



HOSPITALITY WORKSHOP TO “RAISE THE BAR”

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Three Area Business Development Associations Host Half-Day Event

Alton, Illinois – The Alton Area Business Development Association (AABDA), Alton Regional Convention and Visitors Bureau (ARCVB), and River Bend Growth Association (RBGA) are collaborating to host a hospitality workshop on Tuesday, October 28th at Alton Little Theater. From 7:45 am until Noon, area businesses, non-profit organizations, government staff, and civic leaders are invited to learn from area experts how to “Raise the Bar: Build an Exceptional Brand”. Reservations and a \$10 donation (at the door) are required. You can reserve your seats by going to MarketFreshNetwork.org.

“Successful economic development is not an accident,” explained Ron Tanner, event organizer, entrepreneur, business consultant, and AABDA Board member. “Sure, community and/or economic fluctuations are the result of many factors, but sustained growth is a planned series of events strategically executed for the greater good. This event is an important first step toward that plan.”

For a \$10 donation to cover venue expenses and refreshments, these local organizations, all of whom promote and nurture economic prosperity, have combined their resources to deliver an important message to the community: “If you deliver a memorable positive experience, the community prospers”.

The event features an impressive line-up of business professionals, who will layout the fundamentals for delivering that memorable experience. John and Tracy Sullivan of Buffalo Jump Design in Alton will begin the program at 8am by describing the essence of a brand – a personal brand, company brand, or a community brand. They will be followed at 9am by author, entrepreneur, and hospitality expert, Ralph Pfremmer discussing hospitality as an industry and as a way of delivering an experience. After a networking break, Brett Stawar, President of the Alton CVB, will talk about the market

opportunity and how many people we have an opportunity to serve. To wrap it all up at 11am, Ron Tanner, marketing and sales authority will talk about how to apply all of this knowledge to your situation.

“I hear it every day, and have heard it for 30 years,” exclaimed Tanner. “Why aren’t we growing? There are many reasons, but from my perspective, it boils down to coordinated leadership and a plan. Until we develop a plan, these organizations will provide the leadership and education towards building a community brand that attracts visitors, builds successful businesses, and yields a better quality of life. I think we’ve waited long enough.”

Reservations are made online at MarketFreshNetwork.org. Doors open at Alton Little Theater at 7:15 am, payment is made at that time using cash, check (made payable to AABDA), or credit card.

The collaborating organizations are: Alton Area Business Development Association (AABDA), Alton Regional Convention and Visitors Bureau (ARCVB), and River Bend Growth Association (RBGA). AABDA is the youngest non-profit recently founded to create and run a small business incubator and local food hub called the Great Rivers Market Fresh Network. It is a collaborator with the Southwestern Illinois and St. Louis Regional entrepreneurship ecosystem. The ARCVB is a destination marketing organization serving northern Madison, Jersey and Calhoun Counties. The bureau was established to educate visitors about the many attractions the region has to offer by providing information regarding the area's history, unique landmarks, recreational opportunities, leisure attractions, special events and scenic marvels. The RBGA is both the Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Organization for the communities of the Riverbend. As a Chamber of Commerce, they actively promote activities between our member businesses. As an Economic Development Organization, they work closely with state, regional, county and local officials to develop new employment opportunities. The Growth Association serves the following communities: Alton, Bethalto, East Alton, Elsah, Foster Township, Godfrey, Grafton, Hartford, Roxana, South Roxana, Wood River and Wood River Township.

For more information about this event or the collaborating organizations, contact Ron Tanner at altonabda2012@gmail.com or 618-570-9125.