



ChamberWorks

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Wednesday, November 14, 2007
Consumer Alert: Office Supply Scams

Several businesses recently complained to the Office of the Attorney General about invoices they received for office supplies that were never ordered, including paper, toner cartridges and other office products.

Business owners should be aware that scam artists often send fraudulent billing invoices to companies of all sizes, hoping that the accounting department will simply pay the bill. Crooks count on the business's failure to confirm that a purchase order was issued or that goods actually arrived.

Office supply schemes can take multiple forms. In one variation, the scam artist simply sends an invoice without ever delivering any products. Other thieves send merchandise that the business did not order and charge a price that dramatically exceeds what the same supplies would cost at a local retailer. If the invoices are unpaid, scammers try to intimate the businesses with threatening telephone calls and letters.

Most office supply scammers are based in other states, so Texas businesses can only communicate with them by telephone or e-mail. Businesses that attempt to question the invoices are often met with vague statements claiming that "someone" at the company ordered the supplies.

By law, businesses that receive unordered merchandise are under no obligation to pay to return the unwanted products. Generally, these items can be considered a gift. Otherwise, the retailer that sent the merchandise must pay to

retrieve it within a reasonable period of time at no expense to the business. A scam artist will seldom bother to do so.

Businesses should consider alerting all employees about office supply scams, not just those who work in accounting and billing departments. Some scammers are known to dial random numbers throughout a business until they find an unsuspecting employee who will "accept" the unordered merchandise. According to some reports, employees have also been persuaded to fill out sweepstakes forms without realizing that the fine print committed their company to buy unwanted, overpriced supplies.

Businesses that receive fraudulent invoices or unordered supplies, or are subjected to bogus collection threats or any other scam, should file a complaint with the OAG Consumer Protection Division by calling (800) 252-8011 or visiting the OAG Web site at www.oag.state.tx.us.

FOCUS 2008

At the Annual Chamber Reception and Membership Meeting, incoming Chairman Ty Sweeney reviewed the focus for 2008. Below is a brief outline of that focus.

Make Denison more attractive

- Create a new, tangible reason for joining the Chamber
- Increase Chamber member involvement
- Work with other interested organizations

Look for...

- Retreat
- Blog
- Fundraiser in March – Skeet Shoot
- Opportunities to make a difference! Pride in Denison!

Starting in January look for "Words from the Chairman" to keep you up to date on the progress of Focus 2008.

Awards given at the reception went to Nietling Optical - Small Business of the Year, Terex Mining - Large Business of the Year, and Katy Yates - Outstanding Community Service for an Individual. Also recognized were outgoing directors David MacMullen and Jim McClure.

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ARTSMARTS

Shelley Tate Garner

With many artists living and working in our area, almost every medium is represented. However, like numerous US art markets, the “mixed media” craze has hit in our hometown. Almost every local gallery and studio now features at least one “mixed media” artist. For those of us in the art industry, mixed media is not a new trend but one that has grown in mass appeal over the past few years, making it one of the most desirable types of artwork this season.

Mixed media is generally defined in visual art terms as an artwork that makes use of more than one traditional medium or material in its completed form. For example, an artwork that uses watercolor, ink, and collage would be defined as “mixed media”. The term also applies to 3-dimensional art. An example of mixed media sculpture might be an artwork that incorporates steel, wood, and found objects in its final form.

Today, mixed media is expanding into almost every genre of visual art including painting, drawing, photography, sculpture, ceramics, jewelry, and water media. It breaks many traditional boundaries and opens the door for unprecedented experimentation by using unexpected combinations. However, mixed media also offers new challenges to the artist in making sure the experimental combinations maintain integrity over time. If you are considering purchasing a mixed media piece, be sure to ask questions about the mediums used and the technique. Be sure the artist has tested the methodology and has at least a general familiarity with the material combination.

A Spotlight on Denison's Art Community

Mixed media is at the top of the market and doesn't seem to be going anywhere soon. If you are interested in learning more about mixed media, there are many great opportunities locally. Hit downtown's art galleries or visit a private studio of a mixed media artist to view works and learn about the processes involved. Maybe even try your hand at a mixed media project at a local art school? With mixed media the possibilities are endless!

Want to learn more about what is happening in the arts community? You can find a listing of upcoming art events here in the ChamberWorks calendar or by visiting the Chamber of Commerce website. Gallery information and addresses are also available through the Denison Arts Council at www.smalltownbigart.com

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Michelle Moore	Ken Neely
Alice Prikryl	Rachael Robison
Darla Thompson	Donna Thompson
Marilyn Williams (Manager)	

www.ebby.com

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Katy Yates

Industrial Fans

MacroAir Technologies

Michael Moss - Regional Sales Manager
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Suite 115
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903.821.2677
www.macro-air.com

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Camelot Security Cameras & More, LLC


Mark & Shannon Maulding - Owners
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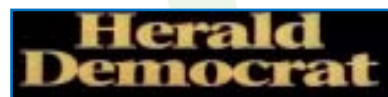


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when we can show who broke in!*

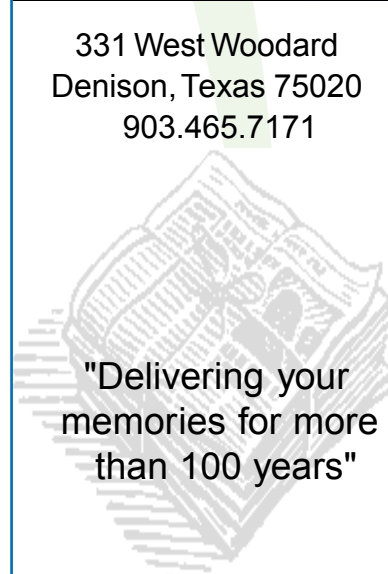
HOLIDAY GIVING

In this season of giving, your Denison Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors encourages all members to support the local food and toy drives that are in progress. Below is a list of several donation opportunities of which the Chamber office has been made aware.

- Nietling Optical Toys for Tots in cooperation with the US Marine Corps Reserve - donations accepted - December 3 - 21 at Denison - 903.465.3815 and Van Alstyne - 903.482.0090 office.
- Denison Helping Hands - accepting toiletries (soap, shampoo, toothpaste) - 903.465.5101
- Home Hospice - Light Up a Life purchase a light on the tree at Midway Mall for a loved one November 27 - December 20. Call 903-868-9315 for more information.
- Denison Lions Club Goodfellows program - food and toys for families - 903.465.5245.
- 8th Annual Strausser Memorial Toy Drive at Jerry's Shell, contact Katy Country for information - 903.463.6800



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"Delivering your memories for more than 100 years"

YELLOW JACKET EDUCATION

Sherry Christie

DHS Career-Tech Programs Win State Honors

Two of the fastest growing programs in the Career and Technology Department at Denison High School now rank among the best in Texas.

Steve Cherry's Criminal Justice Department and Wayne Blount's Agriculture Sciences Program received word from InterLink (Labor Market Information Technical Support) that they are among an elite group named to the organization's list of 2007 Outstanding Career and Technology Programs. Both programs were honored Thursday at an awards luncheon at the Westin DFW in Irving.

"This award speaks volumes about the excellent quality of education that the students in Denison are receiving through their Career and Technology Education department," said a spokesperson for InterLink. "The instructors are to be commended for their commitment to excellence in training students to meet the needs of our immediate and future workforce."

The North Central Texas InterLink alliance promotes partnerships among business, education and government by providing timely, relevant information concerning the education and training needs of employers and employees. Industry

Alliance. "Our hospitals, law enforcement departments, veterinary hospitals and clinics and many other businesses and industries employ a high percentage of students who have graduated from Career and Technology programs at Denison High School and Grayson College. We are extremely fortunate to have area schools who realize the need for these career and tech programs and appreciate the positive impact they have on Denison and Grayson County.

Each semester in Mr. Cherry's Criminal Investigation class, students participate in a "mock crime scene" competition sponsored by the Criminal Justice Program at Grayson County College. The students also take a criminal law test, and each one is allowed to shoot pellet pistols in the "Top Gun" competition.

"During the spring, all of Denison's Forensics students attend the annual "Law Enforcement Forensic Conference at Grayson County College," said Cherry, who coordinates the mega-event. "This conference brings in experts from all over the country who have worked some of the nation's most widely publicized crime scenes, giving students interactive presentations that showcase cutting edge forensic technology. More than 100 law enforcement officers attend this event...it's one of the most respected and heavily attended forensic conferences in the state."

Wayne Blount says his Agriculture Sciences Program has grown drastically over the past several years, with the greatest growth occurring in the Veterinary Assistants Program.

"Students enrolled in our Vet classes actually receive certification as Veterinary Assistants, which allows them to pursue careers in veterinarians' offices, animal shelters and other animal care facilities," said Blount. "The facilities have been greatly improved to include a Vet Tech Lab and a computer classroom for study and research. During the 2006-2007 school year, a record 17 students passed the Level One Certified Veterinary Assistant test and received their Level One Certification."



Criminal Justice teacher Steve Cherry works with students at a mock crime scene.

and education leaders feel that the end result will be a quality workforce, with a globally competitive advantage, that supports the region's economic development activities and goals.

"Our education systems here in Denison, including both Denison High School and Grayson College, do an excellent job of training our young people to enter our workforce and become skilled, productive members of our communities," said Tony Kaii, President of Denison Development

TEAM Banner

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EDUCATION

CONT.

Blount says growth and improvements in the FFA and Ag Mechanics program also got the attention of InterLink judges.



DHS teacher Wayne Blount at work with his veterinary assistant students

“Our students have shown major projects at the Houston Livestock Show, San Antonio Livestock Show and the local county show, winning first and second places in their divisions, and the Reserve Champion Division as well as in Showmanship and in judging contests,” said Blount. “We’ve had 98 students receive their OSHA Certification...another four earned the Hunters Safety Certification, and one received his Boaters Safety Certification.”

Dr. Kevin Matthews, DHS Vice Principal and Vocational Coordinator, said the teachers have done an exceptional job of making the courses interesting, interactive and applicable.

“These courses are hands-on,” said Matthews. “The veterinary students learn to bathe and care for animals as well as administer shots, take temperatures, worm animals...all the basic things that are done in a vet’s office. Many in the Ag Mechanics programs end up with jobs as welders, or with big national companies such as Federal Express. It’s a win-win situation for both students and prospective employers.”

Matthews says the same interactive learning process goes on in Cherry’s Criminal Justice

classes.

“Our Criminal Justice students learn to take fingerprints, collect evidence, dust and secure latent fingerprints from objects, rope off and photograph crime scenes, write reports and interview witnesses. They learn by doing...and it’s an educational process that works very well, as evidenced by the increasing success and growth of these programs and the magnitude of these awards. Our students and teachers are to be congratulated on a job well done.”

TRUE OR FALSE?

The rules and regulations governing an individual who buys a policy are the same as an employer-sponsored plan in the small-group market.

If you answered false, then you are correct! Employers are the primary source of health insurance in the United States today, with more than 160 million people covered by employer-sponsored plans. However, another 17 million Americans—including those who are self-employed, work for companies that don’t offer insurance or are retired but not yet Medicare-eligible—buy their own coverage outside of the group market. These markets are regulated state by state, and in most states, the small-group market and the individual market operate under different sets of rules and regulations. To learn more about specific requirements that affect you, be sure to consult an insurance professional in your state.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER

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30	31					

JANUARY

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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	

- 11/23 - 12/29 5:30p Grayson County Holiday Lights
- 12/5 10a Margin Tax Seminar
- 12/6 6p Denison Christmas Parade
- 12/7 12p Power Networking Lunch
- 12/8 2p Tea with Belle
- 12/8 7p Silver Gala Celebration
- 12/8 7p Holiday Harmony - Red River Valley Chorus
- 12/12 8:30p Denison Leadership Institute ~ Social Agencies
- 12/13 7:45a Power Networking Breakfast
- 12/31 10a Nearly New Years Kickoff for "Triathletes in Training"
- 1/12 5:30p Education After Hours
- 1/25 Denison Parks & Recreation Snowball Tournament
- 1/26 Denison Parks & Recreation Snowball Tournament
- 1/27 Denison Parks & Recreation Snowball Tournament

MERRY CHRISTMAS



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 SHELLEY TATE GARNER · ARTSMARTS
 KATY YATES · NEW MEMBERS

FIND MORE EVENTS
 ON OUR WEBSITE:

www.denisontexas.us