



KEITH

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MAKE YOUR
RESERVATIONS FOR THE
79TH ANNUAL
MEETING



The Chamber's work is far from over

The Cleveland/Bradley Chamber of Commerce owes a debt of gratitude to you, the very lifeblood of who we are and what we do. An organization is only as strong as its members, and thanks to your support and involvement, we have come a long way.

2004 marked the beginning of a new era in Chamber work in Cleveland/Bradley County. Most notable, at least on the surface, was our first year in a new office complex which boasts an administrative wing that accommodates our nine-member staff, a much-needed visitors center and a technologically ready conference facility. The building alone enabled us to do more with better. *Climbing to New Heights* funding enhanced our efforts to put into place some strategic economic and community development programs.

Our work, however, is far from over. We must confront upcoming challenges and seize opportunities with the same energy we've used to build this organization since its inception in 1925. In truth, we ought to augment our efforts to climb to even higher heights. With your continued support, we can do just that.

The Chamber is poised in a unique position to affect issues for the betterment of the business sector in Cleveland/Bradley County and the overall community. By nature of our existence, we forge partnerships and represent broad alliances in economic and community development.

Part of our job is to ensure the health of the local business community. We do this best when local businesses—large and small—support us as their best business ally and economic driver. We promote commerce and a sound business climate. Small businesses need customers, and customers need jobs. Employers need a qualified workforce, and trained employees need a quality education. Legislative issues impact the community, and the community needs representation at local, state and national levels.

All businesses have gatekeepers, budget issues and demands for return on investment—even the Chamber. In order that you might examine your investment in Chamber membership, we've taken stock of what we accomplished in 2004 and presented our performance in an Annual Report. This "State of the Chamber" is a vital document that explains the scope of our mission and summarizes our efforts for the past year. We believe you will conclude that you made a sound investment.

Included in this publication also is our 2005 Program of Work by division. To ensure the growth and development of our community, the Chamber must consider diverse strategies and programs. Occasionally we must regroup and rethink old ways of doing things. Often we must focus on developing relationships. This projection of our work for 2005 gives you a chance to make sure our planning and programming remains true to our mission.

"Building quality communities is a life's work," says J. Mac Holladay, founder and CEO of Market Street Services, an Atlanta-based community and economic development firm. "Those communities that concentrate on workforce, quality of life, infrastructure, and business costs will be the ones that can be successful on projects large and small."

Building a quality Cleveland/Bradley County community is the life's work of the Chamber of Commerce. Your continued loyalty and support will make our efforts successful.—*Nancy A. Neal, Director of Communications*

2004 Annual Report to the Membership

Business Development

Reba Garrison, Reba Garrison State Farm Insurance, Division Vice Chairman

With its focus on increasing the profitability of member businesses through education, networking and services, the Business Development division continued its emphasis on small businesses through training sessions, a trade fair and a new program designed to answer questions relative to their concerns. Following are details of those efforts:

- ☑ Celebrated Small Business Month during the month of May. Nationally recognized speaker Nancy Friedman, The Telephone Doctor®, presented her "entertraining" seminar to over 90 members on May 5. Friedman's customer service seminar was the first major program in the Chamber's new conference facility.
- ☑ Presented two seminars facilitated by Joe Constance with Constant Training on May 18. "Time & Life Management" and "Dealing With Difficult People" were the topics presented to over 60 Chamber members in the half-day sessions.
- ☑ Presented the Mel Bedwell Small Businessperson of the Year award to Loye Hamilton, owner, Coldwell/Banker, Hamilton & Associates, at the Small Business Month kickoff luncheon on May 10, 2004, at the Museum Center at Five Points.
- ☑ Continued the Business-to-Business Tabletop Trade Fair as part of the kickoff luncheon with 15 business members setting up tabletop displays to present their services to other business members.
- ☑ Made plans for a mini Business Showcase in conjunction with the January 2005 Chamber Coffee at the Chamber office.



STAFF

Jerry Bohannon, *President & CEO*
 Bernadette Douglas, *Senior Vice President/Operations*
 Gary Farlow, *Vice President/Economic Development*
 Melissa Woody, *Vice President/Convention & Visitors Bureau*
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- ☑ Implemented the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) program, a bimonthly session featuring a presentation by a local expert followed by audience questions and answers. 2004 topics focused on computer viruses, advertising, employee records and insurance concerns. Topics for 2005 were discussed and scheduled.
- ☑ Continued investigation of discount programs for members through the Small Business Committee.

Community Development

Stephen Crass, Cleveland Daily Banner, Division Vice Chairman

Enhancing the quality of life in Cleveland/Bradley County continued as a principal concern for Chamber staff and volunteers in 2004. Education-based programs and leadership training occupied much of this division's focus, complemented by efforts to provide top-quality arts education in area schools as well as related activities for adults. Following are summaries of major Community Development programs and projects.

Education

- ☑ Honored six outstanding system-level Teachers of the Year in the Cleveland City and Bradley County School systems with a special reception and \$500 checks in recognition of their achievements on April 13, 2004. Also honored building-level Teachers of the Year at the same ceremony where they received door prizes donated by area businesses.
- ☑ Continued to work with current BEST partners in their efforts to strengthen partnership activities. Also recognized one new partnership: Arnold Memorial School and MainStreet Cleveland.
- ☑ Developed a new BEST Partnership logo and incorporated that logo into updated partnership flags offered to all the partners.
- ☑ Presented through the Chamber's Education Committee the 2004 BEST Partnership Award to the partnership of Walker Valley High School and Arch Chemicals Inc. Awards were presented to two other finalists, and all partners were honored at the Teacher of the Year Awards Celebration.
- ☑ Partnered with Junior Achievement of the Ocoee Region in bringing the *Reality Check* program, a real-life budgeting activity for eighth-graders, to all three local middle schools.



- ☑ Continued representation on advisory committees for the Tech Prep Consortium, the Tennessee Technology Center at Athens, and career education programs within both the Bradley County and Cleveland City School Systems.
- ☑ Informed local school systems of area needs, funds and programs to strengthen curricula and assisted in building partnerships with industry.
- ☑ Coordinated with area educators and the Ocoee Regional Tech Prep Consortium the seventh annual Starship Career Fair for all eighth-graders in Cleveland/Bradley County, including private school students. Students from West Polk County also attended. Approximately 40 companies representing 75 careers participated in the event, which served approximately 1,300 students.
- ☑ Coordinated the eighth annual Job Shadowing event for high school juniors on November 4 and 11, 2004, and placed 302 students at 108 participating businesses.
- ☑ Conducted the sixth annual Teachers Academy, which placed 11 area teachers at eight business/industry sites for a four-week internship during the summer.
- ☑ Coordinated Business/Industry in the Classroom at Bradley Central and Walker Valley High Schools during which 31 business professionals spoke to students about the skills necessary to succeed in today's workforce.
- ☑ Coordinated the fourth annual ethics program, titled "Ethics in the Workplace," at local high schools. Approximately 900 students were reached during the program that involved 23 speakers and 37 high school classes at Bradley Central High School, Cleveland High School and Walker Valley High School during the fall activity. Area business/education professionals spoke to students concerning work ethic and ethical conduct in general.

Leadership Cleveland

- ☑ Completed the 2003-04 program designed to acquaint participants with the community in which they live through onsite visits and presentations from community leaders over an eight-month period with 10 participants graduating.
- ☑ Enrolled 15 business leaders in the 20th Anniversary 2004-05 class. Began plans to celebrate the program's success with an alumni dinner in 2005.
- ☑ Continued utilization of a steering committee comprised of 12 Leadership Cleveland graduates to ensure the program's continued success through refinement of the daily schedules.

Youth Leadership

- ☑ Graduated the second Cleveland/Bradley Youth Leadership Class of 23 students on April 25, 2004.

- ☑ Coordinated Youth Leadership activities with the Youth Leadership Steering Committee, comprised of Leadership Cleveland alumni and high school guidance counselors. Twenty-four students (eight from each of the three public high schools) comprise the 2004-05 class, which is participating in a program that includes a two-day leadership retreat and five school-day learning trips throughout the school year.

Allied Arts & Leisure Council

- ☑ Worked with Chamber staff to create a new "One Community, One Calendar" event scheduling program hosted on the Chamber's website.



- ☑ Placed Allied Arts events each week in the *Cleveland Daily Banner* Sunday edition.

- ☑ Raised more than \$30,800 for arts in schools through the April 2004 Chair-ries Jubilee auction that featured chairs and other items designed and decorated by local artists.

- ☑ Sponsored the ninth season of "Evening Shade" concert series in Johnston Park each Friday in May. The free concert series, featuring local as well as regional entertainment, was sponsored in part by a grant from the Tennessee Arts Commission, local sponsors and AALC funds.

- ☑ Awarded \$11,290 in grants to 24 projects in various public and private schools for arts education and to the Cleveland Storytellers Guild, which provided storytelling events in local schools with their grant money.

- ☑ Began planning a special event, Southern Fried Chicks, with two shows to be held in the auditorium at St. Therese of Lisieux Catholic Church in February 2005.

- ☑ Researched, applied for and received grants from the Tennessee Arts Commission for \$5,400 for "Evening Shade" and Southeast Development District "Arts Builds Communities" for \$3,000. Arts Builds Communities is a program funded in part by the Tennessee General Assembly



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and administered in cooperation with the Tennessee Arts Commission and the Southeast Tennessee Development District.

- Sent representatives to grants workshops sponsored by the Tennessee Arts Commission and Southeast Development District.
- Continued discussion on a local artist registry.
- Held planning session to revisit and refine the mission, goals and structure of AALC.

Convention & Visitors Bureau

Bill Varnell, Hilliard Lyons Inc., Division Vice Chairman

The latest tourism figures released by the Travel Industry of America reflected another 4.6-percent increase in tourism expenditures in Bradley County, bringing the local tourism expenditures to almost \$86 million in 2003. This represents an estimated savings of \$204 per household. The following information outlines some of the reasons for the continued increase in tourism dollars.

Individual, Family & Group Travel

- Advertised in state and national publications, such as the *Tennessee Vacation Guide*, *Family Circle* and *Southern Living*, to remain visible to the travel market.
- Partnered with MainStreet Cleveland on an effective *Southern Living* ad promoting downtown events.
- Targeted youth groups through advertisements in *Group Magazine*, which specializes in marketing to youth ministers.
- Continued to produce the visitors information guide.
- Completed production of a new rack card brochure.
- Distributed new rack card brochures to targeted welcome and rest centers across the state and to key locations in the Atlanta market and along I-75 corridor.
- Purchased and distributed new four-slot brochure racks to local hotels featuring the visitors guide and other local brochures.
- Continued contract with Touch 'N' Go visitor information kiosks present in all state welcome centers.
- Continued participation in the East Tennessee partnership advertising campaign, a yearlong advertising plan reaching millions of subscribers in a variety of markets. This campaign resulted in more than 373,365 user sessions on the East Tennessee website.
- Worked with Walker & Associates advertising agency to develop a media plan, including insertions in *Southern*

Living, *Family Circle/Parents*, *AAA Home & Away*, *USA Weekend*, *Country Living*, *Fommer's Budget Travel* and a variety of newspaper inserts.

- Continued membership in the Chattanooga Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) to benefit from regional marketing and joint projects.
- Renewed advertisement in the Chattanooga CVB *Visitors Guide*, which has a circulation of 500,000 and is available for downloading from their website.
- Maintained dedicated visitors center housed in the Chamber lobby.
- Partnered with downtown businesses to lease billboard space on Highway 64 to drive traffic to downtown.

Recreation & Sporting

- Assisted local parks and recreation departments and other organizations in the recruitment of tournaments and other activities to the area.
- Worked with city and county recreation departments to coordinate a list of all tournaments scheduled in our community.
- Assisted Tri-State Exhibition Center in recruiting events.

Meetings & Conventions

- Responded to and consulted with local organizations and businesses that host meetings.
- Assisted meeting planners with lodging room rates and other details.
- Updated the meetings calendar and distributed it to members of local hospitality industry.
- Published the meeting calendar and economic impact figures in local news media.

Communications & Public Relations

- Responded in a timely manner to any and all media inquiries with current and reliable information.
- Provided timely information about the tourism industry to local and state governmental officials.
- Submitted timely press releases to local newspapers highlighting tourism activities and economic impact.
- Submitted press releases and feature ideas to the newly formed news bureau operated by Ackerman Public Relations on behalf of the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development.

- ☑ Conducted sales calls and delivered items to targeted welcome centers to encourage promotion of our area.
- ☑ Served as the Chamber's liaison for the Allied Arts & Leisure Council.
- ☑ Participated in cooperative press tours with the SETTA (Southeast Tennessee Tourism Association) and the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development.
- ☑ Presented information about the CVB and the local tourism industry to civic organizations.

Product Development and Community Involvement

- ☑ Continued staff involvement with organizations developing and operating attractions, including serving on the board of MainStreet Cleveland and serving on the marketing committee of Tri-State Exhibition Center.
- ☑ Participated in the development of the revitalization plan for downtown.
- ☑ Organized a hospitality fair to develop frontline tourism staff (clerks, servers, etc.) as ambassadors for the local tourism industry.
- ☑ Partnered with 15 antique and collectibles shops to develop the *Antique & Collectibles Trail: The Shops of Cleveland & Charleston* with trail information available in a brochure and on the CVB website.
- ☑ Ordered new welcome signs for the major corridors leading in to Cleveland and Bradley County.
- ☑ Worked closely with the Southeast Development District, fiscal administrators of SETTA (Southeast Tennessee Tourism Association), to develop products in the 10 counties of Southeast Tennessee.
- ☑ Assisted SETTA with the production and introduction of the *Out to the Farm* brochure featuring regional agri-tourism sites such as wineries, orchards and corn mazes.
- ☑ Served on the Southern Appalachian Partners, formerly known as the Ocoee Economic Development Partnership, a project initiated by U.S. Representative Zach Wamp.
- ☑ Assisted local organizations in coordinating events to attract visitors to our area and improve the quality of life in our community, including the White Oak Mountain Bluegrass Festival (co-chair), Community Christmas Tree Lighting, the Christmas Parade and "Evening Shade."



- ☑ Completed production of an updated version of the *Historic Downtown Cleveland Walking Tour* brochure.
- ☑ Attended city and county governmental meetings regularly.
- ☑ Served on the Cleveland Police Department's TRAC Team (Total Resources Against Crime).

Research & Development

- ☑ Monitored travel trends through various industry sources.
- ☑ Applied for and received matching advertising grants from the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development.
- ☑ Invited and hosted the Commissioner of Tennessee Department of Tourist Development as the ATHENA® Award speaker.
- ☑ Secured development district funding for the updated *Historic Walking Tour* brochure.
- ☑ Collected and maintained data regarding visitor inquiries and responses to advertisements.
- ☑ Served on the board of Tennessee Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus.
- ☑ Served as vice chair of the East Tennessee Marketing Partnership.
- ☑ Attended the Governor's Conference on Tourism, including several training seminars.
- ☑ Attended an agri-tourism workshop hosted by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture and Tennessee Department of Tourist Development.
- ☑ Attended a workshop on "Telling Your Story" hosted by SETTA and the Tennessee Arts Commission.
- ☑ Attended Tourism's Salute to Legislature.
- ☑ Attended Tourism's Day on the Hill luncheon.
- ☑ Updated and consulted with state legislators regarding tourism issues.

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Economic Development

Tim Columbia, Cormetech Environmental Technologies, Division Vice Chairman

Creation of the new Industrial Development Board was a hallmark of the year's Economic Development efforts, allowing for a more focused approach to development of the area's industrial parks. Related to this are marketing efforts that continued to strengthen and improve the visibility of the local community both nationally and internationally. Additionally, commercial projects, capital investments and total value of building permits reflected significant activity. Workforce development remains a primary focus to ensure qualified employees for business/industry. Following are details of these efforts:

New Investment

- Recorded the completion of Southeastern Container's major expansion with a 200,000-square-foot, \$21 million building addition and new equipment purchases.
- Recorded a total value of commercial and residential building permits in the Cleveland/Bradley County area for FY 2004 (as of October 2004) of \$103.1 million (\$42.1 million commercial and \$61.8 million residential).
- Recorded significant new commercial projects either announced or under construction, including Outback Steak House, IHOP, Home Depot, Eckerd, Wildwater Steak House, Hiwassee Grill, The Athenian Grill, Bojangles, Chili's and BB&T Bank.
- Recorded completion of the Church of God International Offices expansion.
- Recorded completion of the Southeast Tennessee Human Resource Agency's new transit bus service center in the Cleveland/Bradley Industrial Park and announcement of plans for a fixed-route bus service in the city of Cleveland.

Bradley/Cleveland Industrial Development Board

- Created the new Bradley/Cleveland Industrial Development Board (IDB), a cooperative effort with the city of Cleveland, Bradley County and the Chamber of Commerce.
- Accepted ownership of the Cleveland/Bradley Industrial Park and the Hiwassee River Industrial Park via the new IDB.
- Completed new aerial photography and topographic mapping of the Hiwassee River Industrial Park.
- Began planning a 100,000-square-foot speculative industrial building in the Hiwassee River Industrial Park with funding from the Chamber's *Climbing to New Heights* campaign.



The Bradley/Cleveland Industrial Development Board allows for a more focused approach to developing the area's industrial parks. The cooperative effort was launch by, from left (seated), Economic Development Vice Chairman Tim Columbia, County Mayor Gary Davis, City Mayor Tom Rowland, Chairman of the Board Keith Barrett, (standing) Immediate Past Chairman of the Board Hal Roe, City Manager Joe Cate, Chamber President Jerry Bohannon, Attorney Tom Tisdale and Economic Development Vice President Gary Farlow.

- Provided funding to Cleveland Utilities to help complete the engineering and design work on a new 16-inch waterline system to serve the Hiwassee River Industrial Park through the IDB and Chamber of Commerce *Climbing to New Heights* Committee.
- Completed water and sanitary sewer line extensions to serve the new Southeast Tennessee Human Resources Agency transit system facility in the Cleveland/Bradley Industrial Park.
- Initiated an overall grading plan for the Hiwassee River Industrial Park.

Research/Education

- Participated in the American Chamber of Commerce Researchers Association's (ACCRA) cost-of-living quarterly report, which compares the cost of living in more than 300 cities nationwide. Cleveland's composite index (93.4 compared to the national average of 100) indicates that Cleveland's cost of living is 6.6 percent below the national average.
- Updated and enhanced the local industry database along with the *Cleveland/Bradley County Industrial Directory and Community Data Sheet*.
- Attended the annual Governor's Conference on Economic Development, the annual meeting of the Tennessee Industrial Development Council, quarterly meetings of the Southeast Industrial Development Association, the annual U.S. Southeast and Japan Conference, and the Southeast Economic Development Council Automotive Industry Conference.
- Completed major revisions to the Existing Industry survey

document that provides a structured means to address the needs and concerns of existing businesses in the area.

- ☑ Completed the *2004 Wage-and-Benefits Survey* of area manufacturers with 40 companies participating.

Marketing

- ☑ Advertised in national and regional economic development publications.
- ☑ Attended the SAE Automotive Trade Show in Detroit.
- ☑ Responded to 33 industrial prospect inquiries and hosted visits to Cleveland/Bradley County by 15 of those companies.
- ☑ Received Three-Star Community certification from the governor for community economic development for the 13th consecutive year.
- ☑ Maintained and updated available industrial buildings and site databases with Southeast Industrial Development Association, TVIDA, and the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development.
- ☑ Continued listing our sites and buildings on *Fast Facility*, a World Wide Web national data base of industrial sites and buildings. This website will be advertised on national television on CNN's *Daybreak News* with a series of 30-second spots designed to make more than 75 million impressions among CNN viewers. *Fast Facility* is a product of *Area Development and Facility Planning*, a magazine aimed at industrial and corporate real estate professionals.
- ☑ Continued membership in the National Association of Manufacturers and placed Cleveland on their Internet list of communities and their Site Selector list, which enables us to receive inquiries from their member manufacturers looking for expansion locations.
- ☑ Completed Economic Development Council work on a strategic plan for economic development as part of a TVA pilot program, *Community Readiness for Economic Development (C-RED)*, designed to help communities assess their economic development activities, organizations and programs and to develop a comprehensive economic development strategy.
- ☑ Purchased two new computer software programs, *Adobe Acrobat Professional* and *Decisions Data Resources*, which will enable us to further our efforts to provide up-to-date information in electronic form to prospects.
- ☑ Completed a comprehensive Cleveland/Bradley corporate relocation packet for distribution to all relocation prospects that will include key demographic, economic, financial, real estate and cultural information.

Existing Industry

- ☑ Presented the Existing Industry Committee Member of the Year award to Georgia Gann, Southern Heritage Bank, in recognition of her outstanding contributions and service to the committee.
- ☑ Interviewed 32 manufacturing and service companies in 2004 through the Existing Industry Committee to determine and address concerns of local industry.
- ☑ Compiled, presented and distributed the results of the 2003 existing industry visits.
- ☑ Coordinated Quality Council meetings, featuring such topics as "Improving the Bottom Line Through Root Cause Analysis, Reduce Injuries and Save \$ With Safety in Motion®", "Tour the Cormetech Manufacturing Facility" and "Outperforming Your Best Competitor—What Really Works." The group continued flexible scheduling that allowed for reaching a varied audience each month.
- ☑ Collaborated with the Chattanooga Section of the American Society for Quality in such partnership activities as joint meetings and publication of each group's meetings to the membership of the other.
- ☑ Hosted an Existing Industry Forum in partnership with Cleveland Associated Industries (CAI) during which representatives of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development presented Tennessee's Existing Industry Programs and Services to area industry officials. Also co-hosted with CAI a forum with Matt Kisber, Tennessee commissioner of Economic & Community Development.



Georgia Gann (right) with Southern Heritage Bank is Existing Industry Committee Member of the Year for 2004. Randy Morris congratulates her.

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Jerry Adams, CPA
Nick Decosimo, CPA

- ☑ Hosted a forum for local industry and the Industrial Development Board with officials from S&ME, a professional engineering firm specializing in environmental and geotechnical engineering, who discussed redevelopment of industry “brownfields,” former industrial sites no longer being utilized.
- ☑ Held an Industry Appreciation luncheon on May 26, 2004, to honor the contributions of local industry to our local economy and community. Zach Wamp, Tennessee’s 3rd District representative to the U.S. House of Representatives, was the keynote speaker. 2004 Industry Appreciation Awards were presented to Olin Corporation, Lubing Systems and Masterfoods USA.
- ☑ Worked extensively with the state of Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development’s senior Southeast Tennessee field service coordinator for existing industry on matters pertaining to local industries.
- ☑ Continued to work with the University of Tennessee Center for Industrial Services and the Small Business Development Center at Cleveland State Community College to pursue partnerships that can directly benefit area companies.
- ☑ Participated actively in the Olin/Arch Community Advisory Panel and the Business/Industry Committee of Cleveland/Bradley Keep America Beautiful.

Workforce Development

- ☑ Held two follow-up sessions to the “Developing Tomorrow’s Workforce Today” workforce development summit held late in 2003—one with local education providers to discuss their role in meeting business/industry workforce needs and one with business/industry that detailed plans for meeting those needs.
- 
- ☑ Implemented the Tennessee Scholars program, a rewards-and-recognition program designed to encourage students to complete a more rigorous high school curriculum, in cooperation with Bradley County Schools.
 - ☑ Began development of an adult workforce development certificate program for the underemployed and unemployed of Cleveland/Bradley County in cooperation with Cleveland State Community College.
 - ☑ Helped employers find short-term workforce solutions by coordinating contacts with local service providers.
 - ☑ Coordinated the Chamber’s Education/Workforce Development Committee, which actively promotes and conducts programs that partner industry and area school systems.
 - ☑ Actively participated in the Youth Council of the Youth Enrichment Services Program, the youth component of the Workforce Investment Act.

- ☑ Served on various advisory boards for area workforce development organizations, including Tech Prep Consortium, the Tennessee Technology Center at Athens, career education boards for both local school systems, Bradley County Adult Education, Opportunity for Adult Reading and Tennessee Rehabilitation Center.
- ☑ Coordinated school workforce development programs such as “Ethics in the Workplace,” 11th Grade Job Shadowing, Teachers Academy, Business & Industry in the Classroom, and the Starship 8th Grade Career Awareness Fair as detailed in the Community Development section.

Membership Development

Dewayne Belew, Bradley Memorial Hospital, Division Vice Chairman

The Chamber upgraded the membership services coordinator to a full-time position this year to increase its emphasis on member retention and contact. This will complement ongoing efforts to provide benefits to members through networking opportunities and communications efforts, including the launching of a redesigned website.

Retention

- ☑ Achieved an 86.3-percent retention rate in the number of members renewing their memberships for 2004.
- ☑ Held two New Member Receptions in the new Chamber facility in May and December 2004. Over ___ new members attended to network with other new members and meet Chamber officers, directors and staff.
- ☑ Upgraded the position of the membership services coordinator to full-time in August to place an additional emphasis on increased contact and retention of members.
- ☑ Restarted “Lunch With the Board” program for member feedback on issues.

Programs & Services

- ☑ Held 12 Membership Coffees at various member locations throughout Cleveland and Bradley County.
- ☑ Held the second Ralph Buckner Sr. Memorial Chamber Classic golf tournament on November 15, 2004. Major sponsorship and support from Ralph Buckner Funeral Home & Crematory led to an overflow field of 148 players participating and a full slate of sponsorships. The event was held at the Cleveland Country Club. Other major sponsors included Don Ledford Automotive; Logan, Thompson, Miller, Bilbo & Thompson; Jones Management; and McCain, McCain & Bunch.

Development

- ☑ Enrolled 160 new business members and 34 affiliate members in 2004 through the efforts of dedicated volunteers and staff. This amount exceeded the Chamber's budgeted amount for new members by 32 percent. Ten volunteers qualified for incentive trips to Cancun in November.
- ☑ Updated the Chamber's database of potential new members to ensure correct contact and business information.

Communications

- ☑ Completed the redesign process of the Chamber's website (www.clevelandchamber.com), which went online in February 2004. An online version of the Chamber's newsletter now provides increased visibility to advertisers and greater distribution of pertinent information.
- ☑ Published the Chamber's *Annual Report and Program of Work* in the January 2004 issue of *2145 Keith* (monthly newsletter). Continued monthly publication of the Chamber newsletter with a new masthead, *225 Keith*, and new design reflecting the Chamber's move to a new location.
- ☑ Continued to publish *The Resource* (membership directory) in a 5 1/2-by-8 1/2 format designed to be more user-friendly.
- ☑ Published the fifth edition of *The Experience* (four-color, 60-page quality-of-life publication), with a print run of 5,000.
- ☑ Conducted focus groups comprised of advertisers, end-users and general membership representatives (1) to determine if *The Experience* magazine effectively represents the community in its current format by providing in a single publication information to those relocating, visiting (tourists) or seeking general information about the community and (2) to determine if

Economic Indicators

October Unemployment Rate				
	2003	2004		
Bradley County	5.0%	4.7%		
Tennessee	5.5%	5.1%		
United States	6.0%	5.5%		
November Building Permits				
	2003	2004		
Residential				
Number Issued	36	54		
Permit Value	\$3,814,852	\$6,172,386		
YTD Number Issued	620	642		
YTD Permit Value	\$51,432,123	\$67,192,032		
Commercial	2003	2004		
Number Issued	8	8		
Permit Value	\$1,586,086	\$3,298,875		
YTD Number Issued	86	89		
YTD Permit Value	\$59,708,312	\$45,407,941		
Local Sales Tax Collected				
	Nov 2003	Jan-Nov 2003	Nov 2004	Jan-Nov 2004
Local Sales Tax	\$1,498,403	\$15,577,545	\$1,563,738	\$16,962,269
Retail Sales				
	June 2003*	Jan-June 2003*	June 2004*	Jan-June 2004*
Bradley County	\$80,444,084	\$454,810,166	\$86,179,582	\$511,451,228
Tennessee	\$5,824,282,757	\$32,842,930,454	\$6,219,267,646	\$35,675,305,054

*Unemployment rates, local sales tax and retail sales figures are the latest state-provided figures. Numbers for building permits are obtained from city and county records.



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production of the magazine in its current format is the best value for staff time and advertising dollars invested.

- ☑ Disseminated some 75 press releases from the office of the director of communications to the *Cleveland Daily Banner* and *Bradley News Weekly*, along with area radio and television stations when appropriate, to inform the community at-large of Chamber activities.
- ☑ Continued to update and produce in-house publications as needed (e.g., *General Information* sheet, membership brochures).
- ☑ Coordinated the advertising efforts and press releases for the May 2004 "Evening Shade" concerts in downtown Johnston Park.
- ☑ Continued the development of a Chamber-related photo library.
- ☑ Continued to provide publications/graphics/photographic support for all Chamber divisions and programs.
- ☑ Continued staff membership in the Cleveland Media Association. Nancy Neal, director of communications, was installed as president-elect for 2005 during the December 2004 meeting.
- ☑ Provided an instructor for the communications session of the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce Executives (TCCE) Institute March 21-23, 2004. Nancy Neal served in this capacity for the third consecutive year.
- ☑ Hosted three business communications classes from Lee University in the Chamber's conference facility to provide an overview of communications efforts and the overall work of the Chamber for students pursuing business degrees.
- ☑ Coordinated the development of a new BEST partnership logo and a new referral card for use when choosing the services of a Chamber member business.
- ☑ Coordinated development of the "One Community, One Calendar" logo and support materials. Provided staff oversight to ensure that submissions for the online calendar were suitable and grammatically correct.
- ☑ Coordinated the efforts of the Chamber's Communications Committee, which reviews and makes recommendations for communications projects.



Larry McSpadden (right) with The Bank/First Citizens Bank receives the Ambassador of the Year award at the December 2004 Chamber Coffee.

☑ Presented the Ambassador of the Year award to Larry McSpadden, The Bank/First Citizens Bank, at the December 2004 Membership Coffee.

☑ Coordinated 43 ribbon cuttings and/or groundbreaking events in 2004.

Organizational Development

Nancy Casson, Casson Art & Interiors, Chairman-Elect

The Organizational Development division of the Chamber regularly examines the internal needs of the Chamber to make sure it maintains a viable presence not just in the local community

but in regional and state arenas. Most notable in 2004 was increased use of conference facilities in the new building, which underscored the need for its construction. Listed are summaries of internal projects that pertain to the organization as a whole.

- ☑ Presented the M.C. Headrick Free Enterprise Award to Summerfield Johnston, chairman of the executive committee and former CEO of Coca Cola Enterprises and Johnston Coca Cola Bottling Group.
- ☑ Presented the Varnell Leadership Award to George "Buck" Thorogood, The Bank/First Citizens Bank.
- ☑ Implemented the first of the *Climbing to New Heights* three-year economic and community development campaign goals with the successful move into the new facility at the Village Green. Increased usage of the conference facility by members throughout the year as well as additional space for Chamber programs underscored the proven need for the facility.
- ☑ Received a \$10,000 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission to further outfit the Chamber's conference facility with wireless Internet and satellite downlink capability to enhance educational opportunities for members and the community. Implementation of the grant will begin in January 2005.
- ☑ Attended the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce Executives Association (TCCE) Volunteer Leadership Conference in Nashville in February 2004 with Chairman Keith Barrett, President Jerry Bohannon and Lou Patten representing the Chamber.
- ☑ Held two planning sessions for Board members in 2004. In late January new Board members received an orientation on program goals for the year and the *Climbing to New Heights* program. November's session highlighted progress on 2004 goals and plans for 2005.

Ambassadors

- ☑ Presented the 2004 ATHENA® Award to Barbara Walker, elementary school librarian. The award is given annually to an outstanding businesswoman to recognize contributions to the community. Susan Whitaker, tourism commissioner for the state of Tennessee, was keynote speaker.

Public Affairs

**Carl Hite, Cleveland State Community College,
Division Vice Chairman**

The Public Affairs Committee ensures that the Chamber members maintain a presence in local politics and a voice in issues that affect local business. Following are some ways this was achieved in 2004:

- ☑ Developed the 2004 Legislative Agenda, addressing federal, state and local issues that affect business. Local, state and federal officials received copies of the agenda, which also was published in the February issue of *225 Keith*, the Chamber newsletter.
- ☑ Continued active involvement of the Airport Taskforce in pursuit of a new municipal airport. The Chamber approved an \$85,105 *Climbing To New Heights* appropriation for a new airport Master Plan.
- ☑ Served as coordinator for airport planning group activities in developing the initiatives toward resolving the airport issue.
- ☑ Appeared before the County Airport Study Committee as resource for airport activity and business usage
- ☑ Approved a \$5,000 contribution to help underwrite the Chattanooga Metro Airport marketing grant for service to Dallas/Ft. Worth.
- ☑ Attended the annual Governor's Economic Development Conference and the annual Tennessee Chamber of Commerce Executives meeting.
- ☑ Attended more than 90% of County Commission and City Council meetings.
- ☑ Held Transportation Strategic Planning sessions in support of the city's street improvement projects.
- ☑ Met with Commissioner Gerald Nicely, TDOT, to promote funding for airport and street/road projects.
- ☑ Served as an active member of the Five Points/Downtown Planning and Design Board and participated in the public listening sessions.
- ☑ Attended Congressman Zach Wamp's tour and conference on Chickamauga Lock problems and his attempts to secure funding for the repairs.
- ☑ Took an active role on the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry Workers Compensation Study Committee and supported need to reform the state's workers comp system.
- ☑ Attended the Tennessee Valley Technology Corridor Summit hosted by Congressman Zach Wamp.
- ☑ Hosted Legislative Agenda dinner for local state legislators in Nashville during TCCE/ECDC reception activities.

- ☑ Participated in the TDOT Highway Project listening session concerning Corridor K.
- ☑ Attended TCCI Public Affairs Conference in Nashville.
- ☑ Participated actively on the board of directors for Southern Appalachian Partners and its development of the Ocoee River region.

Welcome our new members

The Chamber Board of Directors and staff are delighted to welcome our new members as of Dec. 8, 2004.

Belle's Attic-Le Fleur Designs

Mona Ellis, Owner
Galleries @ Five Points
251 Inman St
Cleveland TN 37312
423-715-5768
Home Furnishings

Clear Mountain Ice

Ty Cardin, Owner
1010 S Lee Hwy
Cleveland TN 37311
423-368-6220
Ice Vending

Hospice of Chattanooga Inc.

Amy Heider, Marketing Assistant
4355 Hwy 58 Ste 101
Chattanooga TN 37416
423-892-4289
Hospitals & Healthcare

Specialized Enterprises Inc.

W. Craig Pierce, Vice President
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Cleveland TN 37320-3716
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Ocoee Insurance Services

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Cleveland, Tennessee 37364
Phone: 423-476-5204
Fax: 423-476-9958



*Pam Nelson,
Owner/Executive Consultant*

2005 Program of Work

Business Development

Reba Garrison, Reba Garrison State Farm Insurance, Division Vice Chairman

GOAL: *Increase the profitability of member businesses through education, networking and services.*

Objective: Facilitate interaction between small businesses while providing opportunities for increased visibility and appropriate training.

Action Steps

- Celebrate Small Business Month during the month of May beginning with a kickoff luncheon May 2. Include networking events, quality seminars and presentation of the Mel Bedwell Small Businessperson of the Year award. Continue successful tabletop business-to-business trade fair as part of the luncheon activities.
- Explore other networking event opportunities available for members such as breakfast and lunch meetings.
- Survey small business members to determine educational and networking needs and preferences.
- Organize seminars as deemed appropriate to meet the needs of small business members of the Chamber.
- Continue the FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) program bimonthly to educate small business members on different management topics. Increase attendance.
- Expand committee membership.



Community Development

Stephen Crass, Cleveland Daily Banner, Division Vice Chairman

Overall Goal: *Enhance the quality of life in our community.*

Education

Goal: Address the growing disparity between the needed skills and actual skills for the workforce acquired through the educational systems.

Objective: Continue to manage the BEST (Business & Education Serving Together) program.

Action Steps

- Hold orientation sessions for prospective business partners.
- Continue the BEST Partnership Award, honoring the partnership that exhibits the most dynamic and successful partnership for the past year.
- Identify additional businesses to participate.
- Publicize BEST partners throughout the community.

Objective: Establish dialogue with local educators and industry to ensure coordination of efforts to meet the needs of existing and prospective industry for qualified and skilled labor.

Action Steps

- Implement the findings generated by the "Developing Tomorrow's Workforce Today" summit and follow-up session to refine the current workforce development programs and develop new ones for use with local school systems.
- Maintain close affiliation with city and county career education supervisors and other school personnel.

Objective: Establish the Chamber as a concerned, involved organization within community educational areas by creating an awareness of business/industry expectations within the classroom.

Action Steps

- Continue coordination of workforce development programs, including 11th grade Job Shadowing, Business & Industry in the Classroom, Teachers Academy, and Teachers in the Workplace.

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- Facilitate communication via the Chamber between business/industry and education within the community.
- Continue to coordinate "Ethics in the Workplace" seminars in the three local high schools with the assistance of character education coordinators in the city and county school systems.
- Implement the Tennessee Scholars program in cooperation with Bradley County Schools.
- Partner with Junior Achievement to implement *Reality Check*, a real-life budgeting activity for eighth-graders, at the three local middle schools.
- Encourage local business/industry to participate in workforce development activities.
- Encourage coordination of education services through area programs (*i.e.*, service on boards/committees of local schools, educational consortiums, and area government and business industry committees and councils).

Objective: Promote the use of the Cleveland/Bradley Chamber Foundation as a vehicle in funding educational programs.

Action Steps

- Serve as a funding conduit for cash incentive awards to "Teacher of the Year" honorees in Cleveland City and Bradley County School Systems.
- Pursue additional Foundation funds through grants, contributions and other sources.
- Serve as the funding conduit for workforce development programs.

Leadership Cleveland

Objective: Familiarize future business leaders and corporate leaders with the community and to provide exposure to volunteer opportunities while increasing leadership skills.

Action Steps—Adult Program

- Graduate the 20th anniversary class of the program with a dinner for all past participants.
- Survey past graduates of the program regarding community involvement and program impact.
- Continually improve program for 2005-06 class.

Action Steps—Youth Program

- Graduate the third Cleveland/Bradley Youth Leadership class in April 2005.

- Refine the program guidelines and requirements for the class of 2005-06.

- Recruit the 2005-06 class with 24 participants.

Allied Arts & Leisure Council

Objective: Educate the community regarding the value of arts and leisure in their quality of life and promote and support the local arts community.

Action Steps

- Continue to educate the public on arts and leisure activities in the community by maintaining the "One Community, One Calendar" website program and submitting events and information to the local newspaper.
- Facilitate access to funding for artists, organizations and special programming for schools.
- Act as a liaison between arts and leisure groups and government bodies on all levels.
- Serve as an arts education advocate and resource for youth within the community.
- Promote and encourage local artists and quality cultural programs for the community.

Convention & Visitors Bureau

Jerome Hammond, Lee University, Division Vice Chairman

GOAL: Increase growth of local tourism industry through product development, relationship building and promotion for our community, the Ocoee Region of Tennessee.

Individual, Family & Group Travel

Objective: Promote the region as a destination and stopover point to group tour operators, families and individual travelers.

Action Steps

- Apply for participation in the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development's matching advertising and co-op programs.
- Advertise in state and national publications such as the *Tennessee Vacation Guide*, *AAA Home and Away*, *Southern Living*, *Family Circle*, *Parents* and others to remain visible to the travel market.
- Publish the visitor information guide and distribute it to targeted welcome centers and rest areas across the state.

- Maintain the visitors center section of the Chamber; work with the city to direct visitors to the center through improved signage.
- Work with Bradley Square Mall to further develop mall information desk as a satellite visitors center located close to I-75.
- Continue distributing visitors guide to targeted welcome centers and rest areas across the state.
- Continue distributing rack cards to targeted brochure racks in hotels, restaurants and attractions along the I-75 corridor.
- Continue *Touch 'N' Go* kiosk advertising campaign at welcome centers.
- Participate in the East Tennessee cooperative advertising campaign, which promotes East Tennessee as a vacation destination in national magazines and newspaper inserts in a variety of markets and other publications targeting families, nature enthusiasts and heritage seekers.
- Send new visitors guide to last year's phone inquiries.
- Send new guides to youth group databases in feeder markets.

Recreation & Sporting

Objective: Promote our natural, historical and recreational resources.

Action Steps

- Assist local parks and recreation departments and other organizations in the recruitment of tournaments and other activities to the area (*e.g.*, softball, baseball, soccer, BMX races).
- Work with the recreation department to coordinate a list of all tournaments scheduled in our community.
- Continue to distribute information about sports and recreation activities in the area, including adventure activities in the Cherokee National Forest, golf, softball, baseball, soccer, fishing, skiing and all other available activities.

Meetings & Conventions

Objective: Assist organizations in preparing, planning and hosting small group meetings.

Action Steps

- Respond to and consult with organizations planning meetings.
- Gather information from local meeting planners and compile a yearly calendar of activities.
- Continually update the meetings calendar list and distribute to members of the local hospitality industry.

- Release the meeting calendar and economic impact figures to local news media.

Communications & Public Relations

Objective: Market the Ocoee Region and increase awareness of the importance of the local tourism industry.

Action Steps

- Respond in a timely manner with current and reliable information to any and all inquiries.
- Conduct biannual sales calls to key gateway welcome centers and rest areas.
- Continue to distribute one-page map pads to gateway welcome centers, hotels and outfitters.
- Maintain the CVB website, *www.visitclevelandtn.com*, accessed by visitors directly as well as through the Chamber website; promote this URL on all CVB advertising.
- Maintain current and establish new links to the CVB website on appropriate sites.
- Ensure that listings on state and regional websites and publications are current and accurate.
- Produce and distribute timely press kits to a database of travel editors and writers and follow up with calls when appropriate.
- Continue to host media and familiarization tours in conjunction with state and regional agencies, as well as seek new media opportunities.
- Schedule hospitality training for "front door" staff of the local tourism industry.
- Conduct activities in May to promote annual Tourism Week and increase awareness of the importance of the tourism industry on the local economy.
- Place timely and newsworthy press releases in local newspapers highlighting tourism activities.
- Provide information to city, county and state government officials informing them of the importance of tourism dollars and their impact on the local economy.

Product Development and Community Involvement

Objective: Assist in and encourage product development as well as efforts to improve the quality of the visitor experience.

Action Steps

- Assist local organizations in coordinating events to attract visitors to the area.
- Continue staff involvement to encourage attraction

development (e.g., historical, beautification efforts, arts and leisure activities, agricultural shows).

- ☑ Maintain a strong relationship with local attractions such as the Museum Center at Five Points, Tri-State Exhibition Center, Red Clay, Apple Valley, MainStreet Cleveland and the Cherokee National Forest. Promote these and other attractions in CVB material.
- ☑ Work closely with Southeast Tennessee Tourism Association (SETTA) and Southeast Development District on product development in the Southeast Tennessee region.
- ☑ Continue to serve with Southern Appalachian Partners to increase economic development opportunities in the Ocoee Region and surrounding states.
- ☑ Approach the Charleston community about developing heritage sites in the area.
- ☑ Seek further co-op opportunities to promote or develop materials for non-profit attractions or groups interested in collaborative marketing projects.

Research & Travel Trends

Objective: Continue to define target markets and ideal visitor profiles, thereby making marketing efforts more effective.

Action Steps

- ☑ Refer to and follow recommendations in the research project and marketing plan developed by Randall Travel Marketing. Update conversion rates as needed.
- ☑ Compile 2004 visitor phone inquiries, sorting by areas of request, source of information and peak months of inquiries.
- ☑ Track inquiries, visits and leads generated on the CVB website.
- ☑ Attend state and regional meetings to stay updated on tourism trends and legislative issues.
- ☑ Attend educational conferences and seminars when available, affordable and appropriate.
- ☑ Continue subscriptions to trade publications to receive current industry information.
- ☑ Continue membership in Travel Industry of America, the leading source of tourism information and statistics.

Check the accuracy of your
membership listing at
www.clevelandchamber.com

Economic Development

Tom Wheeler, Cleveland Utilities, Division Vice Chairman

GOAL: *Enhance the quality of life for all citizens of Cleveland/Bradley County by providing them with economic opportunity and empowering them with the skills to take advantage of these opportunities.*

Operational

Objective: Ensure the existence of a qualified economic development organization for Cleveland/Bradley County.

Action Steps

- ☑ Continue the *Climbing to New Heights* CEO Forum to involve Cleveland/Bradley CEOs, business owners and other decision makers in workforce development strategies and implementation plans.
- ☑ Continue work with the Bradley/Cleveland Industrial Development Board to further develop and market the Hiwassee River Industrial Park and the Cleveland/Bradley Industrial Park.
- ☑ Continue *Climbing to New Heights* provisions for marketing and promoting economic development activities.
- ☑ Begin implementation of the Economic & Community Development Strategic Plan created through TVA's *Community Readiness for Economic Development* (C-RED) program.
- ☑ Continue to upgrade computer systems and the Chamber's website and maintain a comprehensive database of existing buildings and sites.
- ☑ Provide opportunities for staff and volunteer training and development.
- ☑ Create venues that will encourage increased dialogue and foster a spirit of cooperation between and among the city of Cleveland, Bradley County and area business leaders on important community and economic development issues.

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Existing Industry

Objective: Facilitate the retention and expansion of local industries.

Action Steps

- Conduct 50 one-on-one Existing Industry Interviews annually with CEOs and plant managers of Cleveland/Bradley existing industries to gain confidential input into existing industry needs and to identify and address specific issues that threaten the economic competitiveness of local companies.
- Review the current Existing Industry survey instrument and revise as needed.
- Compile, analyze and publicize survey report information gathered from industry/business visits annually.
- Respond to companies' immediate needs as articulated in industry/business visits and/or other means of communication.
- Establish stronger partnerships between business and education to identify and incorporate necessary skill training and understanding of business/workforce realities into school curriculum.
- Host activity(s) that provide recognition and appreciation for contributions of industries/businesses to local economy.
- Coordinate programs for industry participation in workforce development programs to ensure a viable workforce for the future.
- Provide staff support for the Quality Council Steering Committee and coordinate Quality Council programming.
- Host seminars in cooperation with Cleveland State Community College, American Society for Quality/Chattanooga Section 1101 and other appropriate organizations.
- Provide services for expansion and incentive assistance to local businesses interested in expansion or relocation.



Providing aerial views of industrial land is often a vital part of the process when working with prospects considering relocation or expansion in Bradley County.

- Exhibit at and/or attend industrial trade shows.
- Continue the recruitment of targeted industries, companies and other potential recruitment prospects that qualify as "complementary industry" as identified in the Economic and Community Development Strategic Plan resulting from the C-RED program.
 - Make personal visits to companies that demonstrate interest in locating operations in Cleveland/Bradley County and host their representatives during visits to the community.
 - Evaluate advertising efforts in light of expanded marketing efforts and funding.
 - Maintain and enhance relationship with the state of Tennessee Economic Development Department, SEIDA (Southeast Industrial Development Association) and TVA for regional marketing efforts.

- Maintain the community's Three-Star status.
- Support community revitalization programs and retail/commercial growth of the Five Points area.
- Utilize the new Economic Development Center's state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment to enhance industrial recruitment and retention activities.
- Continue and enhance our efforts to provide community information and proposals to our industrial prospects in electronic form.

Workforce Development and Existing Industry/ Business Support

Objective: Conduct community-wide implementation of short-term and long-term initiatives that address area employers' needs for an expanded, skilled, competent and competitive workforce in close cooperation with local business, education and civic leaders.

Action Steps

- Encourage local business/industry to participate in workforce development activities.
- Refine current workforce development programs and develop new ones based on findings generated by the "Developing Tomorrow's Workforce Today" summit and the follow-up session.
- Develop and implement an adult workforce development certificate program for the underemployed and unemployed of Cleveland/Bradley County in cooperation

Recruitment/Marketing

Objective: Encourage capital investment and create quality jobs.

Action Steps

- Support the regional and state targeted marketing plan.

with Cleveland State Community College if local business/industry desires the program.

- Continue efforts to establish stronger partnerships between business and education to identify and incorporate necessary skill training and understanding of business/workforce realities into school curriculum through continuation of such programs as the Teachers Academy, Youth Leadership, Teachers in the Workplace, BEST Program, Business & Industry in the Classroom, and Job Shadowing for high school juniors.
- Implement the Tennessee Scholars program in cooperation with Bradley County Schools in an effort to better prepare the workforce through a more rigorous curriculum and increased emphasis on work ethic through community service and attendance requirements.
- Continue to respond to industry needs for employees with a strong work ethic by coordinating and enhancing "Ethics in the Workplace" seminars in the three local high schools.



- Partner with Junior Achievement to implement *Reality Check* at the three local middle schools to

foster the value of education and the need to become responsible citizens.

- Spearhead efforts to increase the number of readily qualified and employable high school and post-secondary graduates in the local workforce in close cooperation with the Cleveland City and Bradley County Schools, Cleveland State Community College, Lee University, and other educational and training institutions.

Information Resources

Objective: Ensure the availability of accurate and up-to-date community information supporting economic development efforts.

Action Steps

- Maintain and update available industrial buildings and sites with SEIDA, the state of Tennessee and TVA.
- Participate quarterly in the ACCRA cost-of-living index.
- Update the local industry directory at least biannually.
- Maintain and update the economic development section of the Chamber's website.
- Update computer hardware and software to enhance our efforts to provide economic development prospects with relevant, current information in a quality electronic format.

Membership Development

Cameron Fisher, Church of God International Offices, Division Vice Chairman

Goal: Provide the membership base to finance programs and services while providing tangible benefits to members.

Retention

Objective: Achieve a 90-percent retention rate for 2005.

Action Steps

- Host new-member receptions in late spring and fall to brief new members on programs and services and to provide an opportunity for networking with other new members.
- Continue to recognize continuing memberships through an enhancement to the membership renewal plaque and recognition in the area media.
- Develop a standing membership retention committee.
- Develop increased retention opportunities through the expansion of the membership services coordinator position to full-time.

Programs & Services

Objective: Establish the Chamber as an organization with definable benefits.

Action Steps

- Establish a membership program committee to investigate and evaluate membership opportunities and programs.
- Establish a quarterly Dutch-treat membership luncheon with business-related speakers.
- Continue to investigate opportunities to serve members through the collective group buying power for discounts and special rates.
- Continue the popular Membership Coffee program.

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- Coordinate the Ralph Buckner Sr. Memorial Chamber Classic Golf Tournament in the fall and expand the tournament to ensure increased member participation.

Development

Objective: Secure 125 new members in 2005.

Action Steps

- Continue staff efforts in membership sales.
- Conduct a volunteer membership campaign in February with an incentive trip as a reward for volunteers.
- Continually update and improve membership leads files.
- Begin a structured contact program with prospective members.

Communications

Objective: Inform members and the community of the work of the Chamber and the services provided.

Action Steps

- Develop and budget for a marketing plan for the Chamber to educate businesses, the public and the media.
- Continue to publish a monthly newsletter, *225 Keith*, offering monthly advertising opportunities, member business profiles and news items of interest to the membership.
- Establish a means to secure information about the goods/ services provided by new member businesses, and disseminate monthly press releases recognizing these new members.
- Establish an archive of information about all Chamber-member businesses to facilitate publication efforts and to enhance referral efforts.
- Implement an appreciation effort for Chamber-member business referrals.
- Continue to investigate opportunities to recognize an increased number of members via publicity efforts in the monthly newsletter.
- Publish *The Resource* (membership directory) with a goal of increased advertising sales in conjunction with efforts by the membership services coordinator.
- Publish the sixth edition of *The Experience* (four-color quality-of-life publication) with an emphasis on greater distribution.
- Enhance communications efforts with *Climbing to New Heights* investors.
- Continue to disseminate press releases from the office of

the director of communications to the *Cleveland Daily Banner* and *Bradley News Weekly*, along with area radio and television stations when appropriate, to inform the community at-large of Chamber activities.

- Continue to create a greater regional presence by establishing better communication links to media outlets across the region, particularly with regard to such programs as the Economic and Community Development Strategic Plan and workforce development initiatives.
- Maintain electronic communication with Chamber members and the general public through online press releases and an online version of the Chamber newsletter accessed through the Chamber's website; this will provide added value to those members advertising in the Chamber's newsletter.
- Continue to promote and facilitate the "One Community, One Calendar" efforts to provide a comprehensive community calendar of events.
- Issue an "Annual Report to the Community" summarizing significant economic, community and tourism development activities and the effects of those activities.
- Continue to update and/or produce in-house publications.
- Establish a comprehensive publications calendar to strengthen publicity for all Chamber-sponsored programs and events.
- Update photo files, maintaining stock photos for the various programs and divisions of the Chamber.
- Provide publications support for all Chamber divisions and programs, and preserve a record of all major events both in print and photography.
- Attend communications-related conferences and seminars when available, affordable and appropriate.

Ambassadors

Objective: Assist with public relations and retention programs for members.

Action Steps

- Increase participation in the group by at least eight new members.
- Sponsor and coordinate the ATHENA® Award luncheon in August to recognize the contributions of professional women to the community.
- Assist with Chamber-related events as necessary.
- Initiate personal member interview program at Membership Coffees.
- Continue Ambassador of the Year program.

Organizational Development

Jeff Morelock, Insurance Inc., Chairman-Elect

Goal: *Ensure that the internal needs of the Chamber are examined and addressed on a continual basis to preserve the organization's viability.*

Finances

Objective: Ensure equitable funding across divisions and maximize revenue sources.



Action Steps

- Continue to investigate supplemental financial support and possible areas of additional revenue.
- Maintain dues structure to meet program needs and coordinated with economic conditions.
- Continue implementation of *Climbing to New Heights* programs as they apply to financial support for expanded programs and/or personnel and make budget adjustments as necessary.

Staff

Objective: Maintain a highly motivated and professional staff.

Action Steps

- Continuously review employee benefits and policies.
- Continue investigation of a performance-based incentives plan for staff.

Board of Directors

Objective: Provide opportunities for increased involvement in and better awareness of the operations of the Chamber.

Action Steps

- Orient new directors and officers on the responsibilities and role of the Chamber director.
- Emphasize directors and staff presence at governmental meetings and Chamber events.
- Coordinate annual Board of Directors retreat for program and professional development.
- Host annual Past Presidents/Chairmen Breakfast.

Public Affairs

Carl Hite, Cleveland State Community College, Division Vice Chairman

Goal: *Improve the influence of the Chamber in governmental affairs.*

Objective: Inform and represent our members on legislative and governmental matters affecting the business environment of Cleveland/Bradley County.

Action Steps

- Compile an agenda of pertinent issues at the local, state and federal level having direct influence on the economy and business environment of our members, publishing it in the Chamber's monthly newsletter and providing it to the city and county elected officials, state legislators and congressional delegation.
- Establish the committee's focus as a pro-business advocate for the community and convey this position on issues requiring quick response to the applicable governmental agencies.
- Continue emphasis on, support for and construction of a new community general aviation airport through the Airport Task Force.
- Pursue street and road improvement projects in Cleveland and Bradley County as addressed in the Comprehensive City/County Road Plan.
- Work with city and county governments in securing funding for street and road projects.
- Promote the initiative for TennCare reform in Tennessee.
- Serve as a member of the Tennessee Prosperity Project Steering Committee in establishing a political review group at the state level.
- Attend City Council and County Commission meetings and disseminate pertinent information from those meetings to Chamber members.
- Enhance close informational relationship with the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry to secure governmental/business information at the state level.
- Continue the Chamber's advocacy for the rebuilding of the Chickamauga Lock, quick completion of the Dalton Pike project and construction of the Corridor K road project.
- Create venues that will encourage increased dialogue and foster a spirit of cooperation between and among the city of Cleveland, Bradley County and business leaders.
- Support the emphasis for quality and progressive elected officials.

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Nancy A. Neal, Editor
Jerry Bohannon, Publisher

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