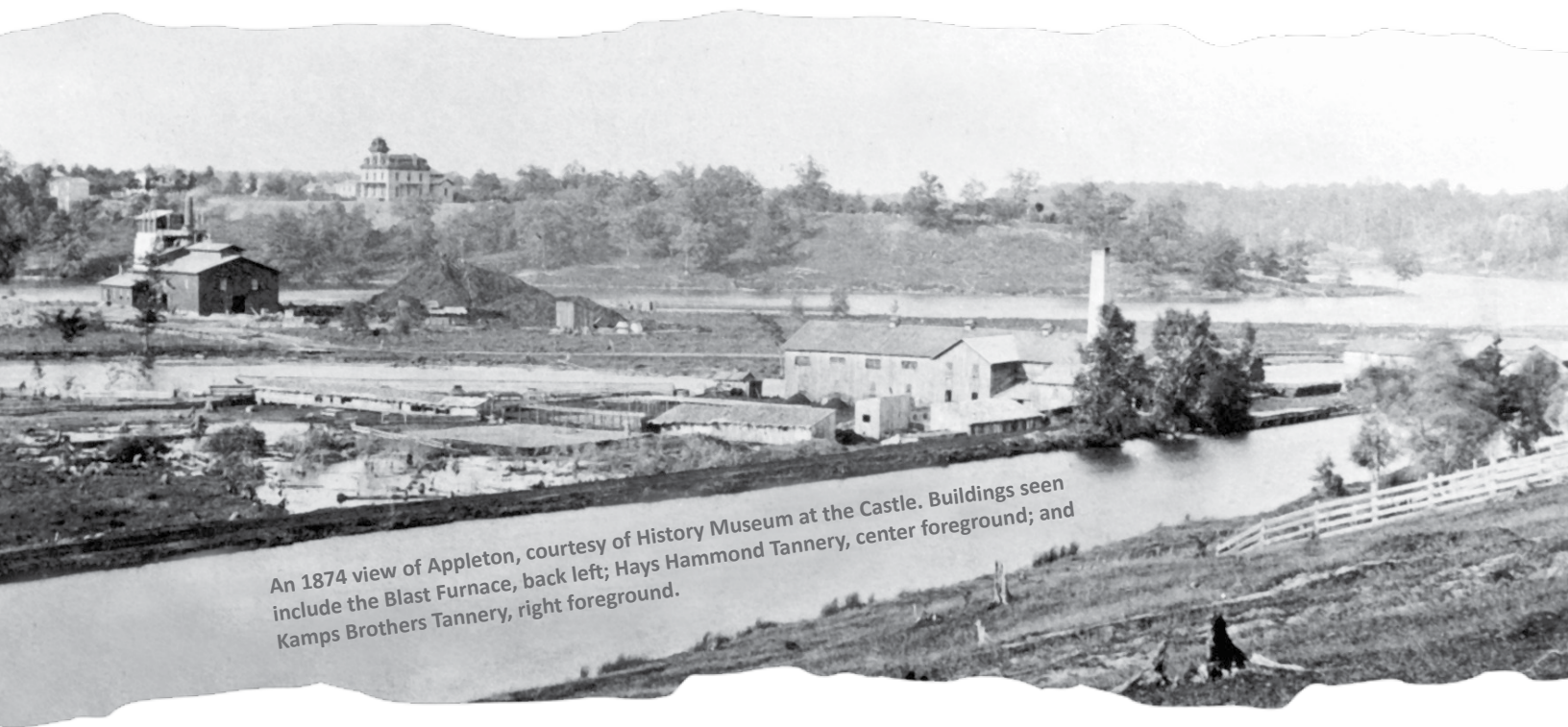


CELEBRATING 150 YEARS

Connecting ... Growing ... Leading



An 1874 view of Appleton, courtesy of History Museum at the Castle. Buildings seen include the Blast Furnace, back left; Hays Hammond Tannery, center foreground; and Kamps Brothers Tannery, right foreground.

For Over 50 Years, Our Legacy Has Been Building Yours.

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Join us as we celebrate 150 years!

It's hard to believe it's been 150 years since the Fox Cities Chamber was founded! A lot has changed in that time, but I'm proud to say the mission of your Chamber has not.

We were founded in 1874 to unite the business community for greater economic impact, and that's still a focus we share today. We serve as a collective voice for our members, to convene the programs and services that help the community thrive.

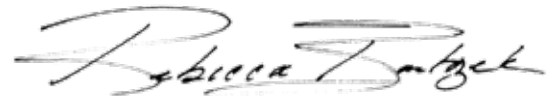
As we celebrate our milestone anniversary in 2024, our goal is to better share the story of the Chamber and Fox Cities business community, which is why we are so excited to create this publication in conjunction with *FOX CITIES Magazine*.

Collecting our history has been a labor of love for us and one that is ongoing, as we continue to dig, research, and talk to others. Please know that this has been done to the best of our ability and excuse any omissions. We continue to delve into our history to learn more and keep adding to our timeline. Let us know if you have any stories or accomplishments to share as well!



Becky Bartoszek, President & CEO
Fox Cities Chamber

Thanks for being a member, friend, and supporter of the Fox Cities Chamber. We are honored to be able to celebrate our past as we look to the future. We pledge to continue to coalesce the voice of business and community, as well as play a key role in the Fox Cities' economic development.



At Miron Construction, we are honored to build the dreams of local businesses and organizations, from healthcare facilities that support health and well-being to schools that promote learning and collaboration. Through these projects, we are able to do our part to sustain a thriving community.

Congratulations to the Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce on 150 years of serving our community, driving economic growth, and creating space for businesses in the area to connect and grow!

Together, we're **Building Excellence**.



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Congrats on 150 years!



Together, we celebrate the strength and achievements of the Fox Cities Chamber over the past 150 years. We look forward to a bright future together.

SECURA is committed to supporting organizations making a difference in our communities.

From your friends at:



1874

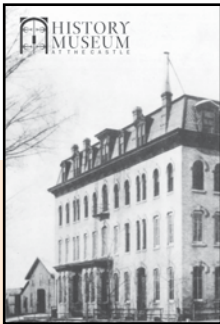
A Chamber of Commerce is born

It was a small clipping in the Sept. 5, 1874 *Appleton Crescent* that started as follows: "For the purpose of bringing into harmony the diversified interests of the business men of this city, to the end that their influence can be more intelligently and unitedly enlisted in behalf of every enterprise tending to advance the common prosperity..."

Though the verbiage was short, it was at the same time powerful, as was the organization it described: the newly-formed Appleton Chamber of Commerce. This was the constitution of the area's first Chamber, created to unite the interests of area businesses so collectively they could grow. The growth continued for 150 years, as the Chamber remained committed to the original intent of its founders all those years ago. Read on to learn about the Chamber's many accomplishments.



Photo courtesy of History Museum at the Castle



1874

A CHAMBER?

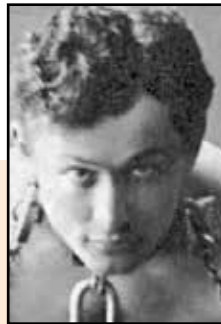
A group of Appleton business leaders met at the Waverly House in August to consider a Chamber for the city.



1874

IT'S OFFICIAL

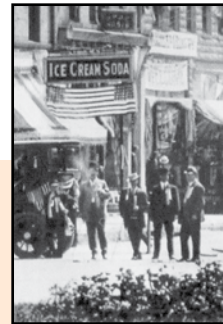
In September, 21 men officially signed the Chamber charter. Membership was \$3 and mayor A.L. Smith was board president.



1874

AT THE TIME

Ulysses S. Grant was president of the U.S., and Harry Houdini was born in Budapest but later moved to Appleton with his family.



1919

MENASHA CHAMBER

The Menasha Chamber of Commerce was organized around this time, just 7 years after the U.S. Chamber formed.

1920

A REBIRTH

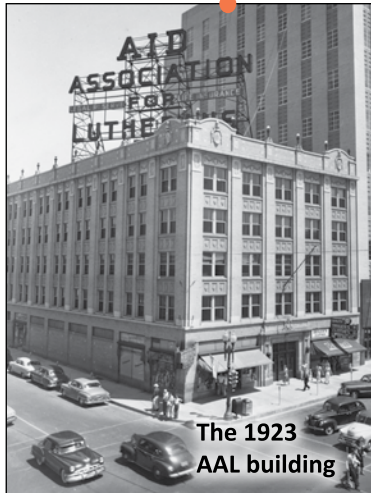
The Appleton Chamber had its ups and downs in its early years, but in 1920 they reorganized amid much fanfare and with great success. On March 29 it was officially relaunched, with 612 enthusiastic members signing up immediately.



1923

LOCATION

Chamber offices were located on the second floor of the old AAL building, on the corner of Superior and College Ave.



The 1923 AAL building

Photo courtesy of History Museum at the Castle.

1920-1940

TRAINS, PLANES AND AUTOS

Always working for businesses, transportation was a huge focus of the Chamber, from securing faster train service to creating a traffic bureau and an aviation committee.

1940

NEENAH CHAMBER

The Neenah Chamber of Commerce was formed by a group of Neenah merchants and businessmen to align the interests of the business community.

1946

NEENAH + MENASHA

The directors of the Neenah Chamber invited Menasha to join with them to become the Neenah- Menasha Chamber of Commerce, a true "twin cities" chamber.



East Wisconsin Ave. looking east from Commercial St., Neenah, in 1940

Photo courtesy of History Museum at the Castle.



Downtown Appleton circa 1920



Octoberfest's first year (1981) and the crowd in 2022 (right).

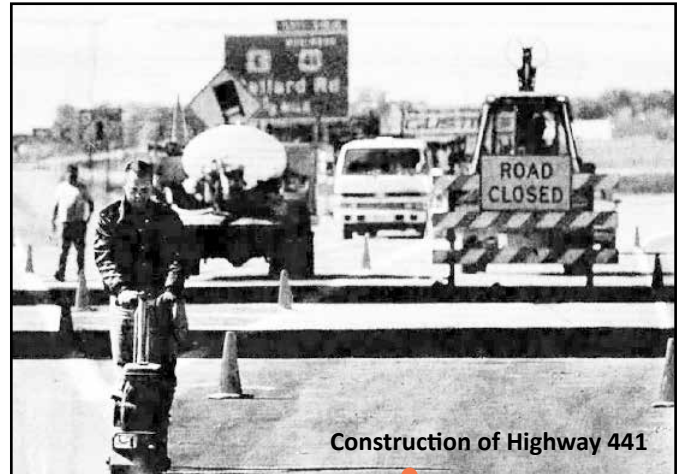


Photo courtesy of History Museum at the Castle.



1965 Rendering of the Outagamie County Airport

Photo courtesy of Appleton International Airport.



Construction of Highway 441

1965

AIRPORT

The Chamber helped advocate for construction of a new airport in Greenville, which opened in 1965 along with the start of Air Wisconsin.

1967

ACTION PLAN

An action plan from this time stated how the Appleton Chamber was instrumental in projects such as the establishment of FVTC, Appleton Redevelopment Authority, and the downtown Appleton rejuvenation project.

1976

CONSOLIDATION

The Appleton and Neenah/Menasha chambers consolidated to become the Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

1981

OCTOBERFEST

Appleton's Octoberfest was held for the first time as a way to promote businesses and showcase downtown Appleton.

1988-93

HIGHWAY 441

The Chamber was instrumental in the planning and development of Highway 441, a beltway designed to relieve traffic on US 41.

1992

DOWNTOWN

The Chamber's Appleton Downtown Business Association morphed into the new Appleton Downtown, Inc., still a thriving business organization today.

2008-17

EXPO CENTER

From a feasibility study in 2008 to opening in 2017, the Chamber was a vital partner in making the Fox Cities Exhibition Center a reality.

2012

REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

The Chamber identified a need for a division focused on economic development and launched the Fox Cities Regional Partnership.

2020

A PANDEMIC

The Chamber coordinated efforts and resources for Fox Cities businesses when an unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic swept through the world.

2022

CONNECT FREE

The Chamber was the first in the state to roll out a free membership level for small businesses who qualify and added nearly 500 new members by year-end 2023.



Photo courtesy of History Museum at the Castle.

(Left) the Chamber annual dinner in 1946 and present day (right).



FOX CITIES CHAMBER
CONNECT | GROW | LEAD

150 YEARS

CONGRATULATIONS
Fox Cities Chamber on 150 years!
Thank you for your leadership and service to the business community.

MENASHA CORPORATION

Congratulations on 150 years!

As a local nonprofit organization, your Fox Cities Performing Arts Center receives and gives community support.

According to the latest Arts and Economic Prosperity Report from Americans for the Arts, an average of **\$17.9 million of economic activity** is generated for the region through events held at the Center each season. We are honored to work together with the Fox Cities Chamber to strengthen our community.

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Where the Arts Come Alive!

Location, location, location!



BELOW: In 1947 they shared office space at 527 W. College Ave.

ABOVE: The Chamber's first offices were on the second floor of the 1923 AAL building.



ABOVE: In 1966 the Chamber moved into a newly constructed facility at 100 E. Washington.



BELOW: They relocated to 227 W. Walnut in 1974. After the 1976 merger they also had an office in Neenah.



ABOVE: The Chamber moved into its current office space at 125 N. Superior St. in 2004.



Photo courtesy of Evans Title.

Over the past 50 years the Chamber's physical offices have changed, but its location has always been close to the heart of business.

In their early years, the Chamber didn't have physical office space, but the Chamber reorganized in 1920 and in 1923 was located on the second floor of the AAL building (on the corner of Superior and College). In 1947 they shared a

building with Production Credit Association at 527 W. College Ave., then in 1966 moved to a newly constructed building at 100 E. Washington. In 1974 the office was relocated to 227 S. Walnut; and in 1976, after the merger with the Chamber of Neenah/Menasha, the newly formed Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce had a second office at 325 W. Commercial St. in Neenah. Then in 2004 the Chamber moved to its now-current location at 125 N. Superior St., which was the former Thrivent Financial Bank.



Thank you, Fox Cities Chamber, for all you do to make our community amazing. Congratulations on 150 years!

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Our pillars = A foundation for success

The Fox Cities Chamber serves as a catalyst to further improve the local economy and quality of life. Today's Chamber has three main pillars of focus -- Connect, Grow, and Lead. Within each area they offer a variety of programs, services, and events for businesses both small and large, and in all industries.

CONNECT

- Networking programs such as Business After Hours, Network Builder, and Morning Mingle
- PULSE Young Professionals Network, with over 600 members and still growing
- Appleton's Oktoberfest/License to Cruise, one of the Midwest's largest community celebrations
- Future Fox Cities Career Expo, to help middle through high school students explore careers with local employers
- Advocacy on all levels for the business community
- Smart Girls Rock! to connect high school girls with local employers and STEM careers
- Media partnerships to showcase members, such as regular appearances on WFRV-TV's Local 5 Live

GROW

- Fox Cities Chamber Regional Partnership, to help advance economic development
- Economic Outlook Lunch, providing an annual update on our local, regional, and national economy



- Professional development such as a Grow Seminar Series and Leader Lab
- Leadership Fox Cities 1.0, 2.0, and Alumni, to help immerse leaders in the Fox Cities and grow their skills
- Employee Friendly Workplace certification that recognizes employers who offer a great work/life balance
- PULSE Champion Designation, which celebrates employers who offer a work environment supportive of young professionals
- Member ribbon cuttings, to celebrate and promote member milestones

LEAD

- Future 15 Awards celebrating the amazing Fox Cities Young Professionals
- Celebrate Awards, to recognize individual lifetime achievements in the community
- CEO Breakfast, for area leaders to share their knowledge, experience, and stories with young professionals
- The Connection business recognition, to celebrate members, partners, and supporters of the Chamber
- An annual economic development magazine to share why the Fox Cities is a great place for business and enhance talent attraction
- Excellence in Education Shining Star Awards honoring Fox Cities educators

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Thank You

A special thank you to these individuals and organizations, who have contributed to our history research:

- History Museum at the Castle
- Bill Brehm
- John Miller
- Christine Williams
- Tim Hoff
- Evans Title
- Appleton Historical Society Facebook Page
- Menasha Historical Society Facebook Page
- Neenah Historical Society Facebook Page

Plus a HUGE shout out to FOX CITIES Magazine, who helped make this publication a reality!



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Scan the QR code to see how the Chamber has evolved over 150 years!

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CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOX CITIES CHAMBER ON YOUR 150TH ANNIVERSARY!

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LEAVE YOUR IMPRINT.

Thank you to our 150th sponsors

Thank you to these employers for stepping up to support the Chamber's 150th anniversary in 2024.

Community First Credit Union

Congratulations to the Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce on 150 years of finding a way to connect our people, communities, organizations, and industries in creative, meaningful, and economically impactful ways.

It's the same philosophy Community First Credit Union started out with almost 50 years ago and practices to this day. At Community First Credit Union, we are owned and operated by the people of this community, for this community. This is why we too are committed to the communities we serve, as a financial institution, as a business partner, and as a civic organization. In addition to providing exceptional financial services, our staff spends countless hours volunteering their time and talents to local organizations that are dedicated to making this a better place to live.



Like the Fox Cities Chamber, making a positive impact on the quality of life in our communities is a crucial part of who we are. Not just because we are owned by the people of this community, but because we live here, too.

We are proud to be a long-standing partner with the Fox Cities Chamber, and we look forward to an even longer future of finding a way together, for the betterment of our 155,000+ member-owners and all who call the Fox Cities home.

Johnson Financial Group

Johnson Financial Group is a privately owned, Wisconsin-based financial services company offering banking and wealth solutions through its subsidiaries, Johnson Bank and Johnson Wealth. For over 50 years our focus has been to help the families, businesses, and communities of Wisconsin build a future we can all be proud of. When you work with us, you get more than an advisor, you get an experienced local partner who cares deeply about creating a financial plan designed to realize your unique goals for the future.



We recently expanded our presence with the acquisition of The Appleton Group, a registered investment advisor. In addition to the acquisition, we plan to open a new office in Appleton in the fall of 2024. We are excited to continue making significant, long-term investments in the communities we serve, creating experiences with our clients in mind.

Each year we contribute \$2 million dollars to deserving Wisconsin-based community partners. Embedded in our culture is a genuine mission to make every community better because we're there. This philosophy is anchored in the philanthropic spirit of the Johnson family. Our team is excited to serve you! For more information, visit www.johnsonfinancialgroup.com.



Miron

Miron Construction Co., Inc. is a fourth-generation, family-owned company with a culture and passion for building dreams. As one of the nation's premier construction firms, the company's 1,700 team members have been providing professional construction services to clients throughout the country for more than a century. Miron is headquartered in Neenah, with yard operations located in Menasha and regional offices in Eau Claire, Green Bay, Madison, Milwaukee, Wausau, Cedar Rapids (Iowa), and Marquette (Michigan).



Miron ranked as the largest Wisconsin-based contractor on ENR Midwest's 2023 Top Contractors List, is a Fox Cities Gold-Certified Employee Friendly Workplace, was recently named one of the 25 fastest growing companies in the region, and is the Official Provider of Construction Services for the Green Bay Packers and Lambeau Field.

Miron is renowned for its community-minded endeavors. In 2022, the company invested more than \$3,000,000 in the community via sponsorships and donations, almost \$800,000 of in-kind services, and employees logged nearly 600 hours of volunteer time. As they've entered new communities, cultivated relationships, and grown as an organization, the team at Miron has an even stronger sense of appreciation for the places they call home, especially the Fox Cities. For more information, visit www.miron-construction.com.

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For nearly 115 years, ThedaCare® has been improving the health and well-being of the communities it serves in Northeast and Central Wisconsin. The organization delivers care to more than 650,000 residents in 17 counties and employs approximately 7,000 providers and team members at 180 points of care, including eight hospitals. As an organization committed to being a leader in population health, team



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-- continued --

members are dedicated to empowering people to live their unique, best lives. ThedaCare is a not-for-profit health system with a level II trauma center, comprehensive cancer treatment, stroke and cardiac programs, as well as primary care. ThedaCare also partners with communities to understand needs, find solutions together, and encourage health awareness and action. In 2024, ThedaCare and Froedtert Health combined to form one system to strengthen local health care and provide high-quality services for treatment and prevention in a coordinated manner.

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Congratulations to the Fox Cities Chamber on a remarkable 150 years of making a difference in the community for businesses of all sizes. Your century and a half of unwavering service has left an enduring impact on the success stories of so many. Here's to another 150 years of fueling prosperity in the Fox Cities.

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Today's Chamber ... By the numbers

<p>NEARLY 1,400</p>	<p>650+</p>	<p>#2</p>	<p>100+</p>	<p>\$11M+</p>
<p>Members of the Fox Cities Chamber This includes over 500 Connect Free small business members.</p>	<p>PULSE YP members Fox Cities Young Professionals are active and thriving!</p>	<p>Size ranking The Fox Cities Chamber is the second largest chamber in the state, behind Milwaukee.</p>	<p>Events in 2023 More than 100 opportunities for networking, leadership, and professional development were offered in 2023.</p>	<p>OF economic impact Octoberfest is the Chamber's largest event that has had more than \$11M economic impact on the Fox Cities through the years.</p>



Travis Froze
Vice President II
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Congratulations

to everyone at the

FOX CITIES CHAMBER

on this momentous milestone.



FOX CITIES CHAMBER

CONNECT | GROW | LEAD

We are proud to work side-by-side to positively impact
the economic growth and quality of life for
everyone in this wonderful community we call home.

Here's to continuing to *find a way*, together!



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