

Bluffton Area Chamber of Commerce



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This newsletter goes to 397 addresses  
and is posted on [www.explorebluffton.com](http://www.explorebluffton.com)  
Current membership at 167

## Fortman Insurance celebrates 1st year in Bluffton

Fortman Insurance Services, Inc., celebrated its first anniversary in Bluffton on July 1. The Ottawa-based company opened a branch office at 115 N. Main St., Bluffton, in the former Book Reviews store front on July 1, 2011.

Fortman's expansion to Bluffton took place due to the expanding number of clients outside Putnam County, according to Catherine Fortman.

"The need to expand to a second location made sense. Because the business had several customers in the Bluffton area, the expansion into Bluffton made sense," she said.

### **F**ortman Insurance opened its Bluffton office on July 1, 2011

Bluffton's proximity to Lima and Findlay was another reason for opening an office here, according to Fortman as the business has several clients in those areas also.

Fortman Insurance entered its second generation as a family business when Jonathan Fortman, son of John and Catherine, joined the company after graduating from Bowling Green State University in 2003.

He is a licensed health and life agent and works with businesses and individuals with medical insurance and ancillary (vision, dental, short and long-term disability) coverages. Jonathan's wife, Branden, is the Bluffton office manager. Another son, Zachary Fortman, joined the company in September 2010. He is a licensed property and casualty agent.

The company has six additional licensed agents. They are Dale Metzger, Laurie Basinger, Kathy Green, Amy Baker, Pam Eickholt and Sam Brauen. Laura Kuhlman, works in customer service.

John Fortman started Fortman Insurance in 1978, and Catherine joined him in 1982. After leasing buildings in downtown Ottawa and in the Westrick Realty Building, Ottawa, in 1991, the company built its current Ottawa office on State Route 65. In 2004, Fortman doubled the size of its building and added on to the original building.

# A chat with chamber member Gordon Diller

## Story by Jake Dowling, summer intern

Heard of the saying, ‘there’s no place like home?’ For Gordon Diller, funeral director of Chiles-Laman Funeral Home, Bluffton, there is no better place for a home than a funeral home.

“It has always been nice to work here,” Diller said. “My home is upstairs and so I have always been able to raise my family in a funeral home.”

Funeral homes that serve as a home are not as common as they used to be, but for Diller, that has meant the world to him.

“Living here, I am more than just a funeral director. I mow the lawn, clean the windows and I am still a part of the community,” he said. “And that is what I have always enjoyed while working here.”

Diller, who has been the funeral director for Chiles-Laman since 1986, said being a funeral director runs in the family. Many relatives have been funeral directors in the past. One of the task with being a funeral director is taking care of prearranged funerals, something that was not popular about 30 years ago.

“Prearranged funerals have always been around,” Diller said. “But I would say in the mid ‘80s, when the laws changed with Medicare, we saw more pre-arranged funerals.”

Diller says there are many advantages of a prearranged funeral for a loved one.

“If people are in a nursing home for some time it uses up all their assets. If they prearrange and prepay for their funeral, we put the money into an insurance fund, so it is no longer an asset for them,” Diller said.

Funerals in themselves are hard to deal with for families and friends, on top of the emotional roller coaster there is the cost and planning on the funeral, which creates more stress, but prearranged funerals help ease the stress a little, maybe even a lot.

“Majority of prearranged funerals are planned when the mom or dad, or a grandparent, are moving into a nursing home or just moving out of the home to go somewhere else. That seems to be the biggest trigger,” Diller said.

Families, or even individuals, who want to plan their funeral, can have everything taken care of at Chiles-Laman.

“We get the information for the people that we would need like the death certificate, the obituary and just kind of get to know who the family is and then we set up everything for the family with a service charge, the merchandise and cash advances,” Diller said.

The service charge pays for the use of services, utilities and equipment at Chiles-Laman. Paying for the cost of the merchandise include a casket, burial vault, or even an urn and

## Chat with Gordon - continued

cash advances would be paying the cemetery to open and close the grave, the minister, organist, things that Chiles-Laman would have to pay for.

“Once we put the money into the fund that we use, the merchandise and our services are guaranteed,” Diller said.

Diller says he sees many benefits in planning for a funeral, even though it may be hard for some, planning for a funeral can go a long way when that time comes.

“A prearranged funeral resolves issues such as, knowing exactly what a person wants for their funeral compared to after they have already died. It also makes the emotional toll a little more soothing because by then, the family does not have to worry about planning for a funeral,” Diller said. “They can focus on other important things once a family member does die.”

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## Bluffton featured by Lima-Allen County Convention Visitors' Bureau

Bluffton is featured in the current e-mailed Lima/Allen County Convention and Visitors' Bureau Community Calendar of Events. The calendar has previously been a mailed piece. It is now available by e-mail.

The calendar lists activities held in Allen County that are open to the public. The Bluffton Area Chamber of Commerce lists several items taking place in Bluffton throughout the year in the Calendar of Events.

A photo attachment below shows the Bluffton feature. Click on image to enlarge. Persons interested in being added to the Calendar of Events e-mail list may contact [cara@lima-allencvb.com](mailto:cara@lima-allencvb.com).

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## BFR offers boot camp style class

BFR Sports & Fitness is offering a boot camp style class. TBC is similar to P90X, Crossfit and Insanity. Each workout is different and under the supervision of a staff trainer. Kettle bells, medicine balls, stability ball, free weights, and body weight will be used. Modification can be made for those who need it.

Classes are Monday -Friday 7:30 a.m. to 8 a.m., Monday and Wednesday 5:30 to 6 p.m., and Tuesday and Thursday 12:10 to 12:40 p.m. Classes are free for BFR members and \$5 for non members or you can purchase an aerobics card.

# Bring your family to July 14 Taste of Bluffton on Vine St.

You might call it the Saturday, July 14, Bluffton Taste of Summer “Italian Heritage Night,” or perhaps it’s an Italian-American summer festival.

Bluffton’s Taste of Summer continues with an evening of food and entertainment at Jeannie’s Restaurant, on Vine Street, from 4 to 9 p.m., Saturday, July 14. The event is part of a summer series sponsored by the Bluffton Area Chamber of Commerce.

The event is family-oriented and is open to the public.

A portion of Vine Street will be blocked off, allowing those who wish to eat outdoors to do so. Persons may also choose to eat inside the restaurant.

With fresh Italian food as Jeannie’s specialty, the menu includes:

- Italian sausage with homemade meatballs
- Fried Calamari
- Pizza
- Cannoli – pastry dessert
- Beverages including espresso and cappuccino

Musical entertainment will be provided by Krysti and Phil Schey of Bluffton.

The idea behind the Taste of Summer is to invite persons to downtown Bluffton in the summer. A final Taste of Summer will take place in August at Common Grounds coffee shop, Bluffton.

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COMPANY BULLETIN BOARD**

**Bluffton Area Chamber of Commerce Board:**

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**Bluffton chamber invites you to:**



# TOSSLEWOT

**4 to 9 p.m. - Saturday, July 14, on Vine St.**

**Italian cuisine from Jeanne's Kitchen  
and music from Krysti and Phil Schey**

- Italian sausage with meatball sandwiches
- Spaghetti with homemade meatballs
  - Fried Calamari • Pizza • Cannoli
- Beverages including espresso & cappuccino