shop Spring Grove for the Holidays.” It was given to local businesses to distribute to their clientele, distributed at Brunch & Be Merry, and displayed as posters.
- Applied for and was awarded an Explore Minnesota grant that will be used to create our own stand-alone website. Began plans for this website.
- EDA began hosting a monthly co-working space opportunity at the Chamber building.
- Worked together with two of Santa’s elves (Kylie and Tyler Ladsten of Big T’s Painting and Construction) to provide a mailbox for letters to Santa including personalized return letters.



Thank you for your support in 2023!

We look forward to working together in 2024.

