

Local Business Owners Find Success Through North Alton-Godfrey Business Council

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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ALTON/GODFREY - The North Alton-Godfrey Business Council (NAGBC) invites you to join them for their monthly meeting to learn more about the businesses and volunteerism in the community.

NAGBC's next meeting is scheduled for 7:30 a.m. on Oct. 10, 2023 at OSF St. Anthony's Medical Center in the Perpetual Care Center. The organization has approximately 150 members, and the group meets once a month to network and share information about volunteer opportunities, upcoming events and ways to boost each other's businesses.

"We have fun but yet we do good," said Margaret Freer, owner of [Freer Auto Body](#) in Godfrey. "It's truly a great organization. The members are giving, they're caring, they're supportive... That's what it's all about, helping one another."

Freer has been NAGBC's secretary for 31 years and jokes that President Zeke Jabusch has held his role "since he was born." Throughout her years as a business owner, NAGBC members have supported her and always make a point to help out during the shop's annual Community Christmas and [Christmas in July](#) fundraisers, which benefit local families.

Brian Morris is a newer member of the organization, but he already recognizes how much NAGBC has helped him grow as a business owner. Morris joined in 2015 after purchasing [Shivers Frozen Custard](#) in Godfrey, and he is thankful for the advice and support he's received from his fellow NAGBC members.

"When I first started, I had no idea what I was doing," he said. "I met some people through and a lot of mentors. I learned a lot about business, learned a lot about community and different things like that. You can definitely rely on everyone there."

Now, Freer and Morris are hoping to help more people and businesses through the organization. In addition to networking opportunities and updates on local businesses and ways to support them, NAGBC also works to connect volunteers with groups throughout the community. They're currently looking for volunteers to support the Reach Out And Read (ROAR) program at Alton Community Unit School District #11; find out more at the [district's website](#).

For Morris, this is exactly why he chose to join NAGBC. Individuals can become a member for \$25 and businesses for \$55 a year, a price that allowed Morris to join immediately after purchasing Shivers. He said it goes to show how community-oriented NAGBC is, and he's proud to be a part of it.

"What I like best about this is that they're not about trying to make a bunch of money," he added. "It's about bringing people together — ideas, partnerships, different things like that — and not so much, 'How can we pad our own pockets?' I love it... Everyone there, they're all awesome. It takes everyone doing their own thing to make the community what it is. It's awesome watching them."

Members will meet at 7:30 a.m. on Oct. 10 for their monthly meeting. NAGBC is also introducing their [Benjamin Godfrey Entrepreneurial Speakers series](#) at Lewis and Clark Community College on Nov. 7, 2023. To learn more about NAGBC, their programs and how to join the organization, check out [this article](#) at [RiverBender.com](#) or visit their [official website](#) and [Facebook page](#).