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OCTOBER 2017

"The local support of the restaurant has been tremendous and extremely appreciated."

– Dan Kordiak,
Alma Main Street
Entrepreneur



When you drive through Alma and notice businesses such as the Empire Room Restaurant, Hotel De Ville, Hotel De Ville Grand, Fire & Ice, Lions Building, The Gypsy Wagon and Alma Bakery - they all have one common denominator, Dan Kordiak.

Dan grew up in Minneapolis and began buying apartment buildings when he was only 18 and has owned real estate ever since. They are now being run by his partner, Timothy Anthony. "I have the solid and unending support of Tim who is managing operations in Minneapolis. Without him I couldn't be doing this here." Dan is also a licensed attorney, but said with a chuckle, "Please don't hold that against me as I actually practiced for a very short time, but it does help keep me out of trouble."

Dan is like the energizer bunny - he keeps going and going and going. My fear was that I wouldn't be able to get him to sit long enough to tell me about his commitment to Alma and how it all evolved.

Dan's presence in Alma started in 2005 when he and his partner, Jeff Shilts, were offered the ice cream shop and garden (now known as Fire & Ice) by their Minneapolis neighbor, Mark Saxton, who was born in Alma and still has a home here. The decision of whether or not to buy the ice cream shop and the house across the street (birds were flying through both of them) went on for nine months and five visits to Alma. Finally, after Dan was sure Jeff really wanted to create the garden and run the ice cream shop, he bought them. Jeff added coffee and developed what is now known as the "secret garden." The garden transformation is beautiful and draws many visitors. In 2010 the garden was featured on WPR's Wisconsin Gardener, it was also the year of Jeff's heart attack which led to his death the following April. It was also featured in the BIG RIVER magazine in June 2015. The garden needed much renovation including repair of the walls, but Dan said, "Our guests and visitors love it as much as Jeff did." It really is a world class space complete with bronze sculptures and fountains that were purchased in Bangkok, Thailand on one of their trips there. The small cherubs watching over both the secret garden and the patio garden at the Empire Room were added as a memorial, purchased during a return trip to Bangkok after Jeff's death. Both the hobbit hole and castle wall are still under construction and delights children of all ages.

In 2006 across the street from Fire & Ice, the Hotel de Ville was created out of a then vacant and collapsing house. Over the next several years, the hotel was expanded to six hotel suites in four buildings. Now, with the Hotel de Ville Grand, above the Empire Room Restaurant, he will be adding seven more hotel rooms, to the already 16 beds, some of which are completed and licensed for operation. Dan said "They include some of the best in Western Wisconsin with a king size bed, marble fireplace, abundant river views, high ceiling and six crystal chandeliers with 1000 pieces of crystal lining the main floor and suites. It's obvious that Dan and Jeff worked hard to decorate the suites, and their motto in that regard was, "It isn't done 'til it's overdone." In 2006 Dan also purchased the bakery. He rebuilt, replaced and renovated because he didn't want the town to lose it. The bakery appears much as it did in 1922 when it first opened as a bakery.

Two years later came what he refers to as the "Falcon Cottage" and the "Gypsy Wagon Curiosity Shop" located next to Fire & Ice. He purchased it because he didn't want to see someone tear down the old red shed next to the cottage as it's one of the oldest buildings in Alma. It was built well before 1867 and housed the fur traders who did business with the local American Indian tribes who held summer pow wows across the river. The interior was badly damaged by fire in the late 30's, but he rebuilt it saving every board of the slightly charred exterior. The Gypsy Wagon now houses antiques and as the sign says ... "A little of this and a lot of that." It also functions as a warehouse for the furnishings of the hotel.

A couple of years later Dan purchased and renovated the old Lions Club building on Main Street which now houses Wings Over Alma, the Alma Chamber of Commerce, Senior Nutrition Center and more of the Hotel de Ville.

Dan's favorite part of his business is talking to tourists (he always refers to them as guests) and spreading the story of Alma. He loves that his guests walk Main Street and visit other businesses, which helps everyone.

Last but not least is his biggest undertaking in Alma which started in 2015 ... the Empire Room Restaurant and Hotel de Ville "Grand."

The Empire Room seats fifty, has outdoor seating overlooking Lock & Dam #4 for forty, and also offers a private, "Boom Boom Room" with additional seating up to twenty-eight.

"The chefs' ever changing menu of creations keeps the place singing and he changes the regular menu in spring, summer and fall," said Dan. They offer a Wednesday night prime rib special which has become very popular. On Thursdays, they offer three Chinese entrees for only \$10 along with three \$5 appetizers - dine in or take out. On Sunday, the Empire Room offers a delicious brunch buffet from 10am to 1pm. They have happy hour every Wednesday and Friday from 3pm to 6pm, and Thursdays all day. They are proud to offer a complete cocktail menu with specialty drinks and are expanding their wine list regularly.

Dan said, "I love to decorate and I'm not done. Even though the décor may be a little fancy for Alma, everyone understands you don't have to dress up to eat at the Empire Room. The local support of the restaurant has been tremendous and extremely appreciated."

(Continued on back page)



Tips & Tidbits

When it's time to reorder your checks please check to be sure the address is correct, as well as the other information you have on your checks. Did you know it's recommend to **NOT put identifying information on your checks** such as your drivers license?

If you are not interested in our **on-line banking** service did you know you can have access to some of your account information through our **24-Hour phone banking line**? Call 608-685-2400 or stop in for a brochure, or www.bankofalma.net for an enrollment form for on-line banking.

Do you have some old **Savings Bonds** sitting in your safety deposit box? Be sure to check their issue date to verify if they are still earning interest.

Ready or not – here it comes

Before we know it we'll be starting to think about Christmas. The season for family, get togethers with friends, decorating, baking and no doubt some shopping.

If you have a Bank of Alma Christmas Club the checks will be mailed out in a couple weeks and we'll be ready to open 2018 Christmas Clubs.

As you begin to think about shopping, remember to make a list and a budget and stay within it. Shop the sales, watch for free shipping offers, and check out our local merchants first. Be careful when you're shopping as the holidays are also prime time for thieves, and con artists. Here are a few reminders:

- \$ Use a credit card when possible so you can cancel the purchase if you don't get what you paid for.
- \$ Avoid wire transfers or cashier's checks when dealing with unfamiliar businesses. There might not be a way to recover your money.
- \$ Ask what the refund policy is before you make the purchase.
- \$ Be sure to keep your paper trail. Hang on to your receipts, invoices and confirmations ... just in case.
- \$ Protect your identity. Never give out your personal information to strangers, and use only secure websites when shopping online. If you shop online use your credit card, or bank routing number and account number - not your debit card. We can NEVER return a purchase made with your debit card. No matter what the reason you cannot put a stop payment on anything if you use your debit card, nor can it be returned "unauthorized by customer", but if you give them your checking account number we can return it.

So let us help you next year, open a Bank of Alma Christmas Club and ask us about our automatic transfer program. This will help you better prepare for the 2018 holiday season.

5 Year "Special" CD

\$5,000 Minimum To Open CD

Rate

2.00%

Annual Percentage Yield (APY)

2.00%

Interest will be credited annually. This rate effective as of 9/27/17.
CD will automatically renew at 5 year rate & term.
Penalty for early withdrawal. See us for terms and conditions.

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Fraud against the Elderly continues to rise

Have you ever talked with an older person and heard them say something like, "This getting old is for the birds?"

Unfortunately besides their aches and pains they have something else to be concerned and watchful of. Every year MILLIONS of senior citizens are victimized by financial fraud or theft of money, property or valuable personal information. Did you know the victims usually know the financial abusers? Yes, most often they are family members (68%), with others being friends, neighbors, caregivers, legal guardians, investment advisors or new "friends."

Research indicates that "the typical victim of elder financial abuse is between the ages of 70 and 89, white, female and frail."

Here are some of the recommended suggestions for protecting yourself:

1. **Be careful with powers of attorney.** While powers of attorney (POA) can be very helpful, be careful who you name as your representative. POA's can easily be misused. Typically POA papers are written so that the appointed person can step into your shoes and do everything you can do including taking money from your account and borrowing money in your name.
2. **Closely monitor your credit card statements and bank statements.** This is an on-going job. Be sure you look for unusual small amounts as well as big amounts.
3. **Protect your personal financial information.** We've said it over and over again NEVER EVER give out any information unless you initiate the contact. Even if they try to tell you that you won money. Remember if it sounds too good to be true—that's a red flag so watch out.
4. **If anyone demands you make a decision right now.** Walk away. You have the right to understand the transaction and ask questions....and take your time. Don't ever be pressured or allow anyone to threaten you to do anything.

So please understand that as your banker if we ask a few extra questions we are not prying, we are doing our job in trying to help protect you and your money. It's important that we train our bank personnel to be watchful for signs so we can help in combating elder financial abuse. We can very often sense when something is not right because we know you, your finances and interact directly with you, our customers. Very often we can observe suspicious conduct by you and changes in your banking patterns, unusual transactions, or a new "friend" coming in with you to do your banking.

We know how the banking system works and how hard it is to get your money back once you wire it or purchase a cashier's check. We don't want you to become a victim of financial abuse.

The only ways to get rich:

1. Marry money
2. Inherit money
3. Exploit a unique talent
4. Get exceedingly lucky
5. Either own or lead a successful business
6. Spend less than you make and invest your savings wisely over a long period of time.

As we aim for any of the first 5, if we practice the last one we are probably guaranteed to be rich someday.

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Thank you, farmers!

Bill Bosshard, President



The current economic climate in agriculture is not encouraging. While every farmer has a different cost of production the arrows point down for profitability in virtually all areas of crop and livestock production.

The American farmer is a production machine continually fine tuning his or her skills to produce larger crops. Because of the perishable nature of their product he/she is particularly vulnerable to the vagaries of the market and Mother Nature.

We are extremely fortunate to have an abundant supply of virtually every food type. Whether it is fresh or frozen, conventional or organic, high fat or low fat, GMO or non-GMO, we can find it delivered to super stores or at farmers markets.

Thanks to all those who take the risk to provide us this bounty.

Local Happenings

Alma

We welcome **Bill's Talk of the Town** tavern to 107 N. Main! Bill and Merri have been coming to Alma for the past 30 years to vacation, so they already established their love for Alma. Bill's TOT is open 7-days a week at 11am. Their food is "Chicago Style" with Chicago style hot dogs, Italian beef sandwiches, Italian sausage, brats & combos. Besides three big screen TV's, you can count on fresh popcorn, cold beer, and great staff in their new clean environment. Join them for BINGO every Tuesday night at 7pm. Like them on Facebook. 608-685-3535

New at the Emporium on Main Street in the Spasha Salon & Spa is **Trax Liquor**. They have beer, wine, spritz and ice. Open Monday through Saturday. 608-685-3825

A new business will be opening after the first of the year at 813 N. Main Street. We are pleased to welcome Clive and Yolanda Pace to Alma, who have been working diligently to complete the renovation of their **tax office with attached custom knife, gun sales, restoration and repair shop**. The Pace's said, "Your response has been tremendous and we will endeavor to make sure we live up to both the good wishes and your expectations." This is not a new venture as they have tax clients from Florida to Hawaii, most of whom have been with them since 2002, so they are available right now for your tax needs or questions. Or if you need to repair or restore your grandfathers old rifle, give them a call 702-210-2511 or email clve@taxvantage.org

I'm not sure if this is her last project but, owner Jerri Schreiber of the **Alma Hotel** is now working on the exterior of the building. She said, "I'm also working on changing the menu by bringing back some old favorites like roast beef and mashed potatoes, as well as adding some new items, including scoop ice cream." Thanks Push -- looking good! Facebook or call 608-685-3380

Nelson:

Nelson is excited for the new **Flea Market**, located on Highway 35 next to Beth's Twin Bluff Café and Forget Me Not Gifts. Every Saturday from 9am-5pm until weather gets too chilly, but will restart again in spring 2018. Call Beth's to participate or for questions 715-673-4040.

Pepin

Now you can ride your horse to Stockholm and have a hitching post to tie them up while you shop at **Antique Future** for art, furniture, jewelry and gifts. They will also be offering Christmas trees and greenery this holiday season. On Facebook or www.AF-experience.com

We're happy to announce another new shop in Stockholm, **IVRY**, which offers art, gifts, fashion and décor. You will find one-of-a-kind items, handcrafted by female artisans, such as wearable art, textiles, bath and beauty, purses, pottery and more! Located above Bogus Creek Bakery. Open Thursday-Monday. 715-619-1555

A time capsule of unusual artifacts, **Limbo Records & Rarities** in Stockholm is a trip down memory lane with rare and collectible used records, music related items, posters, antiques, art, vintage and locally handmade clothing plus many other truly unusual gifts and consignments. Open Thursday-Sunday. 507-213-3343

Wabasha

Great news for all locals is that the new **St. Elizabeth's Community Clinic** is now open and taking appointments. Open Monday-Friday 8am-5pm. 651-565-5600

We wish our best to **Perry Dental** for the expansion of another office; besides their Wabasha and Eyota locations they are opening in Lake City. Dr. Phil's daughter Ava and her fiancée Joe Line will be participating dentists. For more information visit www.perrydental.com

A new pharmacy opened - **Eagle Point Pharmacy** opened at 160 W. Main Street. Kellogg native Lori (Edelbach) Passe is the owner and pharmacist and her sister Cindy Edelbach is the manager and pharmacy technician. Open Monday-Friday 8:30am-5pm and Saturday 9am-1pm. 651-560-4355 for more information and orders. Congratulations!

Employee News:

We are pleased to welcome our two newest Personal Bankers to our Alma office. **Julia Birtzer** lives in Buffalo City and in her free time she enjoys hunting, fishing and spending time with her "little family of fur babies." Julia said "I love spending time on the Mississippi or in Cream with my two beautiful nieces, sister and dad on the farm."

Nature Jensen resides in Minnesota and in her spare time enjoys being outdoors and staying active with her 2- year-old son, or spending time at her local gym. She said, "I'm enjoying my new position and getting to know the customers on a first name basis."

We are also happy to have **Randy Durgin** join our team in Alma as our Credit Analyst. Randy presently resides in Plainview and loves to do anything outdoors. Camping, fishing and hunting are some of his favorites; but also enjoys cross country skiing, bowling and golfing. Randy said, "I look forward to meeting the people of the Alma community."

Please stop in and say hello to Julia, Nature and Randy and welcome them to Alma!

We bid farewell to **Mary Hager** in May, who worked at our Wabasha office. We wish her a happy and relaxing retirement. She was a joy to work with.



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Estimating your Retirement Income Needs

Tim Wuebben & Brian Harris, SagePoint Financial, Inc.

You know how important it is to plan for your retirement, but where do you begin? One of your first steps should be to estimate how much income you'll need to fund your retirement. That's not as easy as it sounds, because retirement planning is not an exact science. Your specific needs depend on your goals and many other factors.

It's common to discuss desired annual retirement income as a percentage of your current income. Depending on who you're talking to, that percentage could be anywhere from 60 to 90 percent, or even more. The appeal of this approach lies in its simplicity. The problem with this approach is that it doesn't account for your specific situation. If you intend to travel extensively in retirement, for example, you might easily need 100 percent (or more) of your current income to get by. It's fine to use a percentage of your current income as a benchmark, but it's worth going through all of your current expenses in detail, and really thinking about how those expenses will change over time as you transition into retirement.

Don't forget that the cost of living will go up over time. The average annual rate of inflation over the past 20 years has been approximately 2.2 percent. (Source: Consumer price index (CPI-U) data published by the U.S. Department of Labor, January 2016.) And keep in mind that your retirement expenses may change from year to year. Finally, have a financial professional help you with your estimates to make sure they're as accurate and realistic as possible.

The age at which you retire isn't the only factor that determines how long you'll be retired. The other important factor is your lifespan. We all hope to live to an old age, but a longer life means that you'll have even more years of retirement to fund. You may even run the risk of outliving your savings and other income sources. There's no way to predict how long you'll actually live, but with life expectancies on the rise, it's probably best to assume you'll live longer than you expect.

If you're lucky, your expected income sources will be more than enough to fund even a lengthy retirement. But what if it looks like you'll come up short? Don't panic--there are probably steps that you can take to bridge the gap. A financial professional can help you figure out the best ways to do that.

We welcome the opportunity to review your current situation and address any questions or concerns – 800-299-9079, 3626 East Ave. South, La Crosse, WI 54601- and are happy to visit with you in Alma as well.

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7 Days A Week!



Dan Kordiak

(Continued from front page)

When I asked what's next, his first reply was, "Nothing." But then said, "Well, I am going to develop parking across from the Empire Room, put in wrought iron fencing and a daylily garden ... and maybe seating with drinks on a patio bar, but that's in the distant future."

Editor's Note: Born & raised in Alma I'm thankful for people like Dan who are willing to make a financial commitment to our town. He is giving people a reason to cross the river and come down to Alma, as well as offering us locals an option. He promotes Alma not only with his businesses but through local festivals such as Swiss Heritage Days. He understands the importance of local support and is very appreciative. We are fortunate to have Dan and may he keep going & going & going! Hoteldelvillealma.com or call 612-423-3653, Empire Room 608-685-9669.

Up-coming 55 & Better* Events

- Nov. 14 - Plymouth Playhouse "The Looney Lutherans in "Hold the Lutefisk"
 - Dec. 10 - Christmas at the Palace Theater - WI Dells & the Rotary Lights in LaCrosse
 - Jan. 31 - Chanhassen Dinner Theater "Sister Act"
- *55 Members & non-members welcome. Details are on our website & in our bank lobby as they become available. Money due when you sign up. Dates/events may change without notice.



Bank of Alma: Your one-stop financial center

Give Us A Call

Alma: 608-685-4461 Nelson: 715-673-4351
Pepin: 715-442-2311 Wabasha: 651-565-2627

— Money Matters —

If you have any questions or comments about the Bank of Alma's MONEY MATTERS, or suggestions for future articles, we'd enjoy hearing from you. Editor reserves the right to edit all articles for length and content.

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