

2007

KEITH

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Cleveland/Bradley Chamber of Commerce

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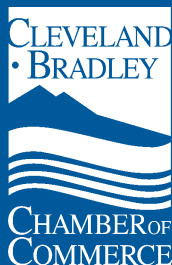
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Happy New Year!

81st
Annual Meeting
Jan. 23, 2007



Chamber of Commerce achieves 3-Star rating

2006 Annual Report to the Membership

Happy New Year! As 2007 begins, we celebrate achievement of 3-Star Accreditation from the United States Chamber of Commerce for our effective organizational procedures and outstanding contribution to positive change in the community.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world's largest business federation, representing more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector and region.

The Cleveland/Bradley Chamber was one of 10 chambers across the country to receive this award

at the Nov. 9 U.S. Chamber board meeting. Of the 6,936 chambers in the United States, only 310 are accredited, ranking the local chamber in the top 5 percent. Only 11 chambers in Tennessee are accredited.

"Accreditation is one of the highest honors bestowed on local chambers fighting for pro-growth and jobs policies at the federal, state and local level," Thomas J. Donohue, U.S. Chamber President and CEO, said. "We are proud to recognize Cleveland/Bradley Chamber of Commerce and its members for helping to advance the principles of free enterprise—the bedrock of this prestigious award."

As the only program of its kind in the country, U.S. Chamber Accreditation validates an organization as having solid programs, clear organizational procedures and as being a catalyst for positive action in the community. To achieve accreditation, a chamber must meet minimum standards in their operations and programs, including areas of governance, government affairs and technology. This extensive self-review can take an organization from three to six months to complete.

Bernadette Douglas, senior vice president, explained that this was the Chamber's fifth experience with the five-year cycle accreditation process, marking our 25th year as an accredited chamber although the 2006 revision of the U.S. Chamber's accreditation program no longer recognizes the longevity component.

"Although it is time consuming," Douglas said, "it's a great exercise for our volunteers and staff as we examine every aspect of our program and operations and facilities."

Accreditation depends on the chamber's ability to successfully meet specific criteria, including accountability, financial transparency, employee involvement, political advocacy and community involvement. The accrediting board, a panel of U.S. Chamber board members, votes on the final accreditation.

"Accreditation recognizes chambers whose operating procedures and commitment to community stand out from the crowd," JP Moery, senior vice president of Federation Relations, said. "It proves that a dollar invested into these organizations is a dollar well spent."

As part of the process, the U.S. Chamber provides specific feedback based on how to improve

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Annual Report

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the organization. The Final Point Form noted that "this chamber has made significant progress on achieving its short-term goals, including working to increase tourism revenue in the region and partnering with the Industrial Development Board to develop the Hiwassee River Industrial Park. . . . The chamber has made great strides in reaching its long-term goals, including mobilizing leaders of the corporate community to support a new airport, exceeding new member recruitment goals, increasing tourist traffic, leading efforts to increase recent graduates in the local workforce, and providing expansion assistance to local businesses. The chamber should maintain this momentum and seek further progress in these areas."

An overview of the efforts in 2006 by division will illustrate that we achieved most of our objectives and met many of our goals and subsequently earned the U.S. Chamber accreditation. The summaries on pages 2-7 will give you a better understanding of what we do for you and your business and subsequently for our community. We believe you will conclude that you made a sound investment with your Chamber membership. A detailed version of our Annual Report is available at the Chamber offices.

Following the Annual Report is our 2007 Program of Work, which will illustrate our commitment to do as the U.S. Chamber suggests: "maintain this momentum and seek further progress."

Business Development

According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, more than 96 percent of its members are "small businesses with 100 or fewer employees, 70 percent of which have 10 or fewer employees" (September 26, 2006). Small businesses play a

big role in boosting the economy of Cleveland/Bradley County as well, and the creation of new businesses by entrepreneurs is an important key to our economic growth. Therefore, the Business Development division of the Chamber of Commerce continues to focus on increasing the profitability of member businesses through education, networking and services.

Two programs—one new and one continued—marked the importance of serving our small business sector. Early in 2006 the Small Business Committee launched "SmartStart," a new program for startup businesses in conjunction with the Small



The Telephone Doctor® presented a national seminar on customer service for small businesses.

Business Development Center (SBDC) at Cleveland State Community College. SmartStart focuses on improving the success rate of new businesses in the area through Chamber membership and counseling services provided by the SBDC and volunteer Chamber members. This program alone netted 12 new Chamber members.

Continuation of the "Top Tools for Business" monthly seminar series offered educational opportunities designed specifically for small businesses. More than 100 Chamber members attended programs taught by local/regional experts on such topics as employment issues, marketing and financial issues for small businesses and allowed time for questions and answers.

In addition to these efforts, the Chamber continued the Business-to-Business Trade Fair and a mini Business Showcase and offered two national seminars, one by The Telephone Doctor® on customer service and the other by Constant Training on *Professional Sales Skills* and *Building Positive Attitudes in the Workplace*.

Jack Robbins, Cleveland Risk Management & Insurance, served as vice chairman of Business Development.

Community Development

Although measuring a community's quality of life is fairly subjective, *quality of life* is best described as a feeling of well being, fulfillment or satisfaction resulting from external factors. Incorporated in the Chamber's mission statement is a commitment to providing the "highest quality of life for our community." Therefore, enhancing the quality of life in Cleveland/Bradley County remained a principal concern for Chamber staff and volunteers in 2006 and included emphasis on education, leadership training, and artistic development and opportunities.



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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Community Development

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The sheer number of education programs administered or supported by the Chamber of Commerce reflects a long-term commitment to ensuring a prepared workforce. In 2006 the Chamber went into local schools with such programs as Job Shadowing, which impacted 275 students; Ethics in the Workplace, which reached 34 high school freshmen classrooms; Reality Check, a real-life budgeting activity at the middle school level in partnership with Junior Achievement; and Choices®. It also provided opportunities for teachers to re-enter the



Business/industry representatives teach Ethics in the Workplace sessions.

workplace outside the field of education through Teachers Academy, which creates a greater awareness of what employers need and what students need to learn before entering the workplace in a four-week "summer school."

Leadership training programs for adults and students both added new sessions in 2006 focusing on tourism and community history. The high school students added a service learning project to their nine-month program by raising money to assist with construction and donating "sweat equity" for Habitat for Humanity of Cleveland.

The Chamber's Allied Arts Council raised more than \$28,000 for arts education and programming through the April 2006 Chair-ries Jubilee "Creations and Renovations" auction. Subsequently, the council awarded \$10,470 in grants to 20 projects in various public and private schools and to the Museum Center at Five Points for arts education. The AAC



Mercy's Bridge at Evening Shade

also sponsored the 11th season of the Evening Shade concert series in Johnston Park in May each Friday evening. As many as 400 attended each of the family-friendly concerts to hear such artists as Karen Peck and New River and Knoxville's Flashback

along with local talent Mercy's Bridge and Lisa Geren and Donna Simpson who presented a segment of "Always . . . Patsy Cline." A grant from the Tennessee Arts Commission, local sponsors and Allied Arts Council (AAC) monies helped fund the free concert series.

Jerome Hammond, Lee University, served as vice chairman for Community Development.

Convention & Visitors Bureau

The latest tourism figures released by the Travel Industry of America reflect a significant 9.45 percent increase in tourism expenditures in Bradley County, bringing the local tourism expenditures to \$98.6 million in 2005. This represents an estimated savings of about \$230 per household.

The continued increase in tourism dollars is linked in part to marketing efforts by the Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB), which included the annual production of 75,000 visitors guides detailing local attractions, restaurants, lodging and other information for travelers. Development of a media plan that included insertions in *Southern Living*, *American Profile*, *USA Weekend*, *Country Living*, *Frommer's Budget Travel* and a variety of newspapers also helped reach new audiences. The bureau also partnered with MainStreet Cleveland to place an effective *Southern Living* ad promoting downtown Cleveland events. Overall, visitor inquiries and responses to advertisements reflected a 33-percent increase in 2006. The Convention & Visitors Bureau received matching advertising grants from the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development in 2006 to supplement the media buy.

In preparation for a new travel season, the CVB has already placed an ad in the 2007 *Tennessee Vacation Guide*. Because Cleveland/Bradley County is designated a Three-Star Community, the CVB received a \$1,000 credit for the advertisement.

The Convention & Visitors Bureau rolled out a new website this year, www.VisitClevelandTN.com, following recommendations from industry professionals. Although the site is accessible through the Chamber's website, www.clevelandchamber.com, it functions independently to attract "tourism traffic" to the unique tourist opportunities in Southeast Tennessee.

Without product development, the CVB has little to gain the attention of tourists. In 2006 the CVB secured funding for and coordinated production of a newly designed *Walking Tour of Historic Downtown Cleveland* guide book. The CVB also worked closely with the Southeast Development District, the fiscal administrators of SETTA (Southeast Tennessee Tourism Association), to develop tourism products in the 10 counties

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Convention & Visitors Bureau

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of Southeast Tennessee. Among these was the production and rollout of a religious heritage trail, *On the Gloryland Road*, the first known heritage trail in the country featuring faith-based sites and geared toward tourists. SETTA also released a supplemental brochure, *The Pentecostal Heritage Trail*, at a media conference in conjunction with the Museum Center at Five Points' exhibit, "Sweet Harmony," a history of Southern gospel music in the Ocoee Region. The supplemental brochure details the historical sites of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements in Southeast Tennessee.

In related efforts, the CVB continued to work with the Charleston community on heritage development and is assisting the community in researching possible registry of an historic roadway on the National Register of Historic Places.

Without an informed public, though, tourism efforts fall short if visitors do not realize "What's there to do around here?" when they visit our community. The CVB hosted the third annual Hospitality Fair in the spring featuring Ramay Winchester, specialist with the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, who presented two "May I Help You?" customer service training sessions. About 80 "frontline" people attended from retail stores, hotels, restaurants, outfitters and other businesses with customer contact.

Christy Griffith, Bank of Cleveland, served as vice chairman of the Convention & Visitors Bureau division of the Chamber.

Economic Development

2006 was an exceptionally busy year for the Chamber's Economic Development Council (EDC) and the Bradley/Cleveland Industrial Development Board (IDB). The year's biggest news was the location of the new \$30 million, 850,000-square-foot Eastern Lighting Distribution Center (ELDC) in the Hiwassee River Industrial Park, the park's first tenant. The EDC and IDB approved two Payment In Lieu of Tax (PILOT) projects, one to induce the ELDC to locate here and the other to assist Maytag with a retention and expansion project. Whirlpool Corporation later purchased Maytag. The Industrial Development Board also began the engineering design, permitting and grading for a 100,000-square-foot speculative industrial building in the Hiwassee River Industrial Park. Construction on the building will begin in early 2007.

Related to these activities are marketing efforts that continued to strengthen and improve the visibility of the local community



A November 2006 aerial photo of the long-awaited first tenant, Eastern Lighting Distribution Center, in the Hiwassee River Industrial Park

both nationally and internationally. The EDC participated with regional, state and TVA efforts to market our area through advertising, trade shows, trade missions and continuous improvements to our online marketing materials.

The Chattanooga and Knoxville regions joined forces to promote the I-75 corridor to Canadian companies interested in expanding operations into the United States and participated in a regional industrial recruiting mission to Ontario, Canada.

The EDC continued to maintain and update available industrial buildings and site databases with the Southeast Industrial Development Association, TVA, and the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. The council also began a new partnership with TVA to use their Internet property system on the Chamber of Commerce's Economic Development website.

As part of its marketing efforts, the EDC participated in the Southeast Industrial Development Association's new regional marketing magazine, *Southeast Resource*, to promote our region to site consultants, manufacturers and businesses looking for new locations. The 19 new prospect inquiries recorded and nine visits hosted in 2006 reflect the success of our marketing efforts touting Cleveland as a good place to do business. The EDC also hosted a multinational contingent from the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) and attended their conference on "Doing Business in Japan" in Chattanooga.

In 2006 Cleveland/Bradley County received Three-Star Community certification from the governor for community and economic development for the 15th consecutive year, again confirming that Cleveland/Bradley County is a good place to do business.

Because Cleveland and Bradley County's economy sustained its steady growth, additional commercial projects, capital investments and the total value of building permits reflected significant activity. More specifically, the value of commercial

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Economic Development

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and residential building permits in the Cleveland/Bradley County area for 2006 (as of October 2006) totaled \$142.5 million (\$68 million commercial and \$74.5 million residential). New capital investment in the Eastern Lighting Distribution Center, Sky Angel/Dominion Video Customer Service Center and satellite uplink facility, and Lynnco's International Paper and Michigan Avenue warehouses totaled more than \$30 million.

Other notable new and expanded businesses included Horizon Center (travel center), CVS Pharmacy, Easy Auto Corporate Office, First Tennessee Bank branch, First National Bank of Cleveland, Tennessee Valley Credit Union, Tarver Distributing expansion, Captain D's restaurant and office, United Community Bank, Southeast Bank and Trust, Tri State Warehouse, Oliver's Restaurant, Quality Machine, Athens Federal, Burke's Outlet, Firehouse Subs and The Rush Fitness Center.

Based on 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 (91.4 compared to the national average of 100) indicates that Cleveland's cost of living is 8.6 percent below the national average.

Existing industry efforts facilitate the retention and expansion of local industries. To determine the needs and concerns of local industries, members of the Existing Industry Committee interviewed 45 manufacturing and service companies using a formal survey, which will be compiled and distributed in 2007. To keep local industries abreast of changes and trends in manufacturing and to facilitate training, the Quality Council offered sessions on such topics as Economic Impacts of a GREEN Building," "First-Line/Front-Line Supervision: The Most Important Level in All Your Organization," and "The Use of Near Infrared Technology to Help Ensure Quality."

Staff also worked extensively with the state of Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development's Southeast Tennessee and TVA field service coordinators for existing industry on matters pertaining to local industries and 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.

Our industrial base ensures a stable local economy. To recognize their contributions, the Chamber hosted an Industry Appreciation luncheon in June 2006 and honored three local industries: Duracell Global Business Management Group, Eaton Hydraulics and Manufacturers Chemicals LP.



Workforce development remained a primary focus to ensure qualified employees for business/industry. The Tennessee Scholars program, a rewards-and-recognition program designed to encourage students to complete a more rigorous high school curriculum, continues to impact students in the Bradley County and Cleveland City School Systems. Currently, some 145 seniors are on track to graduate in May 2007 as Tennessee

Scholars with more than 675 students involved in the program.

The second and third Community Workforce Initiative, an adult workforce development program, continued to concentrate on classes for those underemployed and unemployed of Cleveland/Bradley County. This program is coordinated in partnership with Cleveland State Community College.

Following Chamber facilitation of a request and application from a local manufacturer to the Tennessee Department of Labor &

Workforce Development Incumbent Worker Training funds, United Knitting received \$30,000 for worker training on a new product line. Other employers received short-term workforce solutions through contacts with local service providers.

Tom Wheeler, Cleveland Utilities, served as division vice chairman for Economic Development.

Membership Development

The Chamber continues to investigate and coordinate efforts to provide benefits to members through networking opportunities and communications efforts. The Chamber achieved an 85-percent retention rate in the number of members renewing their memberships for 2006. More than 38 of the 78 new business members and nine affiliate members who joined in 2006 attended a New Member Reception in the Chamber's conference facility in December to network with other new members and meet Chamber officers, directors and staff.

With an increased focus on retention, Membership Director Gina Akins made more than 240 contacts with new and existing

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Membership Development

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members during 2006 via personal or electronic visits to communicate membership benefits. The continued monthly networking Coffees averaged over 100 members in attendance. Akins also coordinated 48 ribbon cuttings and/or groundbreaking events in 2006.

Recognition of longtime members—those with more than 40 years of consecutive investment in Chamber membership—was a highlight of the membership programs this year and was complemented by a reception, PowerPoint presentation showcasing their years of membership, and a detailed article in the *Cleveland Daily Banner* acknowledging their continued membership.

The communications division continued to produce the Chamber's monthly newsletter in a print format, as well as an



online version on the Chamber's website; the annual membership and buyer's guide, *The Resource*, with opportunities for members to advertise; and *The Experience*, the Chamber's quality-of-life relocation magazine with a print run of 5,000.

Some 95 press releases were disseminated in 2006 to the *Cleveland Daily Banner*, *Bradley News* and *Chattanooga Times-Free Press*, along with area radio and television stations, to inform the community at-large of Chamber activities. Two major economic development announcements provided opportunity to coordinate two press conferences that evoked response from regional print and television media representatives for the announcement of the location of Sky Angel/Dominion Video Customer Service Center and satellite uplink facility to Cleveland and the location of the new Eastern Lighting Distribution Center (ELDC) in the Hiwassee River Industrial Park.

Local radio stations offered airtime to the staff for a new weekly radio spot to highlight Chamber programming and Chamber-related events on Brewer Broadcasting stations beginning in March and monthly with WCLE in November.

Staff continued to oversee the submissions for the online

calendar of community events, "One Community, One Calendar," and to upload them to the Chamber's website, www.clevelandchamber.com.

Realizing that volunteers are the lifeblood of the Chamber, those recognized for specific efforts in 2006 include Gail Gray, retired, Cleveland Utilities—Ambassador of the Year, and Mike Bales, retired, Whirlpool Corporation—Existing Industry Committee Member of the Year.

Cameron Fisher, Church of God International Offices, served as Membership Development vice chairman.

Organizational Development

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 as well. The division encompassed Chamber finances, staff,

board of directors and the overall organization.

Following months of self-evaluation, the Chamber of Commerce successfully attained a Three-Star Accredited Status with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Accreditation program, marking the Chamber's 25th year of accreditation. The Chamber is one of only 11 accredited chambers in Tennessee.

An ever-changing technology prompted applications for grants to upgrade equipment for the Chamber offices. The Chamber 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. The Chamber also received a \$3,700 grant for TVA through their Technology Equipment Grant program to allow for software/hardware upgrades in the Chamber offices.

The presentation of two prestigious awards took place at the 80th Annual Meeting in January 2006. The brother-and sister team of Dan Cooke and Becky Cooke Smith, Cooke's Food Stores and Panera Bread, received the M.C. Headrick Free Enterprise Award. Jeff Morelock, president of Insurance Incorporated, received the Robert Varnell Leadership Award.

Brenda Lawson, Brenda Lawson & Associates LLC, served as vice chairman for Organizational Development.



Longtime members Steve Robinson, Cleveland Plywood Co., Tom Wheeler, Cleveland Utilities, and Bob Reffner, Hardwick Clothes, were recognized for more than 40 years of consecutive Chamber membership.



A \$10,000 ARC grant outfitted the Chamber's conference with wireless Internet and satellite downlink capability.

Public Affairs

The Public Affairs Committee ensures that the Chamber members maintain a presence in local politics and a voice in issues that affect local business. The 2006 Legislative Agenda addressed federal, state and local issues that affect business; local, state and federal officials received copies of the agenda.

The community made great strides in 2006 toward securing a new general aviation airport, and the Chamber strongly supported the Cleveland Municipal Airport Authority's efforts to do so. The Transportation Task Force also advocated a good transportation infrastructure to sustain continued growth. The Chamber also promoted "Get Out the Vote" initiatives during the busy 2006 campaign season so that businesses could make their voice heard.

The Chamber also conveyed its position on good eminent domain legislation to our U.S. Senators and backed the need for federal legislation in support of healthcare programs for small businesses.

Mike Thomasson, First National Bank of Cleveland, served as vice chairman for Public Affairs.

Please make a note . . .

You should have received information about your 2007 investment in the Chamber of Commerce. Please note that for inclusion in the 2007 edition of *The Resource*, the membership directory and buyer's guide, dues **must be paid by March 18, 2007**.

Thank you for all you do to make Cleveland/Bradley County a great place to do business.

Economic Indicators

October Unemployment Rate				
	2005	2006		
Bradley County	5.1%	4.1%		
Tennessee	5.6%	4.5%		
United States	5.0%	4.4%		
November Building Permits				
	2005	2006		
Residential				
Number Issued	53	42		
Permit Value	\$7,209,041	\$6,824,000		
YTD Number Issued	686	664		
YTD Permit Value	\$90,073,625	\$81,360,708		
Commercial	2005	2006		
Number Issued	11	4		
Permit Value	\$2,821,000	\$1,650,574		
YTD Number Issued	114	114		
YTD Permit Value	\$40,346,092	\$69,637,590		
Local Sales Tax Collected				
	Nov 2005	Jan-Nov 2005	Nov 2006	Jan-Nov 2006
Local Sales Tax	\$1,517,793	\$17,541,382	\$1,573,903	\$18,424,035
Retail Sales				
	June 2005*	Jan-June 2005*	June 2006*	Jan-June 2006*
Bradley County	\$92,209,758	\$527,032,993	\$98,150,264	\$549,730,079
Tennessee	\$6,890,806,018	\$38,134,818,946	\$7,381,406,688	\$40,911,092,718

*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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2007 Program of Work

"The Cleveland/Bradley Chamber of Commerce is a quality organization dedicated to the business development of our members, the economic growth of our region, and the highest quality of life for our community, the Ocoee Region of Tennessee."

This mission statement guides every facet of the Chamber's Program of Work, a written document that defines our seven divisions by outlining our goals and objectives and detailing the strategies for achieving them. Following is the Chamber's "blueprint" for the year 2007.

Business Development

Division Vice Chairman: *Bill Varnell*, Hilliard Lyons Inc.

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

☐ Continue the "SmartStart" program for small business start-up programs with refinements in partnership with the Small Business Development Center at Cleveland State Community College. This program provides education and support for start-up businesses during the crucial early months of operation. Further develop the program for the 12 businesses enrolled in the program in 2006.

☐ Celebrate Small Business Month during the month of May, beginning with a kickoff luncheon May 7. 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.

☐ Continue "Top Tools for Business" program to provide an educational opportunity for members on the third Wednesday of each month at noon.

☐ Investigate additional opportunities to provide programs and services to the small business members of the Chamber.

☐ Expand committee membership.

JANUARY MEMBERSHIP COFFEE

Host: *Five Star Food Service*

Where: *Cleveland/Bradley Chamber of Commerce*

When: *Tuesday, Jan. 9, at 8:30 a.m.*

Community Development

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

OVERALL GOAL: Enhance the quality of life in our community.

Education

GOAL: Coordinate business support for educational programs within the community.

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

Action Steps

☐ Identify additional businesses and hold orientation sessions for prospective BEST partners.

☐ Continue the BEST Partnership Award, honoring partnerships that exhibit the most dynamic and successful partnerships for the past year.

☐ Publicize BEST partners and partnership activities throughout the community.



Objective: Continue 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

☐ Maintain close affiliation with city and county career education supervisors and other local school personnel and representatives of Cleveland State Community College and Lee University on workforce development issues.

☐ Encourage coordination of education services through participating in area programs (*i.e.*, service on boards/committees of local schools, educational consortiums, and area government and business/industry committees and councils).

☐ Partner with Junior Achievement to continue Reality Check at the three local middle schools to foster the value of education and the need to become responsible citizens.

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

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Community Development

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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 provide exposure to volunteer opportunities while increasing leadership skills.

Action Steps—Adult Program

- Survey past graduates of the program regarding community involvement and program impact.
- Continually improve the program for the 2006-07 class.

Action Steps—Youth Program

- Graduate the fifth Cleveland/Bradley Youth Leadership class in April 2007.
- Refine the class project and the selection process for the class of 2007-08.
- Recruit the 2007-08 class with 24 participants.

Allied Arts Council

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

Action Steps

- Continue to educate the public on arts 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 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

Division Vice Chairman: *Christy Griffith*, Bank of Cleveland

GOAL: *Continue the growth of local tourism industry through promotion of our community, the Ocoee Region of Tennessee, public relations programs, product development and research.*

Promotion

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

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 *Tennessee Vacation Guide*, *AAA Home and Away*, *Southern Living*, *Family Circle*, *American Profile* and others to remain visible to the travel market and drive traffic to our website.
- 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 Bradley Square Mall to maintain the mall information desk as a satellite visitors center located close to I-75.
- Continue distributing rack cards to targeted brochure racks in hotels, restaurants and attractions along the north Georgia I-75 corridor and Chattanooga area.
- Send new guides to youth group databases in feeder markets.
- 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.
- Respond to and consult with organizations planning meetings in our area.

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Lisa Webb Senior Vice President		Jenny Waters Loan Officer
SouthEast		
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Convention & Visitors Bureau

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- Compile a yearly calendar of meetings/group activities and distribute to local hospitality industry.

Communications & Public Relations

Objective: Promote the Ocoee Region to travel media as well as increase local awareness of the importance of tourism to the economy.

Action Steps

- Respond in a timely manner with current and reliable information to any and all media inquiries.
- 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, www.clevelandchamber.com; 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.
- Use the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development News Bureau to distribute press information to travel writers and publications outside the local area.
- Continue to host media and familiarization tours in conjunction with state and regional agencies, as well as seek new media opportunities.
- Release information throughout the year to increase local awareness of the importance of the tourism industry on the local economy.
- Place timely press releases in local newspapers highlighting tourism activities, economic impact figures, grants and other newsworthy items.
- Provide information to city, county and state government

officials to inform them of the importance of tourism dollars and their impact on the local economy.

Product Development & Community Involvement

Objective: Assist in and encourage product development as well as continue 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.*, heritage sites, 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 State Historic Park, Apple Valley Orchard, Main Street Cleveland, Outfitters Association 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 working with the Charleston community to develop 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.
- Host hospitality training (Hospitality Fair) for "front door" staff of the local tourism industry—hotel clerks, restaurant servers and store clerks.

Research & Travel Trends

Objective: Continue to define target markets and 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.
- Track inquiries, visits and leads generated through advertising and on the CVB website.
- Continue to track lodging tax collections.
- Attend state and regional meetings to stay updated on tourism trends and legislative issues.
- Maintain appropriate and effective memberships.

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Convention & Visitors Bureau

continued from previous page

Serve as 2007 Chair for Tennessee Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus (TACVB).

Attend educational conferences and seminars when available, affordable and appropriate.

Welcome our new members

The Chamber staff and Board of Directors welcome the following new Chamber members as of Dec. 13, 2006:

American Insurance Managers

Jim Suiter, President

3555 Keith St Ste 213

Cleveland TN 37312

423-473-1500

Insurance Agencies & Services

Burke's Outlet

Bill Webster, Director of Sales Promotion

155 Stuart Rd NE

Cleveland TN 37312

423-728-4091

Clothing

Gilbert Real Estate

Susie Gilbert, Owner

2407 Chambliss Ave

Cleveland TN 37311

423-479-7727

Real Estate Agencies

Ocoee Region Multicultural Services

Daniel Sylverston, Executive Director

1075 Blythe Ave Ste #2

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Cleveland TN 37320-5482

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Community Services

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Economic Development

Division Vice Chairman: *Tom Wheeler*, Cleveland Utilities

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 work with the Bradley/Cleveland Industrial Development Board to further develop and market the Hiwassee River Industrial Park and the Cleveland/Bradley Industrial Park and begin the process of identifying new public industrial park sites.

Continue *Climbing to New Heights* provisions for marketing and promoting economic development activities.

Continue implementation of the Economic & Community Development Strategic Plan.

Continue to upgrade computer systems and the Chamber's website and maintain a comprehensive database of existing buildings and sites.

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.

Provide opportunities for staff and volunteer training and development.

Existing Industry

Objective: Facilitate the retention and expansion of local industries.

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Economic Development

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(Existing Industry) Action Steps

❑ Conduct 50 one-on-one existing industry interviews/visits 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 to strengthen the economic competitiveness of local companies.

❑ Compile, analyze and publicize survey 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, Lee University Business Department, the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence and other appropriate organizations.

❑ Provide services for expansion and incentive assistance to local businesses interested in expansion or relocation.

❑ Support the Small Business Development Center at Cleveland State Community College.



Randy Morris, director of existing industry/workforce development, recognizes 2006 Existing Industry Person of the Year. Mike Bales (right), retired, Whirlpool Corporation.

Recruitment/Marketing

Objective: Encourage capital investment and create quality jobs.

Action Steps

❑ Support the regional and state targeted marketing plan.

❑ Attend industrial trade shows and regional recruiting missions.

❑ Continue the recruitment of targeted industries, companies and other potential recruitment prospects that qualify as "complementary industry."

❑ Make personal visits to companies that demonstrate interest in locating operations in Cleveland/Bradley County and host their representatives during visits to the community.

❑ Maintain and enhance relationship with the Tennessee Department of Economic & Community Development (ECD), Southeast Industrial Development Association (SEIDA) and TVA for regional marketing efforts.

❑ Assist in maintaining the community's Three-Star status.

❑ Support community revitalization programs and retail/commercial growth.

❑ Promote the Economic Development Center's state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment to enhance industrial recruitment and retention activities.

❑ Continue to enhance efforts to provide community information and proposals to industrial prospects in electronic form.

Workforce Development

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

❑ Facilitate communication between local educators and business/industry representatives within the community.

continued on next page

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www.coopersathletics.com

Economic Development

continued from previous page

❑ Refine current workforce development programs based on reviews conducted with local school officials and business representatives.

❑ Promote the Career Readiness Certificate Program to area businesses and individuals within Cleveland/Bradley County. Work with the Tri-State Regional Workforce Collaborative in promoting the program to the entire tri-state region.

❑ 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 coordination of such workforce development programs as Teachers Academy and Business & Industry in the Classroom.

❑ Continue to coordinate the Tennessee Scholars program in cooperation with Bradley County and Cleveland City Schools; improve and monitor the program with input from the steering committee comprised of representatives from industry and local school systems.

❑ Continue to respond to industry needs for employees with a strong work ethic by coordinating and enhancing the "Ethics in the Workplace" program in the three local high schools with the assistance of character education coordinators in the city and county school systems.

❑ Spearhead efforts to increase the number of readily qualified and employable high school and post-secondary graduates in the local workforce through 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

Division Vice Chairman: *Nancy Casson*, Casson Art & Interiors/The Red Ribbon

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

Retention

Objective: Achieve a 95-percent retention rate for 2007.

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 ongoing memberships through an enhancement to the membership renewal plaque.

❑ Track membership retention as it relates to increased efforts in this area for 2007.

❑ Increase use of membership software as a retention tool.

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.

❑ Continue to investigate opportunities to serve members through the collective group buying power for discounts and special rates.

❑ Continue the popular Membership Coffee program.

❑ Implement members-only sections of the website, www.clevelandchamber.com.

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Membership Development

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❑ Maintain U.S. Chamber of Commerce Federation program, allowing local Chamber members the opportunity to affiliate at no cost with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Development

Objective: Secure 110 new members in 2007.

Action Steps

- ❑ Continue staff efforts in membership sales.
- ❑ Organize a membership campaign during first quarter utilizing the talents of volunteers.
- ❑ Continually update and improve membership leads files.

Communications

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

Action Steps

- ❑ Continue to publish a monthly newsletter, *225 Keith*, offering monthly advertising opportunities and presenting news items of interest to the membership.
- ❑ Continue to refine a means of securing information about goods/services provided by new member businesses.
- ❑ Continue to disseminate monthly press releases to local media recognizing new members.
- ❑ Continue developing an archive of information about all Chamber-member businesses to facilitate publication efforts and to enhance referral efforts.
- ❑ Continue to recognize an increased number of members via publicity efforts in the monthly newsletter through the "member memo" section.
- ❑ Publish *The Resource* (membership directory) with a goal of increased advertising sales.
- ❑ Publish the seventh edition of *The Experience* (four-color quality-of-life publication) via outsourcing and with a continued emphasis on greater distribution.
- ❑ Continue to disseminate press releases to the *Cleveland Daily Banner*, *Bradley News* and *Chattanooga Times-Free Press*, along with area radio and television stations when appropriate, to inform the community of Chamber activities.



Cameron Fisher, division vice chairman for Membership Development, recognizes 2006 Ambassador of the Year Gail Gray, retired, Cleveland Utilities.

❑ Continue weekly and monthly radio updates with local stations regarding 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 to provide added value to those members advertising in the Chamber's newsletter.

❑ Increase member contacts via electronic communication to help deliver greater value for membership and to solicit feedback for Chamber services.

❑ Continue to promote and facilitate the "One Community, One Calendar" efforts to provide a comprehensive community calendar of events.

❑ Continue to update and/or produce in-house publications and presentations.

❑ 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

- ❑ Assist with Chamber-related events as necessary.
- ❑ Continue organizing quarterly educational luncheons for members of the group.
- ❑ Continue the Ambassador of the Year program.

Organizational Development

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

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

Finances

Objective: To ensure equitable funding across divisions and maximize revenue sources.

Action Steps

- Assure continued investigation of supplemental financial support and possible additional areas of revenue.
- 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.
- Begin planning for the next phase of the *Climbing to New Heights* program to ensure that the initiatives and financial support provided by the first phase continues.

Staff

Objective: To maintain a highly motivated and professional staff.

Action Step

- Continually review employee benefits and policies.

Board of Directors

Objective: To 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 an annual Board of Directors retreat for program and professional development.
- Host an annual Past Presidents/Chairmen Breakfast.

Organization

Objective: Review Chamber bylaws for corrections.

Action Step

- Organize a subcommittee of the Board of Directors to review and make recommendations for revision.

Public Affairs

Division Vice Chairman: *Mike Thomasson*, First National Bank of Cleveland

GOAL: *To improve the influence of the Chamber in governmental affairs.*

Objective: To 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.
- Invite state legislators to selected committee meetings for periodic updates on pertinent issues.
- Establish the committee's focus as a pro-business advocate for the community and convey this stance 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.
- Coordinate activities for the Transportation Task Force in pursuing street and road improvement projects in Cleveland and Bradley County as addressed by the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Master Plan and the Regional Planning Organization for projects outside the MPO boundaries. Provide a Chamber representative to serve as a member of the MPO Advisory Board.
- Work with city and county governments in securing funding for street and road projects.
- Serve as a business advocate in state and federal efforts to contain and improve healthcare costs.

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Public Affairs

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- ❑ 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 quick completion of the Dalton Pike and Georgetown Road projects and construction of Corridor K.
- ❑ Create venues that will encourage increased dialogue and foster a spirit of cooperation among the city of Cleveland, Bradley County and business leaders.
- ❑ Support the emphasis for quality and progressive elected officials.

81st Annual Meeting

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Thanks for your service to the Chamber of Commerce

Following is a list of those members of the Chamber's board of directors who will be "retiring" at the Annual Meeting on Jan. 23, 2007. We appreciate their dedicated service.

- Stephen Crass, Cleveland Daily Banner, 2003-2006; Vice Chairman—2004-2005
- Donna Davis, Outland Travel Inc., 2004-2006
- Ed Duncan, Cleveland Eye Clinic, 2004-2006
- Jerome Hammond, Lee University, 2004-2006; Vice Chairman—2005-2006
- Chuck Parke, Lynn Jones Enterprises LLC, 2005-2006
- Steve Robinson, Cleveland Plywood Co., 2006
- Jack Robbins, Cleveland Risk Management & Insurance, Vice Chairman, 2006
- Margaret Schenck, United Knitting, 2004-2006