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*Wishing You  
A Happy &  
Prosperous  
New Year!*



## 2009 Annual Report

The headline says it all—" \$1 billion plant to bring 500-600 jobs."

What was still but a possibility in late 2008 became reality for Cleveland and Bradley County in February 2009 with the announcement that Wacker Chemie AG would locate a plant in north Bradley County. That announcement set the tone for many efforts of the Cleveland/Bradley Chamber of Commerce in 2009 and paved the way for other headlines, from top honors for our president and volunteers and even our website, from recognition for outstanding business leaders and existing industries, to presentation of quality programming and staff promotions.

Following are summaries of the year's efforts in our Annual Report to the membership by division. We believe you'll discover that while we celebrate the headlines of this year, we continue to work so that good news is the order of the day for our business community.

### Economic Development

#### Vice Chairman Tom Wheeler, Cleveland Utilities

In spite of the national recession in 2009 there were many bright spots for the Chamber's Economic Development Council (EDC) and the Bradley/Cleveland Industrial Development Board (IDB) in 2009. Of course, the big news was the announcement of the Wacker Polysilicon project with its \$1 billion investment and the creation of 500 new jobs. Our region is very fortunate to have two \$1 billion projects—Volkswagen and Wacker—located within 24 miles of each other. These two projects will have a significant impact on our region for many years to come.

In anticipation of the impact of the Wacker and VW projects, the Chamber initiated a study to determine the short- and long-term impact of both projects and to develop a community strategy to deal with the positive and negative impacts of growth. With financial and staff support from the City of Cleveland, Bradley County, the City of Charleston, Cleveland Utilities, Volunteer Energy, the Economic Development Administration, the Southeast Tennessee Development District and the Tennessee Department of Transportation, we were able to hire a consultant, McBride Dale Clarion in association with RPM Transportation Consultants and Miley, Gallo and Associates, to carry out the plan. The study should be completed by early summer 2010.



## A word from the President

### Light at the end of the tunnel

By all accounts, it appears that the recession may have bottomed out and our country is on its way to economic recovery. I recently ran across an article on the MSNBC News website about the economy. The article cited an index developed by Moody's, a financial rating service, rating the economic health of the nation's metropolitan areas called an "Adversity Index."

Moody's looked at four indicators of economic health: employment, housing starts, industrial production and house prices. The most interesting part of the study was the identification of metro areas considered to be "in recovery." Guess what? Cleveland, Tenn., was the only one of 10 metro areas in Tennessee considered to be in recovery with respect to the current recession.

The study cited Cleveland's strengths as moderate living and business costs, spillover growth from Chattanooga and Atlanta, and being an ideal location for transportation and distribution industry. According to the study, our cost of doing business is 77 percent of the U.S. average, and our cost of living is 89 percent of the U.S. average.

When you look at all the activity in our region with Volkswagen, Wacker and related developments, things are looking up. It's nice to know that Cleveland may be leading our state out of the recession.

I have often said that Cleveland and Bradley County have a very strong, diverse economic base. That has helped us weather these difficult times, and if we continue to build on that base, it will serve us well into the future. At the risk of mixing metaphors, we may not be out of the woods yet, but the light at the end of the tunnel may not be an oncoming train after all.—  
*Gary Farlow, Chamber President*



#### STAFF

Gary Farlow, *President & CEO*  
 Bernadette Douglas, *Executive Vice President*  
 Douglas E. Berry, *Vice President, Economic Development*  
 Melissa Woody, *Vice President, Convention & Visitors Bureau*  
 Nancy A. Neal, *Vice President, Communications*  
 Sherry Crye, *Director of Workforce Development*  
 Lisa Pickel, *Director of Existing Industry Programs*  
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 Tammy Randolph, *Administrative Assistant*  
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## Economic Development *(cont. from page 1)*

Whirlpool Corporation completed its move from Oxford, Miss., to Cleveland, resulting in 500 new jobs. Coca-Cola Enterprises announced an expansion of its Cleveland operation, adding two new packaging lines.

Our marketing efforts continue to strengthen and improve the visibility of our community 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. Doug Berry joined Gov. Phil Bredesen and the Tennessee Delegation at the Southeast U.S./Japan Association's annual conference in Tokyo, Japan. Berry also attended the Solar Power International 2009 trade show and conference in Anaheim, Calif.

On the local front, Cleveland/Bradley County received Three-Star Community certification for community and economic development from Gov. Bredesen at the Annual Governor's Conference on Economic Development. This is the 18<sup>th</sup> consecutive year Cleveland and Bradley County have received this recognition. The Cleveland/Bradley Chamber of Commerce also received recognition from Governor Bredesen at the annual Governor's Conference as having one of the 10 best economic development websites in Tennessee.

Ross Tarver, chairman of the Bradley/Cleveland Industrial Development Board, was recognized as the Jim Spradley Volunteer of the Year, and Gary Farlow, Chamber president and CEO, was recognized as the Fred Harris Professional of the Year at the annual conference of the Tennessee Economic Development Council.

Even during the worst recession in the U.S. since the Great Depression, Cleveland and Bradley County continued to see new projects being built. Through October the City and County issued 224 residential building permits with a value of \$23,129,451. They also issued 52 commercial building permits with a total value of \$18,172,107. Local sales taxes for the period from January to October 2009 totaled \$17,727,422, an increase of \$590,628 over the same period in 2008.

Our Chamber partners also stepped up to the plate in helping us continue the strong economic development programs started seven years ago with the *Climbing to New Heights* capital campaign. To build on past successes and aggressively pursue current and future opportunities, the Chamber of Commerce announced a new, four-year economic development initiative called the COMPASS CAMPAIGN: *Charting Our Future*. Results of the *Climbing to New Heights* campaign are on page 4.

As of early December, the COMPASS CAMPAIGN has raised \$1.3 million of the \$1.75 million goal. With these funds, we

*continued on next page*

## **Economic Development** (cont. from page 2)

are confident that we will be able to continue our community and economic development success over the next four years.

### **Existing Industry**

Paramount within the Chamber's Economic Development initiatives is a focus on existing industry programs to facilitate the retention and expansion of local industries. The Existing Industry Committee, coordinated by Director of Existing Industry Programs Lisa Pickel, conducted 41 visits with business leaders. The purpose of the visits was to touch base with our industries and keep them aware of assistance available from a variety of sources, as well as address any concerns that arose. Twenty-five interviews were conducted during the visits. These interviews, which included completion of a survey, identified needs and business-climate concerns of local industries and helped solve, if possible, the challenges of these companies.

The Quality Council met once per quarter for 2009. A Quality Council luncheon on Oct. 29, 2009, featured Tom Mullikin with Moore and Van Allen PLLC, who presented "Federal Climate Change and Energy Legislation: A Business Primer" to more than 60 attendees from around the region about global climate change and growing concerns among business leaders.

The Chamber of Commerce again hosted the Industry Appreciation Luncheon in June and honored three local companies: Eaton Electrical, Johnston Coca-Cola Bottling Co. and SkyRidge Medical Center. Prior to the Industrial Appreciation Luncheon, an industrial showcase was held for industries to display their products and/or services to show what business products and services are available locally and to match local manufacturing with local suppliers.

Participation in the 11<sup>th</sup> Teachers Academy was down this year due to the economy, but the four teachers and three participating businesses all reported a beneficial experience.

Fourteen classes at Walker Valley and Bradley Central High Schools heard from business representatives about the skills needed to succeed in their particular workplace during the Business/Industry in the Classroom emphasis.

The Chamber of Commerce and Cleveland Associated Industries (CAI) continued their mutually beneficial relationship through an Administrative Services Contract. Under the agreement with the Chamber, CAI retains its autonomy with Lisa Pickel, the Chamber's director of existing industry programs, serving as CAI's executive director. Lisa

implemented their program of work for the Membership, Healthcare, Best Practices and Retired Committees.

### **Workforce Development**

Workforce development remained a primary focus within the Economic Development division.



State, federal and international officials sign the final paperwork Feb. 26, 2009, to bring Wacker Chemie AG to Bradley County.

The workforce development director worked with our local secondary school systems and local post-secondary institutions (Cleveland State Community College, Lee University and the Tennessee Technology Center at Athens) to determine the best ways to prepare our students for post-secondary education to have a more qualified workforce for Cleveland and Bradley County. We continue to develop new workforce development programs and refine current ones based on reviews by local school officials and business representatives.

Specific workforce development initiatives that are ongoing include partnership with Junior Achievement of the Ocoee Region to provide the Reality Check programs for eighth-graders in the three middle schools. Also ongoing is the Tennessee Scholars program, which required the 1,275 students enrolled from Bradley Central, Cleveland, Walker Valley High Schools and Tennessee Christian Preparatory School to take more rigorous courses, have good attendance and complete volunteer service hours.

Two Job Shadowing events were held in 2009 for high school juniors. Although one of the most time-consuming workforce development initiatives, this is also one of the most rewarding programs the Chamber offers high school students. In April we placed 183 students in 56 businesses. In November we placed 263 students in 73 businesses.

Sherry Crye, director of workforce development and coordinator of the Tennessee Scholars program, continues to serve on the Tennessee Scholars Advisory Council of the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

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## Business Development

Vice Chairman Mike Thomasson,  
Andrew Johnson Bank

The Small Business Committee continued their successful Top Tools for Business educational programs and celebration of Small Business Month in May 2009.

Jim Workman, owner of Bender Realty, received the Mel Bedwell Small Businessperson of the Year award during the record-attended kickoff luncheon for Small Business Month in May. Coach Michael Burt, motivational speaker, gave the opening address to the group. Twenty-one members also exhibited tabletop displays for exposure and networking before and after the luncheon.

The monthly Top Tools for Small Businesses program continued to provide an excellent educational opportunity for members with a focus in 2009 of “Increasing Sales” through each session offered. The eight program topics, determined from a survey of Chamber members in late 2008, ranged from Search Engine Optimization to hiring the right employee.

The committee also organized two popular programs on social media that gave attendees practical hands-on steps for promoting their businesses via social networking tools such as Facebook and Twitter.

SpeedNet, a bimonthly structured networking event, continued in 2009 after holding initial events in 2008, but member participation in the program was not at a level to continue the program into 2010.

## Membership Development

Vice Chairman Cheryl Dunson,  
Santek Environmental Inc.

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

Businesses each year recognize the value of Chamber membership, reflected both in those that maintain their Chamber membership and in the number that become new members. In 2009, 67 new businesses members joined the Chamber. Support of the Chamber by existing members was strong in 2009 despite the downturn in the national economy with a retention rate of 94 percent in numbers of members. We are above the national average retention rate of 84.8 percent.

Economic Impact of Corporate Recruitment & Expansion During <i>Climbing to New Heights (2002-2009)</i>					
COMPANY / PROJECT DESCRIPTION	CAPITAL INVESTMENT	DIRECT JOB CREATION / DIRECT PAYROLL	TOTAL JOBS / TOTAL PAYROLL IMPACT	ANNUAL RETAIL SALES GENERATION	ANNUAL SALES TAX GENERATION
<b>CORPORATE RECRUITMENT</b>					
<b>Wacker Polysilicon</b>	\$ 1,000,000,000	475 \$ 38,802,000	1,103 \$ 65,816,000	\$ 12,988,000	\$ 1,266,000
<b>Eastern Lighting Distribution (GE)</b> <i>850,000 sq. ft. facility in the Hiwassee River Industrial Park</i>	\$ 35,000,000	350 \$ 16,659,000	526 \$ 23,816,000	\$ 4,647,000	\$ 453,000
<b>Starplex Scientific</b> <i>Pharmaceutical plastics manufacturer in Cleveland/Bradley County Industrial Park</i>	\$ 12,000,000	35 \$ 1,223,000	53 \$ 1,947,000	\$ 384,000	\$ 37,000
<b>Sky Angel U.S. LLC</b> <i>Operations Center (Keith St) &amp; Satellite Operations (Westland Dr Industrial)</i>	\$ 4,986,000	90 \$ 7,392,000	161 \$ 10,068,000	\$ 1,987,000	\$ 194,000
<b>INDUSTRY EXPANSIONS</b>					
<b>Southeastern Container</b> <i>200,000 sq. ft. expansion in the Cleveland/Bradley County Industrial Park</i>	\$ 21,000,000	22 \$ 1,201,000	35 \$ 1,743,000	\$ 344,000	\$ 34,000
<b>Schering-Plough</b> <i>Expansion of its Michigan Avenue facility</i>	\$ 18,000,000	106 \$ 16,724,000	374 \$ 29,963,000	\$ 5,913,000	\$ 577,000
<b>Whirlpool</b> <i>Moving its Oxford, MS operations to Cleveland</i>	\$ 6,000,000	500 \$ 23,500,000	904 \$ 40,765,000	\$ 8,044,000	\$ 784,000
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT</b> .....	\$ 1,096,986,000				
<b>TOTAL DIRECT PAYROLL</b> .....		\$ 105,501,000			
<b>TOTAL PAYROLL CREATION</b> .....			\$ 174,118,000		
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF JOBS CREATED</b> .....			3,156		
<b>TOTAL ANNUAL RETAIL SALES</b> .....				\$ 34,307,000	
<b>TOTAL ANNUAL SALES TAX</b> .....					\$ 3,345,000

*\* Total jobs includes direct jobs, indirect jobs and induced jobs. Indirect jobs are those jobs created by other existing employers as a result of the new capital investment project. Induced jobs result from new employee spending generated by the new capital investment project.*

New members gathered at the Chamber offices in November for a networking opportunity and to learn more about the services offered by the Chamber. Chamber staff coordinated 26 ribbon cuttings/groundbreakings in 2009.

A golf outing was held for Chamber members on June 8 at the Cleveland County Club. Forty-four members enjoyed a beautiful day of networking and golf with door prizes supplied by supportive members. Small business members continue to benefit from membership in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce through our participation in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Federation program.



Board member Mike Claudio, EHD Technologies, talks with new members Jim Davis, Crye-Leike, and Steve and Kyle Howard, Howard Computer Service, at the November New Member Reception.

The monthly Membership Coffee program continued to be the Chamber’s most popular program with sponsors lined up through 2010 and attendance averaging over 125 at each event. The Chamber Ambassador group contributes to the success of this program and our retention efforts by serving as hosts for the event, welcoming new members into the Chamber and representing the membership at ribbon cuttings and grand openings. Membership in the

*continued on next page*

## Membership Development *(cont. from page 4)*

Ambassadors increased by 30 percent. Gail Gray received the Ambassador of the Year award at the December Membership Coffee.

A steering committee was formed to pursue the formation of a Young Professionals organization within the Chamber. This group hopes to begin activities in 2010.

Chamber communications efforts in 2009 included publication of our annual membership directory and buyer's guide, *The Resource*, and the monthly newsletter, *225 Keith*; dissemination of more than 110 news stories/announcements to local and regional media outlets, including print and broadcast media; and launching of an electronic newsletter, *e-NEWS*; and continuation of the online community calendar, "One Community, One Calendar" on the Chamber's website, [www.clevelandchamber.com](http://www.clevelandchamber.com). The Chamber newsletter was posted online, as were more than 45 press releases were also posted online, making Chamber-related programming and news items more readily available to the public.

The economic development section of the Chamber's website, [www.clevelandchamber.com](http://www.clevelandchamber.com), was one of 10 websites recognized with the first-ever LinkTenn Award presented during the 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Governor's Conference on Economic and Community Development for outstanding economic development marketing through the use of the Internet.

## Organizational Development

### Vice Chairman *David Fair*, Regions Bank

The Organizational Development division of the Chamber is responsible for programs of general interest to the membership and regularly examines the internal needs of the Chamber to

ensure good governance and a viable presence in the local community, regional and state arenas.

The 83<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting on Jan. 20 featured presentation of the Chamber's most prestigious awards, the M.C. Headrick Free Enterprise Award and the Robert W. Varnell Leadership Award. These were presented to Bob Card, Easy Auto Credit, and Lou Patten, Cornerstone Insurance, respectively.



Ambassadors Valorie Garmon, Ocoee Insurance, and Ashley Rue, Mix 104.1, were 2009 Platinum Award winners for the year based on a new point system for their service to the Chamber. Presenting awards was Aaron Weatherford, membership director.

In January new Board members received orientation on program goals for the year along with an organizational overview. Board members held a retreat in November to highlight progress on 2009 goals and review changes for 2010. The Chamber's bylaws were updated to reflect current operations and titles during 2009.

After completion of a feasibility study in March, Chamber directors voted to pursue a capital fundraising campaign—COMPASS CAMPAIGN: *Charting Our Future*. This four-year \$1,750,000 economic development action plan will provide funding for crucial projects and initiatives to keep our community competitive for years to come.

Bernadette Douglas and Nancy Neal were promoted in early 2009, Bernadette to executive vice president and Nancy to vice president of communications. Doug Berry joined the Chamber staff in May as vice president for Economic Development.

## Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB)

### Vice Chairman *Jennifer Perdew*, Ocoee Adventure Company

Tourism efforts in our community in 2009 continued previous years' growth trends in 2009, though the percentage was significantly less. The annual study, *Economic Impact of Tourism on Tennessee Counties*, shows that Bradley County's tourist expenditures grew another .77 percent—a small increase but

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## Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) (cont. from page 5)

a positive one nonetheless. The study, commissioned by the state's Department of Tourist Development, reports that expenditures in Bradley County exceed \$108 million. These revenues, and the \$8.5 million in local and state taxes, are important to our local economy and indicated that we must continue to promote our community to visitors.

The Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) places ads in various regional and national publications each year promoting Cleveland, Bradley County and the Ocoee Region. These ads generate inquiries, or people requesting more information about the area. This year the CVB received more than 46,000 requests, maintaining an 18-percent increase over 2007's 36,000 requests. The recession is producing "day-trippers" hoping to cut expenses on lodging or consumers carefully reviewing their options and requesting advance information in greater numbers on a variety of destinations.

The CVB continued to work with various segments of the community on tourism product development, such as events, preserving and recognizing historic sites, and promoting our attractions. CVB Vice President Melissa Woody serves on the board of Southeast Tennessee Tourism Association (SETTA), a group that produces and promotes themed trails featuring the 10 counties of Southeast Tennessee. Woody was elected vice chair of SETTA this year.

The Tennessee Department of Tourist Development (TDTD) began efforts to expand the National Civil War Trails program to Tennessee. In anticipation of the sesquicentennial of the Civil War and in light of the large number of heritage sites in Tennessee, participation in the program shot off like a cannon. The CVB coordinated Civil War markers for Bradley County—one in the Charleston Park and one at the Museum Center at Five Points. The markers indicate the importance of the railroad in Cleveland and bridge in Charleston to war strategy. All three local governments and the two historical societies were instrumental in acquiring the markers.

MTSU Center for Historic Preservation completed a heritage plan under the direction of Dr. Carroll Van West. West and his team included recommendations for the interpretation development and enhancements of Cherokee heritage throughout Bradley County. Charleston was identified as the priority for interpretation as currently no explanation of the sites there exists. The CVB has been working with the Charleston-Calhoun-Hiwassee Historical Society and community leaders on an exciting interpretive plan that will be as significant as the history it represents.

The CVB participated in the Tennessee Sampler, a trade show with media and group travel planners attending. The event is coordinated by TDTD and in 2009 featured Dolly Parton in Washington D.C. The state rotates the Sampler to targeted feeder markets for Tennessee. Due to the high cost of trade shows, this is the only one the CVB attends. The state partnership makes it a more affordable option.



Gold Awards were presented to Ambassadors Marilyn Chesnutt, retired; Stan Pegram, At Your Service; and Lisa Geren, East Tennessee Radio Group, at the December Coffee for their volunteer service throughout the year. Making the presentation was Membership Director Aaron Weatherford.

TDTD and TDOT joined to roll out another new initiative this year, *Discover Tennessee Trails & Byways*. The program will feature 14 driving trails across Tennessee that will pass through all 95 counties of the state. Each trail bears a clever name with a tagline reflecting the area covered. The trail for our area is called "Tanasi—Rapids to Railroads." *Tanasi* is the Cherokee word for "our big river" and *Tennessee* gets its name.

The Ocoee River rafting industry had a slow start but ended with a good season. Visitation to the Hiwassee side of the Cherokee National Forest was about 1.3 million.

## Public Affairs

### Vice Chairman Rick Lawson, Cleveland Utilities

The Public Affairs Committee and its Transportation Task Force affiliate continued their support of the improvements planned for I-75 Exit 20 and the proposed new interchange on APD 40. The new interchange is planned between Exit 20 and Lee Highway (U.S. 11) and will open access to a large area for commercial and industrial development.

The new Cleveland general aviation airport is progressing with work to begin soon on the relocation of Chatata Creek and Tasso Lane to accommodate runway construction. We are also monitoring discussions of airspace safety zoning around the airport and have attended numerous public hearings on the project. The Chamber hosted a public hearing conducted by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation regarding storm water permits for the airport.

The Public Affairs Committee hosted Sen. Dewayne Bunch and Rep. Kevin Brooks at a meeting to discuss lobbying efforts of the National Federation of Independent Businesses. The group also heard from Brooks and Bunch on progress on the Exit 20 upgrade project. Engineering and environmental studies have been started by TDOT.

The Public Affairs Committee, Chamber Board and the Bradley

*continued on next page*

## Public Affairs (cont. from page 6)

Cleveland Industrial Development Board participated in an effort to modify proposed bills in the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate that would require chlorine producing manufacturers to cease using a mercury-based process. As originally written, the bills would likely force Olin Corporation in Charleston to cease operations within two years, impacting over 1,000 jobs in our region. The three organizations mentioned, along with other regional governmental leaders, carried out a letter-writing campaign to our federal legislators requesting the bills be modified to give Olin a more realistic time frame to accomplish a conversion to another chlorine production technology.

With leadership from the Chamber, funding is in place to carry out a strategic plan to determine the impact on our community's growth due to the Volkswagen and Wacker projects and to develop a plan to accommodate expected growth.

Members of the committee and staff participated in discussions about modifications to the City and County growth boundaries. The Chamber hosted two public hearings on the boundary modification plan. Chamber staff also held numerous small group meetings with citizens in the affected areas to discuss future industrial and commercial development possibilities in the vicinity of Exit 20 and APD 40.

## Please make a note . . .

You recently should have received information about your 2010 investment in the Chamber of Commerce. Please note that **for inclusion** in the 2010-11 edition of *The Resource*, the membership directory and buyer's guide, **dues must be paid by Feb. 27, 2010**. If you have corrections or additions in your listing(s), please call the Chamber office at 423-472-6587 before Feb. 27 as well.

**THANK YOU** for all you do to make Cleveland/Bradley County a great place to do business.

## Economic Indicators

October Unemployment Rate				
	2008	2009		
Bradley County	6.1%	9.1%		
Tennessee	7.0%	10.5%		
United States	6.5%	10.2%		
November Building Permits				
Residential	2008	2009		
Number Issued	15	21		
Permit Value	\$1,238,592	\$2,031,075		
YTD Number Issued	354	245		
YTD Permit Value	\$47,624,239	\$25,160,526		
Commercial	2008	2009		
Number Issued	6	8		
Permit Value	\$1,388,208	\$534,000		
YTD Number Issued	88	60		
YTD Permit Value	\$69,368,104	\$18,706,107		
Local Sales Tax Collected				
	Nov 2008	Jan-Nov 2008	Nov 2009	Jan-Nov 2009
Local Sales Tax	\$1,606,174	\$18,742,968	\$1,854,895	\$19,582,317
Retail Sales				
	June 2008*	Jan-June 20078	June 2009*	Jan-June 2009*
Bradley County	\$101,382,190	\$607,357,506	\$92,537,521	\$519,089,565
Tennessee	\$7,785,341,279	\$44,819,990,405	\$6,801,393,881	\$38,048,553,719

\*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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## Community Development

### Vice Chairman *Ann Marie Brewer*, SkyRidge Medical Center

The Chamber, under the auspices of the Chamber's Education & Workforce Development Committee, administers an impressive array of education programs. This reflects our long-term commitment to ensuring a prepared future workforce. The Business & Industry in the Classroom and Ethics in the Workplace programs were both expanded and improved to reach more students and encourage more classroom follow-up by participating teachers.

Business/Industry in the Classroom was presented to Walker Valley High School and Bradley Central High School. Fourteen classes heard from Cleveland/Bradley County business representatives about the skills needed to succeed in their particular business.

Teachers Academy completed its 11<sup>th</sup> year. Although participation was down this year due to the economy, four teachers were placed with three businesses. All participants reported a beneficial experience.

The Tennessee Scholars program continued to expand with over 1,275 students now participating in the program. Tennessee Scholars is a rewards-and-recognition program that requires students to take more rigorous classes than graduation requirements dictate.

The Chamber of Commerce/Junior Achievement partnership with the Reality Check program, a budgeting simulation for eighth-graders, was again an eye-opening experience for students as they sought to balance limited budgets with expensive tastes.

We continue to strive to partner businesses with schools as part of the BEST (Business & Education Serving Together) program. The purpose of the program is the strengthen the quality of the educational process through the utilization of community resources, to foster better understanding between the business community and the schools, and to expand learning opportunities for everyone involved in the partnership effort. Several new partnerships were formed this year, and we continued to strive to maintain active partnerships for all of our schools. We also continued to honor our Teachers of the Year and to award our BEST Partnerships of the Year.

The Chamber's leadership training programs—Leadership Cleveland and Cleveland/Bradley Youth Leadership—train future leaders of Cleveland/Bradley County through extensive monthly sessions designed to give participants an “up close and personal” look at all aspects of life within the community and access to key community leaders. The Youth Leadership

program graduated 24 young leaders that we hope will be among the future leaders of Cleveland and Bradley County. They also continue to have a service project with Habitat for Humanity in which they raise funds and invest “sweat” equity either on a Habitat home or at the ReStore.

Leadership Cleveland graduated 13 participants from the 2007-08 class and continues to improve each year based on participant comments and suggestions. The 2008-09 class is among the largest in recent years with 18 participants.



CiCi's Pizza and Yates Primary School celebrated their new BEST partnership in early December. Present for the occasion were Sherry Crye, workforce development director; Carolyn Ingram, Yates principal; Andrew Carleton and Bill Nelson, CiCi's Pizza; and Gary Farlow, Chamber president.

The Allied Arts Council (AAC) offered quality programming free for the community with the 15<sup>th</sup> season of Evening Shade Concerts in the Park every Friday night in May. Partially funded by a matching grant from the Tennessee Arts Commission, the well-attended series featured

nationally known talent including Henry Gross, Terry Smith, the legendary Leon Redbone and others. The match for the grant was raised through sponsorships, as well as proceeds from a winter concert that featured comedian James Gregory. AAC representatives attended and hosted grant workshops and continued to emphasize the importance of submitting arts grants from throughout the community.

AAC's mission also emphasizes educating the community regarding the value of the arts. The council invested about \$12,000 placing artists in the schools for the 2008-9 school year. AAC awarded \$13,700 in grants to fund arts education projects in various public and private schools for 2009-10 school year.

These activities were supported by money raised at the annual Chair-ries Jubilee auction, featuring furniture and other items designed and by local artists. The recession was an uninvited guest at the auction, so proceeds were down from previous years, but the Allied Arts Council is looking toward a positive recovery and to raise the Arts in Education money back to the \$20,000 range.

**Want to strengthen our local schools?**

**Become a BEST partner!**

**Call Sherry Crye, director of workforce development, at 423-472-6587.**

# 2010 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.”—Mission Statement

This mission statement guides every facet of the Chamber’s Program of Work, a written document that defines our six divisions by outlining our goals and objectives and detailing the strategies for achieving them. At right are the officers governing our 2010 Program of Work, and following is the Chamber’s plan of action for the coming year.

## Board of Directors: 2010 Officers

Chairman of the Board: **DAVID FAIR**, Regions Bank

Chairman-Elect: **BARBARA BAXTER**, FSG Bank

Immediate Past Chairman: **CARL HITE**, Cleveland State Community College

President: **GARY FARLOW**

Treasurer: **MIKE THOMASSON**, Andrew Johnson Bank

## Economic Development

### 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 remaining sites in Hiwassee River Industrial Park and the Cleveland/Bradley Industrial Park.
- Identifying, analyze and recommend new public industrial park sites.
- Use *Charting Our Future* 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.

### Action Steps

- Create an industrial visitation program that will allow the Chamber to gain management’s awareness and support for the community’s effort to promote economic development and to offer assistance in problems of a local nature faced by existing industry and business.
- 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.
- Host industrial showcase for our local industries to display their products, provide information and introduce their services to other local industries.
- Host activity(s) that provide recognition and appreciation for contributions of industries/businesses to local economy.
- 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.
- Perform 2010 Wage & Benefit survey to local industries.
- Develop an industrial directory with more detailed description of products produced and/or services offered along with a thorough description of each company. The directory will provide a means of promoting local businesses as well as used for prospects.
- 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 programs as Teachers Academy and Business & Industry in the Classroom. Increase awareness to the teachers regarding the Teachers Academy program. Provide more literature to businesses detailing the importance and benefits of participating in this program.

*continued on next page*

## **Economic Development** *(cont. from page 9)*

- 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, Tennessee Technology Center at Athens, 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.
- Continue to provide staff support and facilities to Cleveland Associated Industries through mutually beneficial programming.

### **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.
- 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 arenas 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.

- Promote the Career Readiness Certificate Program to area businesses, high schools and individuals within Cleveland/Bradley County. Work with the Tri-State Regional Workforce Collaborative in promoting the program to the entire tri-state region. Work with industries to have them recognize the certificate as an incentive for employment.
- Refine current workforce development programs based on reviews/forums conducted with local school officials and business representatives.
- Continue participation and enhance partnership workforce development programs with Junior Achievement of the Ocoee Region.
- Continue to coordinate the Tennessee Scholars program in cooperation with Bradley County Schools, Cleveland City Schools and Tennessee Christian Preparatory School; improve and monitor the program with input from a steering committee comprised of representatives from industry and local school systems. Work with industries to have them reward Tennessee Scholar graduates with preferential hiring.
- 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.
- Continue the Job Shadowing event for high school juniors.

### **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.

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## Membership Development

Vice Chairman **Cheryl Dunson, Santek Environmental**

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

### Retention

**Objective:** Achieve a 90-percent retention rate in membership accounts for 2010.

#### Action Steps

- Host quarterly new-member receptions to brief new members on programs and services, to provide the opportunity to meet Board members and staff, and to provide an opportunity for networking with other new members.
- Increase use of membership software as a retention tool, sending website statistics to members on a monthly basis.

### Programs & Services

**Objective:** Establish the Chamber as an organization with definable benefits offering value to business members.

#### Action Steps

- Establish a Membership Program Committee to investigate and evaluate membership opportunities and programs.
- Begin First Friday lunch program for members to provide briefings on timely local, regional and national issues.
- Continue the popular Membership Coffee program.
- Organize a committee to plan a spring golf outing scheduled for April 19, 2010, at the Cleveland Country Club. Increase number of golfers participating.
- Maintain U.S. Chamber of Commerce Federation program, allowing local Chamber members an opportunity to affiliate with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce at no cost to the members.
- Launch web-based member-to-member discount program early in 2010.
- Launch the Young Professionals group early in 2010 with a goal of having quarterly events in 2010.

### Development

**Objective:** Secure \$25,000 in new-member income in 2010.

#### Action Steps

- Continue staff efforts in membership sales.
- Continually update membership leads files with a goal of communicating with potential members at least two times during the year.

### Small Business

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

### Action Steps

- Celebrate Small Business Month during May, beginning with the kickoff luncheon May 3. 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. Implement recommendations from the fall 2009 survey of business owners regarding the times of sessions and topics offered. Investigate the addition of posting video sessions on the Chamber's website as a resource for members.
- Investigate additional opportunities to provide programs and services to the small business members of the Chamber.
- Develop a small-group networking program for small business owners.
- Hold at least semiannual sessions for participants in the SmartStart program for start-up small businesses 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.
- Sign on as a participating Chamber in the Green Plus\* program, the nation's first business sustainability certification program dedicated to helping small businesses. This program tests participants in three performance areas: environmental stewardship, economic growth and social responsibility. The Small Business Committee will work to implement this program with Chamber members.

### Communications

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

#### Action Steps

- Reinstate a Communications Committee comprised of a Board liaison and communications professionals to assist in determining ways to increase the visibility of the Chamber and to ensure that communications efforts are aligned with the organization's vision and mission.

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## **Membership Development** *(cont. from page 11)*

- Disseminate timely press releases to local and regional media outlets to inform audiences about Chamber activities, programs and issues related to the business community; economic development efforts; new members; and other newsworthy items.
- Publish a monthly newsletter, *225 Keith*, offering advertising opportunities and presenting news items of interest to the membership; continue to recognize an increased number of members in the newsletter through the “member memo” section.
- Implement regular schedule for a monthly electronic newsletter, *e-NEWS*, to complement the monthly print newsletter by informing members of programs and Chamber activities and recognizing activities of members that are not otherwise addressed in *225 Keith*.
- Maintain and enhance the Chamber’s website, [www.clevelandchamber.com](http://www.clevelandchamber.com), updating content as appropriate. Continue to post the monthly newsletter, *225 Keith*, and news releases. Also continue to promote and facilitate the “One Community, One Calendar” efforts to provide one master, comprehensive community calendar of events online.
- Expand use of social media outlets (e.g., Facebook) to reach new audiences.
- Publish *The Resource*, the annual membership directory and buyer’s guide, with a goal of \$14,000 in advertising sales.
- Update and publish as needed the 16-page, four-color *Relocation Guide* that focuses on the information most requested by those relocating to our community and by business prospects.
- Participate in weekly and/or monthly radio updates with local radio stations regarding Chamber activities.
- Secure information about the goods/services provided by new-member businesses and refine a means of creating awareness of these goods/services.
- Update and/or produce in-house publications and presentations as needed. Provide publications support for all Chamber divisions and programs, preserving a print/photographic record of all major events.
- Explore development of a photography project with Lee University digital photography students to update community photo files.
- Maintain appropriate and effective memberships.

### **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.

- Recognize point levels for the awards program at the December Membership Coffee.

## **Organizational Development**

### **Vice Chairman Barbara Baxter, FSG Bank**

**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**

- Begin implementation of the objectives outlined in the COMPASS CAMPAIGN: *Charting Our Future*. Revise budgetary considerations based on final outcome of fundraising.
- Examine distribution of shared staff and facility budget items for revision.

### **Staff**

**Objective:** To maintain a highly motivated and professional staff.

#### **Action Steps**

- Continually review employee benefits and policies.
- Continue to find training and professional development opportunities for all staff.

### **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.
- Host quarterly extended social/networking opportunities for the Board of Directors.
- 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:** Achieve accreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in 2011 and improve our status from 3 stars to 4 or 5 stars.

#### **Action Steps**

- Begin the application process with the U.S. Chamber late in 2010.
- Review the recommendations from the 2006 Accreditation program to begin advance work on deficient areas.

## Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB)

Vice Chairman *Jennifer Perdew*,  
Ocoee Adventure Company

**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*, *Better Homes & Gardens*, *Southern Living*, *People*, *American Profile* and others, to remain visible to the travel market and drive traffic to our website, [www.visitclevelandtn.com](http://www.visitclevelandtn.com).
- Publish the visitor information guide and distribute it to welcome centers and rest areas across the state, as well as to potential visitors who respond to our advertisements.
- Send regular e-newsletters to those who inquire about visiting the area.
- 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.
- 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 bringing meetings to our area.
- 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

*continued on next page*

## Welcome our new members

The Board of Directors and Chamber staff welcome the following new Chamber members as of Dec. 9, 2009:

### The Bird Group/FranNet

*Jerry Bird, President*  
114 Stuart Rd NE Ste 123  
Cleveland TN 37312  
423-432-4200  
[www.frannet.com/jbird](http://www.frannet.com/jbird)  
*Franchise Consulting*

### Cupcake Divas

*Donna Ellis, Partner*  
60 25<sup>th</sup> St Ste 2  
Cleveland, TN 37311  
423-473-2788  
*Bakery*

### Fulin's Asian Cuisine

*Mandy Cantrelle, General Manager*  
4478 Frontage Dr NW  
Cleveland TN 37312  
423-339-8700  
[www.fulins.com](http://www.fulins.com)  
*Restaurants*

### Mattress Warehouse

*Greg Walden, Owner*  
158 Old Mouse Creek Rd  
Cleveland, TN 37312  
423-614-3232  
[www.clevelandmattresswarehouse.com](http://www.clevelandmattresswarehouse.com)  
*Home Furnishings*

### WTNB- TV

*Joe Palo, Managing Partner*  
20 2<sup>nd</sup> St  
PO Box 83  
Cleveland TN 37364-0083  
423-472-8892  
*Television Broadcasting*

## JANUARY 2010 MEMBERSHIP COFFEE

Host: Habitat for Humanity of Cleveland

Where: Habitat ReStore at 300 Grove Ave SW

When: Tuesday, Jan. 12, at 8:30 a.m.

## **Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB)** *(cont. from page 13)*

welcome centers, hotels and outfitters. Need to reprint map pad with updates.

- Maintain and enhance the CVB website, [www.visitclevelandtn.com](http://www.visitclevelandtn.com), and promote this URL on all CVB advertising. Update content no less than twice weekly.
- 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.
- Continue using and expanding free social media networking to reach new audiences and create new interest in visiting the community.
- Send regular e-newsletters to the tourism industry to communicate activities of the CVB.
- 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 opportunities are available.
- 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 and 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 strong relationships with local attractions such as the Museum Center at Five Points, Tri-State Exhibition Center, Red Clay State Historic Park, Apple Valley Orchard, MainStreet Cleveland, Allied Arts Council, Outfitters Association and the Cherokee National Forest. Promote these and other attractions in CVB materials.
- Work closely with Southeast Tennessee Tourism Association (SETTA) and Southeast Development District on product development and promotion in the Southeast Tennessee region.
- Use recommendations from the heritage plan completed

by Middle Tennessee State University Center for Historic Preservation to develop south, middle and north gateways to Bradley County's Cherokee heritage. The north gateway at Charleston will be a priority project since currently no interpretation is present. The Charleston project will require working with many federal, state and local agencies and organizations and will ideally result in a heritage center and a river park linked together by an interpretive greenway.

- Seek further co-op opportunities to promote or develop materials for nonprofit attractions or groups interested in collaborative marketing projects.
- Work with local high school media classes to create a hospitality training DVD and video clips for website.

### **Research & Travel Trends**

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

#### **Action Steps**

- Use COMPASS CAMPAIGN: *Charting Our Future* funding to conduct a new research project to update visitor profiles, behaviors, conversion rates and other needed consumer data.
- 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.
- Actively participate in Tennessee Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus (TACVB) and assist with the professional development conference planning.
- Attend educational conferences and seminars when available, affordable and appropriate.

## **Community Development**

**Vice Chairman Ann Marie Brewer,  
SkyRidge Medical Center**

**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 and strive to have a strong partner for each school.
  - Work to strengthen existing partnerships by increasing
- continued on next page*

## **Community Development** *(cont. from page 14)*

coordination efforts and adding a yearly BEST Partnership meeting coordinated by the Chamber to share ideas, plan for the school-year activities and build relationships.

- 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 and on the Chamber's website.

**Objective:** Continue dialogue with local educators and industry leaders 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, the Tennessee Technology Center at Athens and Lee University on workforce development issues.
- Encourage coordination of education services by 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.

### **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**

- Graduate the Leadership Cleveland class in April 2010.
- Survey past graduates of the program regarding community involvement and program impact using online survey tool.
- Continue to improve the program for the 2010-11 class.

### **Action Steps—Youth Program**

- Graduate the eighth Cleveland/Bradley Youth Leadership class in April 2010.
- Continue to refine the field trip days, leadership retreat and service learning project with Habitat for Humanity for the class of 2010-11.
- Recruit 24 participants, eight from each high school, for the 2010-11 class.

## **Allied Arts Council**

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

### **Action Steps**

- 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.

## **Public Affairs**

### **Vice Chairman Rick Lawson, Cleveland Utilities**

**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.
- 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. A Chamber representative serves as a member of the MPO Advisory Board.
- Continue emphasis on, support for and construction of a new community general aviation airport through the Airport Task Force.
- Invite state legislators to selected Public Affairs Committee meetings for periodic updates on pertinent issues pertaining to the community's business environment.

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Nancy A. Neal, Editor  
Gary Farlow, Publisher

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## Public Affairs (cont. from page 15)

- 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.
- Serve as a business advocate in state and federal efforts to contain and improve healthcare costs.
- 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.
- Continue Chamber support for a strategic plan for dealing with the short- and long-term impacts of the Wacker and Volkswagen projects.
- Continue to support local efforts to complete improvements to the I-75 Exit 20 interchange and the APD 40 interchange and connector roads.
- Work with local and state elected officials to reinstate the Bradley County office of the Tennessee Department of Labor

& Workforce Development and the Tennessee Career Center.

## 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 84<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting on Jan. 19, 2010. We appreciate your dedicated service.

- **ALLISON HAMILTON**, Coldwell/Banker Hamilton & Williams, 2007-09
- **BOB HARDIN**, Whirlpool, 2007-09
- **MARK HODGSON**, Chick-Fil-A, 2007-09
- **HAZEL KEY**, Key Advertising Inc., 2006-09
- **GARY RAY**, Lee University, 2007-09
- **MICKEY TORBETT**, United Community Bank, 2007-09

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*Those who can, do. Those who can do more, volunteer. — Author Unknown*