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Moody on The Market

Pat Moody

# On the cusp of 100 years, **Monte Package Company** invests in new headquarters

Operating a few months shy of a century, Monte Package Company is planning to cut the ribbon next month on its brand-new corporate headquarters in Riverside. As a modern office structure, it's what company leaders describe as a sensible, overdue, and two-million-dollar investment. For the region, however, it signals a clear and enduring commitment to Southwest Michigan.

On its face, the new building represents the evolution of the company and allows the office team to move out of an endearing-but-somewhat-dated brick shipping depot to work in a more open and collaborative environment. Built for expansion, the new 6,500 square foot facility is bright with natural light, tall ceilings, modern amenities, and supported by the hidden infrastructure of the latest available technology.

Sam Monte, Director of Sales and Operations and fourth generation from the company's founding, said the team had been thinking about a new headquarters for some time. He said they started getting serious about constructing a new corporate office building three or four years ago.

We've been based here in Riverside since our founding in 1925. Enough additions and renovations went on in the existing office where we were sort of maxed out and we didn't have any more room to go left or right or up. So, we were able to pull together this plan to build our new corporate office headquarters that serves our three facilities from Michigan to Florida for all our employees here locally."

Monte said in 2022, the planning started with initial designs, size and layout concepts, and carefully reviewing what pain points the new building might solve.

We didn't have a good space to onboard new employees. We didn't have a space to have a meeting with more than three people, where people four and five would be standing room only. We didn't have a space for people to sit at a table and have lunch. It wasn't so much that we needed to double the

Continued on page 18



3 great ways you can get involved in our community

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Debbie Ramirez Volunteer Engagement Director, United Way of Southwest Michigan

Hi Southwest Michigan! I'm Debbie Ramirez, the Volunteer Engagement Director for United Way of Southwest Michigan with three great ways you can get involved in our community.

ICE

Rake a Difference Last Call for Volunteer Teams to help senior citizens through Rake a Difference,

United Way of Southwest Michigan's largest annual event. On November 14th, more than a thousand local volunteers will rake yards and clean gutters for seniors aged 60+ who cannot rake their yards themselves nor afford to pay someone to complete the yardwork for them.

Continued on page 2

**HEATING - COOLING - I DAY BATHROOMS - HANDYMAN - WATER HEATERS** 

# **Inserts & Promotions**

• Bronson

**Breast Cancer Awareness** 

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- Martin's Super Market
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Inserts may vary by zip code

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## Ramirez Continued from cover

Each year, teams from local businesses, corporations, organizations and schools take one day to participate in the event which is in its 14th year. More than 300 seniors have requested assistance this year, and United Way needs many more teams to sign up so that we can help them all.

While the event takes place across three counties, teams can choose which communities they are willing to rake in. They can also choose how long they want to rake and whether they would be willing to clean gutters. The deadline for volunteers to register for Rake a Difference is Friday, October 18th. More information about the event, including key dates, frequently asked questions, stepby-step volunteer registration videos, and volunteer registration links by county can be found at uwsm.org/rake-a-difference.

Volunteer teams that have questions about Rake a Difference should contact me at Debbie.ramirez@uwsm.org or 269-932-3566.

#### **Investment Teams**

Have you ever wanted to be a part of something big? Have you ever wanted to be a part of something more? Now is your chance! Volunteer for United Way of Southwest Michigan as an Investment Team member! Investment Team members play two primary roles. They make the initial funding recommendations for our Impact Partners, and they monitor progress reports from the Impact Partners to ensure that each program/project is making progress towards its outcomes. Involvement in an Investment Team is a great way to learn more about the needs in the community, and to have a voice in how United Way funding will play a part in meeting those needs.

To volunteer, visit volunteer.uwsm.org and click Investment Team.

# Volunteer United - the Volunteer Center for Southwest Michigan

United Way oversees Southwest Michigan's volunteer center through our free Volunteer United online tool. 100+ local organizations have listed volunteer needs on the site such as helping distribute food at mobile food pantries with Caring Cupboard and Kinexus, repairing bicycles with Cycle-Re-Cycle, helping Sarett Nature Center with trail maintenance, and much more.

The Volunteer United site is one way that United Way helps local non-profits increase their capacity. In 2023, 549 individuals were connected to volunteer opportunities through the Volunteer United site.

The site also has helped groups find ways to serve. In 2023, the United Way team coordinated volunteer projects and events for 11 companies and organizations, impacting 22 local agencies.

If an individual or a group is looking for easy projects to do, United Way's Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Care Packages might be a perfect fit. These care packages were born out of collaborative efforts of the United Way team and local organizations, and represent current ongoing needs in the area. The process is simple - look at the list of items requested for the kit, purchase or gather donations of the items, assemble them in some sort of container (bag, box or whatever else works) and then contact United Way who will get the Care Packages to the organizations that need them.

For more on volunteering in Southwest Michigan, go to volunteer.uwsm.org. Create your FREE personal Volunteer United account and start volunteering today!

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# **Shooting Daggers** Photo by Harry Blesy

Please email your favorite photo with a brief description to Photos@MailMaxOnline.com Photos must be horizontal orientation to be considered for Photo of the Week.

# DARK MONEY IS FLOODING INTO BERRIEN COUNTY **BERRIEN REPUBLICANS** through **Berrien Forward** TARGETED FOR TAKEOVER



is a dark money front group for the Open Society Foundation founded by George Soros BERRIENCOUNTY IS BEING TARGETED



Alex Ott

**District 9** 

**VOTE REPUBLICAN** 

District 6



Sharon Tyler **District 12** 

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Dr. Grady Hilge

Hearing Loss is Common in **People with Diabetes** 

The relationship between hearing loss and diabetes has long been debated. But research now concludes that hearing loss is more prevalent in adults with diabetes.

One research study included data from participants ranging in age from 20 to 69. The study found that people with diabetes are 2 times more likely to have hearing loss than people without. Adults with pre-diabetes, whose blood glucose is higher than normal but not high enough for a diabetes diagnosis, had a 30% higher rate of hearing loss compared to those with normal blood sugar tested after an overnight fast.

The link between diabetes and hearing loss was stronger among people who were 60 or younger than



among older adults. In the younger group, people with diabetes had a 2.6 times higher likelihood of impaired hearing.

Some researchers believe that diabetes damages the hearing nerves. Think of it as neuropathy of the hearing nerve. High blood sugars can damage nerves throughout your body. This is known as diabetic neuropathy. Another theory is that high blood sugars may damage the very small blood vessels that support and feed the inner ear. This is similar to how high blood sugars can affect vision and kidney function. The blood vessel system that feeds the ear is very similar to the systems that support the eyes and kidneys. As this system is damaged, hearing is compromised. The common denominator in both theories is high blood sugars.

Following medication and diet treatment plans are critical to hearing protection for people with diabetes. Whether you have a hearing loss or not, it is important if you have diabetes to get a baseline measurement of your hearing as soon as possible.

If you or a loved one has diabetes and is concerned about your hearing, call our office today to schedule your free consult!

> Dr. Kasewurm's Professional **Hearing Services** C. 511 Renaissance Dr. St. Joseph, MI (269) 982-3444 www.prohear.net



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HonorCU.com/bonus 800.442.2800 Page 6 October 5, 2024 MailMax



# Introducing HYPE!

Southwest Michigan is a region built on entrepreneurship, and now, more than ever, young professionals are stepping up with fresh ideas to shape the future.

To support and celebrate this innovative spirit, the **Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber**, in partnership with the **Emerge Innovation Hub**, is proud to announce HYPE (Highlighting Young Professional Excellence), a Shark Tankstyle competition designed to empower aspiring entrepreneurs. Sponsored by the Frederick S. Upton Foundation and the Whirlpool Foundation, this event will take place November 20, 2024, at the Watermark Solarium in Stevensville,

offering a platform for creative minds to pitch their business ideas and compete for start-up capital, in-kind resources, and community recognition.

Hype kicks off at 5:30 p.m. with a panel discussion featuring some of the region's most successful young entrepreneurs. This year's panelists include Aiyenede Akhigbe of Sticky Spoons Jam, LLC, Chris Mason of Watermark Brewing Company, Stephanie Ott of Base Bowls & **Company**, and **Dustin Lester**, co-owner of **Pipestone Indoor Country Club and** Pipestone Creek Golf Course. These entrepreneurs, who have turned their ideas into thriving businesses, will share their journeys and offer advice to the next wave of innovators. Afterward, the panelists will shift roles, serving as judges for the competition and offering feedback to contestants.

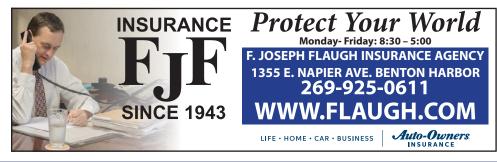
The centerpiece of the event is the pitch competition, where entrepreneurs between the ages of 21 and 40 will present their innovative business ideas to the judging panel and a live audience. The stakes are high, as the top three participants will receive a mix of financial

awards and in-kind services, such as marketing support, business coaching, and mentorship. These resources are designed to help participants take their start-ups to the next level. Additionally, attendees will have the opportunity to vote for a "crowd favorite," who will receive an additional cash prize.

HYPE is set to be an evening filled with energy, innovation, and collaboration. More than a competition; it's about building connections, gaining insights, and celebrating the entrepreneurial spirit that is driving Southwest Michigan forward. Entrepreneurs interested in pitching their ideas can find more details and sign-up information on the Chamber's website.

www.MailMaxOnline.com For those interested in attending, admission is free, though seating is limited, and RSVPs are required. Event sponsorships, managed through the Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber Foundation, also offer a tax-deductible opportunity to support local entrepreneurship and give back to the communi-

To learn more about HYPE or to register, visit www.smrchamber.com/HYPE. To RSVP, visit www.ticketsignup.io/ TicketEvent/HYPE2024. Don't miss this chance to witness the future of business in Southwest Michigan.



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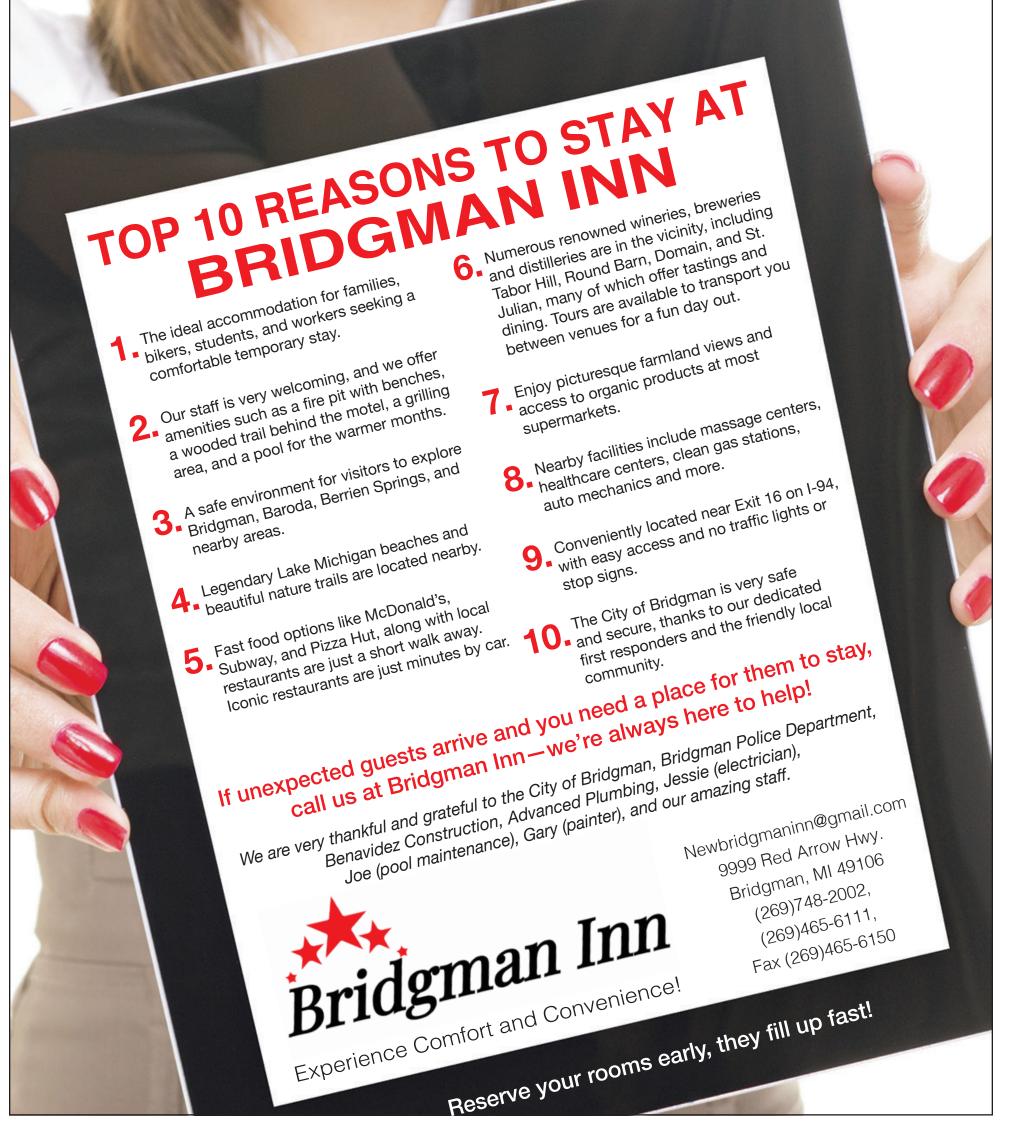




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Madonna Fabian MD

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# It Is All Under Control

They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise." Mark 9:30,31

When my children were little, I loved cuddling up with them on the couch with a big bowl of popcorn for movie nights. Oh, those were the good ol' days! I loved watching them as they held their breath with uncertainty as one of their heroes dangled in a perilous situation, wondering if he would make it through unscathed—which he always did! After all, these were kids' movies we were watching! But now and then, when things got a little too scary, I would hold them tight and assure them that everything would be okay.

At this time, it was easy for the disciples to follow Jesus. Jesus was popular-crowds flocked to see him! Jesus was powerful-he healed the sick, walked on water, and even raised the dead!

But his followers didn't know that times were about to get rather scary. The disciples were about to see one of their own betray Jesus. They were going to see Jesus subdued by soldiers and put to death.

That's why Jesus wanted to assure them that everything would be okay. Jesus wanted to assure them that everything was under his control. So, he told them what would happen-not only that he would die, but also that he would rise!

Life might feel out of control for you right now. And it might be difficult to make any kind of semblance of a plan. But remember, Jesus had a plan to rescue you and me from death and was in control of it all. That's the kind of hero, the kind of Savior you haveone with a plan! And he'll lead you through this week every step of the way! It's all under control

Prayer: Dear Jesus, give me courage and strength to trust in you. Bring peace to my troubled heart when I worry about tomorrow. Amen.

Submitted by Pastor Josh Bishop Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, St. Joseph Originated by: www.What AboutJesus.com



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Ramsey Financial Expert

# **Dave Says Rewarding Success**

Dear Dave

My wife and I are trying hard to get out of debt and start controlling our finances. We've always given our kids allowances in the past, but we've been considering putting their allowances on hold until we pay off our debt and get in better shape financially. What do you think about this idea?

Cody

Dear Cody.

I'm glad vou two are making smart changes in your lives, but I wouldn't stop what you've been doing where your kids are concerned. It can be a series of great teachable moments for them. I would, however, stop calling it an allowance. In my mind, there's a victim mentality attached to word "allowance," and that's not something you want taking root in their minds.

Kids should learn at an early age that money is connected to work. Even a kid who's in kindergarten is old enough to begin doing some age-appropriate chores around the house. So, let's start calling it a "commission" instead of an allowance. Why? Because in situations like these shouldn't be viewed as "allowing" them something. It should be looked at-by you and by them-as rewarding success.

My wife and I did this very thing with our kids as they were growing up. Each of them had a list of chores that were expected of them each day. If they did their jobs, they got paid at the end of the week. If they didn't, they didn't get any money.

Some people may look at this method and call it "tough love." But it's really not. It's just love. It's something you do when you're trying to teach your children, and guide them toward becoming independent, responsible adults. – Dave

#### **Planning Ahead**

I was wondering if you recommend including future purchases, especially major purchases, into your monthly budget. If so, how far in advance should you do this?

Andie Dear Andie,

Dear Dave.

When you wait until things go wrong or something breaks down, you'll find yourself in a mess and the victim of your own poor planning. That's why I'd start putting money aside in my budget as soon as I saw signs there would be a need for whatever item it may be.

Let's say you're pretty sure you'll need a newer vehicle in a couple of years. Go ahead and start putting the money aside now. Decide on a reasonable, affordable ballpark price, then do the math to see how much you'll have to save every month to make it happen. And if you can make it happen faster than two years? Great!

And remember, this kind of stuff is a whole lot easier when you don't have things like car loans and credit card payments hanging around your neck!

Dave

Whirlpool

\* Dave Ramsey is a national best-selling author, personal finance expert and host of The Ramsey Show, heard by more than 20 million listeners each week. He has appeared on Good Morning America, CBS Mornings, Today Show, Fox News, CNN, Fox Business, and many more. Since 1992, Dave has helped people regain control of their money, build wealth and enhance their lives. He also serves as CEO for the company, Ramsey Solutions

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Saturday, October 12, 2024 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Sunday, October 13, 2024 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.



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# A Verdi-able Cornucopia of Trivia

I'm still far from home, so here's something from the far past. (Note: FYI, I didn't send this FROM the past; I'm not THAT far from home!)

As has been expected for several years now, the current events calendar for October 2013 has been packed with celebrations – some carefully planned, some joyously spontaneous - commemorating the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of The Philomathean Society at the University of Pennsylvania

The Philomathean Society pretty much has a mortal lock on the coveted title "Oldest Continuously Existing Literary Society In The United States With A Name No One Can Pronounce." And if you're fearful of falling asleep while reading an entire column about it, fear not - after a nap induced by the first paragraph, I've decided to write about something else.

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(Although I must mention that the Philomathean Society of the University of Pennsylvania somehow kept continuously existing through a membership decline that resulted, at one point, in a group with only one member. It was a guy named Hilary Putnam, a renowned philosopher, mathematician, and all-round smarty-pants who, among other things, developed an algorithm for the Boolean Satisfiability Problem. This is the kind of thing dimwitted humor columnists throughout the world who couldn't carry Hilary Putnam's slide rule LOVE to learn, because we love goofy-sounding science-y words like "Boolean.")



"Blown away by their performance and their legitimacy." ~ **Chicago Tribune** 

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He is from South America.....



When in town, he comes to see us for a haircut.

When: Saturday, October 19, 2024 Time: Sign-in starts 7:00 AM | Race starts 8:00 AM Starting Location: Start and finish at RAC Race Route: Run on Harbor Shores Golf Course Cost: \$35.00 per person (\$20 Ages 0-13) Benefiting: Berrien County Cancer Service Register: Online by October 1st



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But as I said, this column is about something completely different. Well, not completely different – there's still a 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary involved. Besides the birth of the Philomathean Society, October 1813 also saw the birth of Giuseppe Verdi, the Italian composer, maybe the Numero Uno composer of operas in the entire 1800s. (Some might say Richard Wagner, who was also born in 1813, rates the top spot, but it must be admitted that, after careful comparison of his work with Verdi's, he had a much lower batting average with runners in scoring position.)

Verdi is one of those towering figures in the world of classical music who is so beloved there are multiple collections of "trivia" about him, featuring information like this:

• During one 16-year period, Verdi wrote 15 operas. If you sometimes daydream about chucking your current job and embarking on the glamourous career of an opera composer, you might have second thoughts upon hearing this: Verdi referred to this period as his "years in the galleys." Galleys, eh? Maybe that explains why my kids will ask, when they hear opera, "Dad! What's that noise? Is someone torturing those people?"

• Giuseppe Verdi translates into English as "Joe Green." I think in honor of the Verdi birthday celebrations happening worldwide, soft-drink maker Coke ought to produce a new rendition of that Mean Joe Greene TV ad from the 70s – maybe have Verdi slowly trudging to the locker room after a tough day in the opera-writing galleys...and he could toss the sappily cute kid a crumpled up sheet of music from "Rigoletto."

• There appears to be only one town in the world named Verdi. It's in Nevada, about 10 miles from Reno, right on the state line with California. The town was named through a random drawing of suggestions placed into a hat. Luckily the scrap of paper that was drawn read "Giuseppe Verdi"; the other choices were "Mortimer Snerd" and "Boolean Satisfiability Problem."

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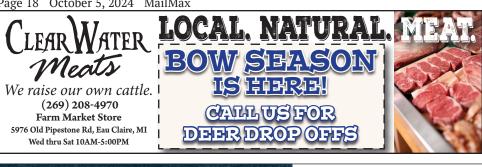
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# **Moody** Continued from cover

size of our working environment, we just sort of needed a reset in the setup and design of where we wanted people and how we wanted people situated."

About a year ago, Monte Package Company broke ground to start construction. Just 12 months later, Monte said employees moved from the existing facility on a Wednesday morning and by midday Thursday, they were back at full operation in the new space.

"We got a little lucky with some favorable weather, which allowed the construction team at Pearson to really keep cranking."

Pearson Construction Company handled the project. Pearson's in-house design team, TERA Architects, worked with Monte Package leaders to develop the design and then Pearson Construction built the facility.

For a company that's spent nearly 100 years evolving its product to adapt to market and consumer demands, it appeared to be a gamble to double down on new office space especially because so many people were still working remotely in the wake of the pandemic. Add to that the glut of existing office space across the nation and economic uncertainty – many companies might have put such a plan on hold. Monte said the decision to move forward was clear from the outset.

'We've been in this community,



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Southwest Michigan and Riverside, for a hundred years. We could have probably rented at least twice as much space, maybe got something in a slightly fancier location, or maybe a restaurant on the first floor. But that would have taken us out of Riverside."

Monte said the corporate office is an anchor to the other facilities in Riverside, specifically a handful of warehouses where employees can see and test products and show customers their operations.

'This rolls back into the level of service that we can supply to our customers. It allows us to keep a very close pulse on the quality of the products. Also, with some of the different volatility in the economy over the past couple years, we received a lot of support from our parent company, Bunzl, to say, 'Okay, they've been there. This is where they've got a lot of other investment, it doesn't make sense to pick up and move somewhere else.' They supported us in that logic and mentality, supported the developers of this office, primarily Tony, my dad, really lobbying for the next generation of key employees here."

The former headquarters is less than a hundred yards from the new building and Monte said it will remain in operation, though it will likely be used for other things like employee training, a sample room, and maybe a dedicated product display area.

At 6,500 square feet, the new space is significantly larger than the original footprint of the now-former headquarters. As for when the next expansion will occur, Monte said he can't say, but when it happens, they'll be ready.

'We've been very blessed to be a company that has seen steady growth over all these different past generations and decades of people working here. And that's the objective, to keep growing. Sometimes that's slower than we want. Sometimes we get big jumps. So yes, we are looking to grow."





565 Riverview Dr, Benton Harbor • (269) 925-3787 Mon-Thur 11:30am-11pm or later. Fri-Sat 11:30am-1am; Sun 11:30am-9pm or later.

Monte added that with growth, there's a need for more people and he said that's a goal as well.

"We want to grow and continue to build this team and continue to have additional key players that can contribute and allow for more of that healthy growth. So, we're in this space now and it was designed to have an easy renovation addition if we wanted to add 2,500 more square feet of office space, and maybe 30,000 square feet of warehousing space. Down the road, if there's a reason to add more warehousing, we've got the space."



Monte Package Company was founded in 1925 and currently carries more than 1,500 products in their inventory, supplying a variety of packaging products to a diversified range of agricultural customers in all 50 states in the U.S. plus customers in Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and other international locations. In 2018, Monte Package was acquired by parent company Bunzl PLC and still operates as a family-owned business.

> Pat Moody Publisher, MoodyOnTheMarket.com moody@wsjm.com (269) 925-1111



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# LEGALS

NOTICE OF REGISTRATION FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY, NOVEMEBER 5, 2024 CITY OF BRIDGMAN, MICHIGAN TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF THE CITY OF BRIDGMAN:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that any qualified elector of the City of Bridgman who is not already registered, may register to vote at the office of the Bridgman City Clerk; the office of the County Clerk; a Secretary of State branch office, or other designated state agency. Registration forms may be obtained at mi.gov/vote and mailed to their City/Township Clerk. Voters who are already registered may update their registration with their

Ical clerk or at <u>www.expressOS.com</u>. The last day to register in any manner other than in-person with the local clerk is

#### Monday, October 21, 2024.

After this date, anyone who qualifies as an elector may register to vote in person with proof of residency (MCL 168.497) at the City of Bridgman Clerk's office, located at 9765 Maple Street, Bridgman, Michigan 49106 at the following times: • Regular business hours: Monday-Thursday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 pm; Friday 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 pm • Saturday, November 2, 2024:

7:00 a.m. to 3:00 pm • Election day, Tuesday November 5, 2024: 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 pm

To comply with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), voting instructions will be available in audio format and in Braille. Arrangements for obtaining the instructions in these alternative formats can be made by contacting the city clerk in advance of the election. All polling locations are accessible for voters with disabilities.

Christine Fisher Bridgman City Clerk (269) 465-5144

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#### October 5, 2024 MailMax Page 21 MISCELLANEOUS

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