

The Greater Panama City Beaches Chamber of Commerce

THE CIRCUIT

your connection to the beach

MEMBER NEWS

AROUND TOWN

GRAND OPENINGS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MEET YOUR 2007 LEADERSHIP TEAM

Chamber's Annual Report

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chairman's report

This year The Greater Panama City Beaches Chamber of Commerce turns 20. At our Board Retreat in mid-December we saw some slides of pictures from over the years. Things sure have changed a lot around here in the past two decades. Maybe 'a lot' is an understatement. Things have changed **DRAMATICALLY**. Most of the changes are evident – mom & pop motels replaced by condos, retail and offices sprouting up, and even a flyover at Thomas Drive! As the condos and resorts get closer to being completed, the retail and office spaces fill, and the traffic continues to flow over the bridges to get here, we need to continue the mission that the Chamber set forth in 1987. What is the Chambers mission? To "Support, encourage, and expand tourism and business development while preserving the quality of life in our community."

At our Board Retreat we focused on the future and how to best work toward our mission. We discussed transportation issues, workforce issues, housing issues, how best to use advertising dollars and how the Chamber can better assist its members. We discussed staffing needs, funding and special events for the Chamber. We talked about property

tax issues, insurance issues and the general business climate. We discussed where, as a Chamber, we have been, and how to get where we need to be. I believe your award-winning Chamber has done a fine job over the years, and has the staff, Board of Directors and a plan to continue the mission into the NEXT 20 years and beyond.

In closing, I would like to tell you that I am proud of The Greater Panama City Beaches Chamber of Commerce. I'm proud of the staff for their efforts every day trying to make Panama City Beach a better place for all of us to do business. I appreciate the marketing efforts that the Chamber and Economic Development Council make to entice attractions and retail businesses to locate here. I appreciate the Chamber members, whose dues, event sponsorships and advertisement purchases help fund social, networking and business development events, as well as get the word out to potential visitors about our glorious beaches. And finally, I am proud to be the Chairman of this organization, and will work with the staff and Board of Directors to continue the mission that the business owners and leaders of Panama City Beach started 20 years ago.



president's report

We hope you had a wonderful Christmas season with your family, friends and loved ones.

I am proud to announce changes and additions to the Chamber team. Lynn Kandler, our past Vice President of Membership Services has been promoted to Director of Business Development. Tom Mixon in Member Services has been a big part of the Chamber through the years as a volunteer and team member. Beth Oltman was recently hired as my new Executive Assistant/Office Manager, and Skip Alford has also come on board in Member Services.

The Chamber is tasked with mapping out a strong Program of Work for the next four years. Our plans for the future take great leadership, past and

present. I looked up the synonyms of leadership in my Thesaurus, and was reminded of what great leadership means: Administration, Authority, Effectiveness, Energy, Foresight, Influence, Initiative and Skill to name a few. Your Chairman of the Board, David Powell, has all those qualities and more. David and the Board of Directors have spent many hours working on current and upcoming Chamber programs, community needs, quality of life challenges and future growth.

We have so many unique opportunities - presently and ahead of us. I am excited to see the difference we can make for our business community and surrounding area. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to be a part of this dynamic organization.



Debi Knight

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JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2007

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The Greater Panama City Beaches Chamber of Commerce

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Phone: (850) 235-1159 Fax: (850) 235-2301

Online: www.pcbeach.org

CHAMBER OFFICERS

President/CEO	Debi Knight
Senior VP Marketing & PR	Marta Rose
Director Business Development	Lynn Kandler
Member Services	Tom Mixon
Member Services	Skip Alford
VP Relocation	Jessica Summers
Membership Accounting Mgr.	Jena Kimmel
Executive Assistant	Beth Oltman
VP Hospitality Services	Bertie Reynolds
Receptionist	Joyce Kidd
Volunteer	Gloria Mallory

EDITORIAL STAFF

Articles

Executive Editor Marta Rose
Staff Writer Jessica Summers

Art & Photo

Creative Director Marta Rose

Advertising

Ad Coordinators Jessica Summers
Beth Oltman

Production Boyd Brothers Printing

Distribution Allegra Print & Imaging



Cover photo by Teddy Meeks. Above photo taken by Lynn Kandler, of Jill Johnson, Leo Rose and Tori Kandler at Andrews State Park, December 2006.

Meet Your 2007 Leadership Team



Mike Abney
Real Estate
Broker



Connie Ballinger
Sterling
Realty



Carol Bell
ID's and
More



Karen Blackerby
Magnum
Capital, LLC



Brenda Buschmann
Grand
Panama
Resort



*Not
Pictured*

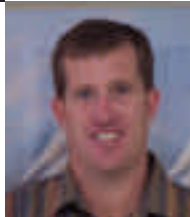
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McNeil
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Engineering



Mack Carter
Shuckum's
Oyster Pub



Anthony DuBose
Coasal
Community
Insurance
Agency



Rick Dye
AmSouth
Bank



Wes Grant
Travelodge



Philip Griffiths Jr.
Sugar Sands
Beach Resort



John Hamati
Marriott's Bay
Point Resort



Fritz Hoehne
Comcast
Cable



Lewis Howell
The St. Joe
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Terri Huggins
Vision Bank



Deborah Hunt
Peoples First
Community
Bank



Cody Khan
Holiday Inn
Sunspreet



Lee Ann Leonard
By The Sea
Resorts



Crystal Martinez
Kilgore's
Karpert &
Ceramic Tile



Al McCambry
Knology



Doreen Morgan
Century 21
Commander
Realty, Inc.



Mayor Gayle Oberst
CFT
Pyramid



David Powell
Peoples First
Community
Bank



Lisa Powell
Hombre
Golf Course



Bill Sherr
Labor
Ready



Russ Smith
Smith
Hospitality
Consulting



Skip Stoltz
Countrywide
Home Loans



Bob Zamboni
McDonald's
Restaurant,
ZeeBest Inc.



Banking Center

Relationship Based Banking Available at MidSouth Bank

Countless choices are available when selecting a bank. The Panama City area, in particular, offers banking resources ranging from large regional banks to independent, community banks. For those who prefer the benefits of personal, one on one banking, the choice is clear: MidSouth Bank offers a unique brand of relationship banking.

MidSouth Bank's Florida Division President, Gloria Daughtry, notes, "The finest traditions of true community banking are embraced by the management and staff of MidSouth Bank. Banking is not one-size-fits-all, it's important to tailor the right solution to meet the unique needs of our customers. We have the answers prospective customers need."



Gloria Daughtry, President of MidSouth Bank's Florida Division.

Daughtry further explains that it's how MidSouth Bank delivers each solution that sets them apart. "We believe that the right solutions, blended with prompt and friendly service, make a difference in the lives of our customers."



MidSouth Bank in Panama City will be completed by year-end.

Established in 1911, MidSouth Bank offers nearly a century of excellence in service and the ability to establish results oriented relationships. In addition to its traditional bank products and financial services, MidSouth Bank offers full service mortgage lending as well as a full array of loan options for individuals and businesses.

We invite you to stop by and visit us at our temporary location at 1418 West 23rd Street or any of our Alabama locations, and visit the MidSouth Bank website at www.bankmidsouth.com. Construction of the permanent Panama City bank office will be completed by year-end.



Real Estate Corner

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With more than 30 years of experience in the real estate business on the Gulf Coast of Florida and Mississippi, Sterling Realty LLC is the best choice when you're ready to buy or sell. Having sold more than \$1 billion in real estate in the past three years, we are proud to be one of the oldest and largest real estate companies along the Emerald Coast.



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Sterling Realty has fully staffed offices in Destin and Panama City Beach, Florida and Biloxi, Mississippi, and our agents are ready and waiting to assist you. Whether you're buying or selling existing or pre-construction properties, or looking for an investment property, vacation rental revenue, retirement options or a new home for you and your family, our top-producing agents will help you with all of your real estate needs.

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Dr. Kimberly Moskowitz, MS, MD

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GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

RESIDENCY:

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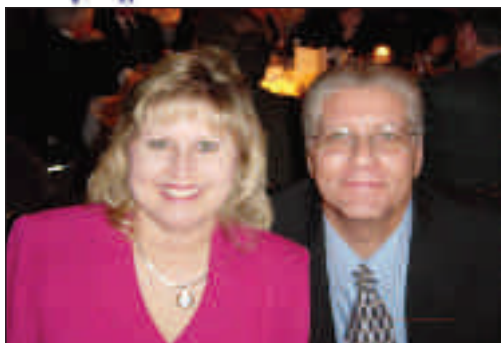
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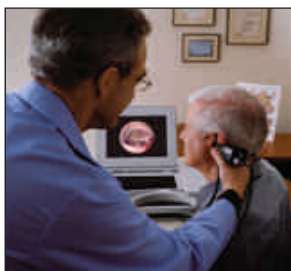
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Biz Spotlight

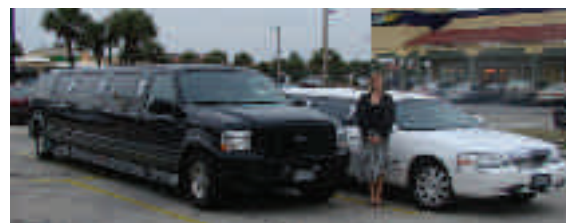
Arrive in Style

Debra Jenkins has been in the service industry most of her life. About three years ago, as she looked around and saw how Bay County was growing, she began to realize the need for a better transportation service. "This area needed not only a classier, luxury front-door limo service, but more worry-free travel," she states. "Things like transporting the kids after school to dance and soccer practice. Airport transportation. Shopping trips to Destin Commons and Silver Sands."

Debra and her partner Andy Pace formed **Luxury Limousines of the Emerald Coast.**

Its fleet of three limousines includes two DaBryan-built Lincoln Town cars, safety-approved for eight passengers, and a DaBryan Ford Excursion which seats up to twelve. The limousines feature flat screen TVs, DVD/CD (*don't forget to bring your own music!*), mirrored ceilings with stargazer lighting, wooden consoles and fiber optic lighting. All limos come standard equipped with glasses, bottled water and ice; the company can accommodate special beverage and hors d'oeuvres requests for a fee.

The business makes frequent runs around Panama City and the Beaches, in addition to Destin, Baytown Wharf and 30-A. "You name it, we'll take you there," states Debra. "Children's birthday parties, weddings, even



Debra Jenkins of Luxury Limousines

'take your new baby home from the hospital' trips!" They've transported famous people such as Goldie Hawn, the Black-Eyed Peas, former New York Giants (and "Bachelor") Jessie Palmer, and Oprah's chef Art Smith. "But really," says Debra, "everyone's a star. We really try to give that first-class personalized service."

The business even provides concierge service; they can make restaurant recommendations and reservations. "Our company is successful because we pay attention to detail," says Debra. "We build a personal relationship with our clients, and we have many repeat clients. Most of our business is based on word of mouth. We're prompt and professional – we have really great chauffeurs."

Luxury Limousines is fully insured and is an active member of the National Limousine Association and the Beaches Chamber. They are available day and evening at competitive rates. For more information call (850) 249-7607 or (850) 960-7607, and please visit their new website at www.Limoluxury.net. **Make your Valentine's reservations now!**



ecohappenings

As development in South Florida has grown into a sprawling megalopolis resulting in crowded roads, inadequate water supplies, packed schools and a vanishing wildlife habitat, a new natural wonderland is emerging: the Florida Panhandle. Northwest Florida, according to Precious Heritage, a nature conservancy survey of biodiversity in the U.S., is one of the six most important places for diverse and rare species in the country. From an environmental standpoint, the Panhandle is like no other part of the state; the assemblage of plants and animals here occurs nowhere else on earth.

It is the lushness of this region and its status as the last undiscovered Florida Coastal area that will bring a new group of environmentally responsible travelers – the “Geotourists,” “Cultural Creatives” and “Naturalists,” – in droves over the next decade. Activities having to do with nature are on the rise...fishing, hiking, biking, photography, swimming, tubing, canoeing, kayaking, boating and bird watching – a growing big business that people of all ages can enjoy.

Pines and Ponds of PCB, open in 2008, will be a bird-watcher’s paradise. This 3,000-acre area situated between Highway 79 and Wild Heron will contain dirt trails ideal for walking, hiking and off road biking. Gayle’s Trails, thirty miles of paved trails, connects Pines & Ponds at the west end of the beach to St. Andrews State Park on the east. Both nature parks contain an abundance of wildlife including osprey, eagles, various species of other birds, deer and raccoon.

More than 41,000 acres of the West Bay Sector – the home of Bay County’s new International Airport – will be set aside for environmental preservation. The National Audubon Society has plans to develop a wildlife preserve and

dents of Bay County as well as visitors to the beaches, but above all, will serve to protect the West Bay.

“Our local scientists have documented the St. Andrew Bay ecosystem to be one of the most biologically diverse in the United States,” states Dr. Neil Lamb, president of the Bay County Audubon Society and a board member of the Audubon of Florida. “Locating a major Audubon center in the West Bay area will provide a window to this vast diversity for residents and visitors to see and enjoy for generations. Preservation is the key – providing a natural place, free of development, for plants and wildlife to live, reproduce and survive.” The regional scope of the West Bay Sector Plan, he adds, and the willingness of the St. Joe Company to participate, offers an opportunity unprecedented in Florida’s development to save a segment of our natural heritage.

The Greater Panama City Beaches Chamber intends to focus heavily on ecotourism in the coming year. For more information on how you can get involved, call the Chamber at (850) 235-1159.

Photo by Eddie Summers

Ecotourism—responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well being of local people—is among the fastest growing travel trends. It’s about connecting conservation, communities and travel.

nature center in this area, with trails and pathways for pedestrians and wheeled vehicles. This world-class facility will serve the resi-

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and our numerous creeks. While kayaking in the area, expect to see wildlife in its natural environment. The gulf also offers some spectacular kayak fishing. King Mackerel, Spanish Mackerel, Skip

Jack, Blue Fish and Cobia can all be caught right off the beach outside of our surf line.



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Dining Out



Let El Morocco Fine Dining at The Shoppes at Edgewater take you on an exotic adventure.

Morocco is an exotic land of endless natural beauty and exquisite architecture. At the extreme north west of Africa and on the immediate southern side of the Gibraltar straight, Morocco is the intersection of the Arab World, Europe and Africa. Its immediate neighbors are Spain, Mauritania and Algeria. Morocco has a rich culture and civilization. Tourism is a growing sector of the economy, with nearly three million tourists visiting the country every year.

El Morocco at the Shoppes at Edgewater in Panama City Beach captures this old world romanticism in a totally unique dining experience. This cozy, secluded hideaway resembles a palace of ancient Moroccan dynasty with its rich colors, soft lighting and mosaic tiles. Fabric swatches in rusts, reds, pistachio and gold span the ceiling and join together in the center to form a dazzling canopy. Two exotic brass hookahs* adorn the small sitting area. Vibrant Moroccan World Beat music fills the room. The Mediterranean-influenced restaurant – the only kosher eatery in Bay County (and reportedly the entire Florida Panhandle) – serves a tantalizing array of appetizers, soups, salads, entrees and brick oven pizzas by Chef Susan Sentenac, who has been with the restaurant since its inception almost one year ago. El Morocco is indeed a feast for the senses!

Our party of six visited the fine dining establishment during that beautifully mellow week between Christmas and New Year's. This is probably my favorite week of the year; the holiday

hustle and bustle has waned just for a minute, and many people are out of town. The crispness and tranquility of that night cast a magical spell on our mood, and that magic entered El Morocco when we did. The warm hospitality of owners Albert and Sigal Bensadoun was evident from the moment we arrived.

Once seated, Albert poured us a glass of *Le Bleu* – a delicate, sweet table water. El Morocco's eclectic wine list includes kosher wines from Israel, Italy, France, Spain and Chile. Albert chose a complex, smooth red wine from Israel for our table, *Yarden Mt. Hermon*, which beautifully accompanied the rich flavors of our meal. Baskets of lavash (crisp bread) were served alongside small plates of herbed olive oil and balsamic vinegar.

Our first course arrived: a lineup of colorful, classic Moroccan tapas served on a long, narrow ceramic plate. **Seven Moroccan Salads**, as this rainbow of relishes is called, included fresh tabouli; marinated bell peppers; a spicy roasted tomato-garlic relish; sesame-marinated diced, roasted eggplant; marinated shredded celery roots; cumin-marinated sliced carrots; and house-made hummus topped with jumbo caper berries. We ordered a second bottle of wine, the white *Yarden Mt. Hermon*, smooth with a citrus edge which brought out the low-key, earthy spices of the food.

Our second course, **Chicken B'stilla**, is a Moroccan national dish: a savory mixture of chicken, almonds, caramelized dried fruit and spices, wrapped in phyllo dough, baked golden, and dusted with powdered sugar and cinnamon. It sounds like dessert, but we were still far from the end! The sweet and savory flavors of this delicate pastry merged into a mouth-watering sneak preview of what was to come. By now the wine was flowing and the mood was festive. As a Moroccan version of *I Will Survive!* surged through the room we couldn't decide whether to belly dance or disco. Luckily the main course arrived, saving us from doing either.

Albert brought us several of El Morocco's house signature specialties served on colorful, etched plates, each one as visually beautiful as it was delicious. The **Chicken Tagine** was simmered in fresh tomato, Moroccan olives, orange zest, cilantro, red peppers, garlic and preserved lemon. The velvety **Leg of Lamb** was roasted with fresh mint and thyme and served with an entire head of roasted garlic. The flaky **Fresh Scamp** was

roasted with tomatoes, whole basil and sesame seeds, served with fresh asparagus. **Cous Cous of the 13th Century** is a traditional Moroccan dish combining tender semolina pasta with lamb, glazed dried fruits and almonds. The **Paprika-Roasted Chicken** was

accompanied by such surprises as pumpkin, prunes, apricots, almonds and butternut squash.

Our final course arrived, an assortment of delectable miniature pastries and sorbets served with steaming, sweet Moroccan mint tea served in beautiful gold leaf tea glasses. A word here on tea culture: Tea occupies a very important place in the Moroccan culture and is considered an art form. Moroccans take great pride in their tea. This traditional beverage is a sign of hospitality and friendship, and is served all day long, after every meal and with every conversation. El Morocco also serves house-made sangria, champagne cocktails, Turkish coffee and espresso beverages. El Morocco is open Sunday through Thursday, serving dinner from 6:00 to 11:00 pm; reservations are recommended. It is also available for private parties (on Saturday nights also) and for catered functions. Call (850) 230-5488 or (850) 960-0888 for more information.



A Fez-clad Albert Bensadoun

*A multi-stemmed water pipe device for smoking flavored, fruity tobacco.

Art & Culture

by Teresa Salter, SailorBoy Records-Publishing

Gene Mitchell of PCB



Gene Mitchell, who has been a part of the Panama City Beach music scene since 2001, was the featured headline entertainment for the Capital One Bowl on New Year's Day, 2007. Songs on two of his CDs, *Greetings From Florida* and *Vacation*, helped get him the contract.

Originally from Brunswick, Georgia, Gene had written and published over 30 songs and had two full length CDs of original songs before retiring from the Navy. He lived on the west coast for several years during the last phase of his Naval career, and while living in the Seattle area he released his third CD, *Tropical Jazz*, which featured John Raymond (guitarist for Kenny G) and Amy Lee (saxophonist for Jimmy Buffett).



Gene decided to retire in Florida, and moved to Panama City Beach in August 2000 based on

the information he received from the Beaches Chamber about the beautiful gulf waters, the beaches and the expected growth in the area. His early performing jobs in Panama City Beach were at Schooners, Harpoon Harry's and the Treasure Ship. He continued to write about vacationing and adventures in sailing and romance throughout Florida and the Caribbean, and wrote and produced five more CDs of original music,

of which 26 songs went national on Sirius Satellite Radio and other stations around the country. The past two seasons he has been the steady performer during the season at Calypso's Lakeside Tiki Deck, where his own personal stage was built.

Gene will release his ninth full length CD of original music titled *Dancing On the Beach*, which highlights the Florida shag

music craze. Read more about Gene Mitchell's career and listen to his music at SailorBoyRecords.com or GeneMitchell.com.



Health & Wellness

by Doug Durham, World Gym

Welcome To The New World!

On January 3rd, World Gym expanded to create a health and fitness facility where all of Panama City Beach can exceed their fitness goals.

The expansion features a state-of-the-art aerobic addition with padded, suspended hardwood flooring – the best flooring available. A spin room was added for



those who like to ride. With all the extra space available they were able to create a separate cardio/core room. Lean up here on one of the ten new pieces of cardio equipment, then strengthen that lower back and blast those abs! Make your way over to the free weight area and find all new benches, bars and 3,000 pounds of weights ready and willing to provide the muscle mass you are looking for. If weight machines are your exercise preference, you will find an area that's been doubled up on the most popular pieces to eliminate waiting.



World Gym's best features are – and will always be – its cleanliness, its service, and its members. One of the goals at World Gym is to make your workout not just a workout, but an event!

For the best in health and fitness, why in the WORLD would you want to be anywhere at 8340 Front Beach 6753 for the best else? Visit World Gym Rd., or call (850) 249-memberships available.



**a few
minutes
with...**

Mayor Gayle Oberst



In 1985, my husband Walter and I built a beach house in Open Sands subdivision with the intentions of coming from Dothan once or twice a month until we could retire and move on. We soon were

here every weekend driving from Dothan on Thursday night and returning early Monday to work. We just loved the place and decided as soon as we could to make a permanent move. In the summer of 1991 we became full time residents of the beach.

Walter retired from the military at Ft. Rucker, Alabama and I retired from Troy University at Dothan. Everyone knows that I am a people person and love to talk, be involved and to visit with anyone who will let me. Retirement in my 40's with no structure and few people just was not for me. Walt loved it! After getting things straight from the move, I began working with Gulf Coast Community College's Citizen Leadership Institute. It was great fun and hard work, but just an unbelievable project.

After about three years I decided to start CFT Pyramid, a consulting, facilitating, and training group that would allow for more flexible hours.

Working behind

the scenes in political races and issues had always been my contribution. I worked on a couple of governor races, city and county races, and served on the Governor's Commission for Women in Alabama. Becoming an elected official was never in my dreams or plans. Yet, in 2000 I ran for the City Council representing Ward 2. It has been a wonderful experience. And now I have the privilege of serving as the City's fifth Mayor.

We have lived and traveled all over the world and can truly say this is "The World's Most Beautiful Beaches." The funny thing is, we seldom go down to the Gulf. I think it's just knowing that it's there, and the people who live here, are what make Panama City Beach a special place.


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Friday at the Beach

February 9th, 2007
8:00-9:00AM
Edgewater Beach Resort
Pier Park Update From
Simon Property Group
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Call the Chamber to RSVP at 235-1159



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Chamber's Annual Report

The Best of 2006 and 2007

ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2006, The Greater Panama City Beaches Chamber of Commerce held its annual Board Planning Retreat for the purpose of gathering information to formulate its 2007 Program of Work. Members of the Board of Directors, Economic Development Council (EDC) and President's Council (representing resort executives and developers) gathered early that morning at the Boardwalk Convention Center, starting the day off with coffee and a light breakfast.

Deciding to give the day a theme, staff created a PowerPoint slideshow consisting of monumental and memorable moments from 2005 and 2006. The theme *Panama City Beach...We Make Memories* felt powerful. After all, that is what visitors have been coming to these beaches to do for decades. As the twentieth anniversary of the Chamber in June of this year draws closer, we are aware of the passage of time...and the desire to keep creating memories. Thus, *Panama City Beach...We Make Memories* has evolved to become the Chamber's charge for 2007.

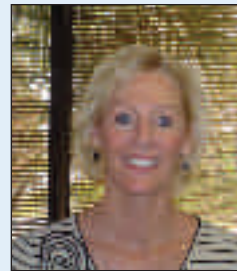
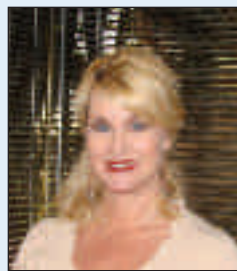
Retreat Overview

Russ Smith, the 2006 Chairman of the Board, called the Retreat to order and delivered welcoming remarks. Facilitated by Bay Solutions, Bert Howell then led attendees in self introductions and a fun ice breaker exercise. Debi Knight, President and CEO, presented the Year in Review (see Page 18) including summaries of activities, membership achievements, and positive financial results for the year. She also discussed staffing and operations.

Topics planned for the morning Break Out Sessions included **Public Affairs**, **Committees 2007**, and **EDC**. Afternoon Sessions included **Marketing** and the **Chamber's New Building**. In between, the group reconvened for lunch and a program from House Speaker Allan Bense, who later entertained questions from the group.

In the late afternoon attendees gathered to hear a summary of the day's work from Bert Howell as well as facilitators Shay Catrett and Dan Duda. Questions and comments concerning the day's work were discussed, and David Powell, the Chamber's 2007 Chairman of the Board, delivered the 2007 Charge and made the closing remarks. Mr. Powell adjourned and invited attendees to remain for a social hour at the Boardwalk. Following is a breakdown of the Chamber's five-part focus and Program of Work for 2007. ▶

The Greater Panama City Beaches Chamber recently held its Annual Planning Retreat to take a look at its accomplishments of the past twelve months, its program of work for the next twelve, and its mantra for 2007: Panama City Beach...We Make Memories.



The Chamber Team

Clockwise from upper-left corner:

Lynn Kandler

Dir. of Business Dev.

Debi Knight

President/CEO

Marta Rose

Sr. VP Marketing & PR

Beth Oltman

Executive Assistant

Jena Kimmel

Membership Account-

ing Manager

Tom Mixon

Member Services

Joyce Kidd

Receptionist

Bertie Reynolds

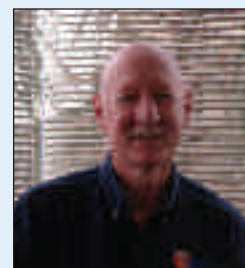
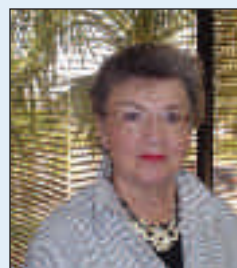
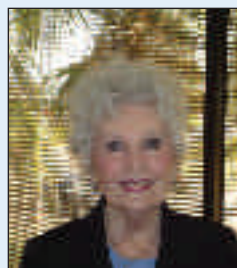
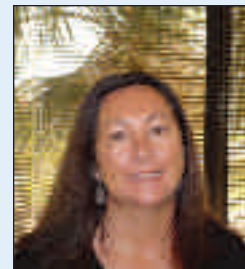
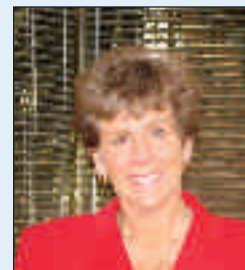
VP Hospitality

Jessica Summers

VP Relocation

Skip Alford

Member Services



Public Affairs

The Beaches Chamber supports the new regional airport, and plans to commit its resources to promoting and staying active in the newly-formed RACC (Regional Airport Commerce Council). Other focal points will be supporting a property insurance reform and lobbying for property tax reform. In the coming year the Chamber plans to create a CRA Task Force which will seek improvement to Front Beach Road, monitoring and publicizing the CRA improvements.

Marketing

Marketing plays a big role at the Chamber. In addition to actively marketing Panama City Beach, we are always busy helping our members market and promote their businesses.

Participants at the Planning Retreat agreed the Chamber should continue to increase its scope and reach of publications including the Official Vacation Planner, The Relocation Guide & Business Directory, The Circuit magazine, and the new Bay Area Rental Guide.

The President's Council, formed in 2006 and comprised of resort executives and developers, will evolve in the next year, adding members and continuing to meet periodically to share ideas and information. This council

was formed to help Panama City Beach's resorts and lodging market themselves and share in co-op marketing programs through trade shows.

2007 Committees

The Chamber's five 2007 committees' purposes and programs of work were discussed at length using the "Five Components of Marketing" as a template: Where have we been? Where are we now? Where are we going? How are we going to get there? How will we know when we've arrived?

The Hospitality Training Committee's mission is to develop a comprehensive, 16-hour hospitality-related industry education program involving service, behavioral, and cultural training that will ultimately result in promoting and retaining tourism. The Committee works in conjunction with Gulf Coast Community College to create the curriculum and certification process.

The Governmental Affairs Committee attends meetings for the Port Authority, Airport, County and City, and keeps the Board informed of new tax laws and amendments, zoning, impact fees, ordinances & bills. The Committee actively lobbies for improvements, reforms, etc. with elected officials.

The WAT (Workforce, Attainable Housing and Transportation) Com-

mittee's mission is to attract new service industry workers to the area, and induce other industries, service organizations and governments to help provide lodging and transportation to these new workers.

The Ambassadors work with staff on functions such as ribbon-cuttings, ground breakings and beautifications; work with staff on New Member Welcome Days and Leads Group meetings; and welcome guests at Chamber functions such as After Hours, Friday at the Beach and Business Expo.

The Special Events Committee works with staff coordinating large events such as the Annual Awards Banquet, Business Expo and the Chamber's 20th Anniversary party

Economic Development

The EDC's mission is to bring in additional attractions, restaurants, theme parks, retail stores and light industry.

At the Planning Retreat, participants discussed attractions and dining establishments that would be beneficial to the beach area economy. These include more waterfront fine dining restaurants, more theme restaurants, a dinner theater establishment, a high-end retail outlet mall and higher-end-super markets. Attractions include a theme park, an IMAX theater, addi-

2006: We Made Memories

1. On January 13th Speaker of the House Allan Bense spoke at the Chamber's first Friday at the Beach, held at Edgewater Beach Resort. 2. City Planner Mel Leonard speaks at Friday at the Beach on February 10th. 3. In March the new \$10 million Aquatic Center opens at Frank Brown Park. 4. The Chamber holds its 14th Annual Business Expo on April 18th at Boardwalk Beach Resort, featuring a "Welcome To The Orient!" theme. 5. The May After Hours at Boatyard is always a hit. 6. Edward Meyer (3rd from left), Vice President of Exhibits and Archives for Ripley Entertainment, wows the crowd at the June 9th Friday at the Beach. 7. In July the Chamber wins the 2006 Outstanding



1



2



3



4



5



6

tional golf courses, a track for NASCAR, and “rainy day” indoor attractions such as an aquarium. More festivals and sporting events such as the Ironman are needed. In order to facilitate bringing in more and bigger attractions, there is a need for a multi-purpose “mega-facility” capable of hosting events varying from sports to concerts and festivals. Participants all agreed that this concept should be fully endorsed and promoted by the Chamber as an economic need of the beach area.

Participants also recognized the importance of expansion and growth of existing businesses, and the need to promote business relocation to the area. The Chamber plans to attend a number of trade shows in the coming year, focused at bringing in hospitality businesses as well as marketing the area as a great place to relocate.

New Chamber Building

The Chamber’s new building will be located on Hutchison at Lyndell, next to the Senior Center and new City Library. A new building will provide a larger venue for members to market their businesses. This one-stop relocation center will also serve as a visitor’s welcome center, will accommodate the Board for meetings, and will enable the Chamber to increase its staff.

The Chamber recently formed a New Building Task Force chaired by Anthony DuBose, which will meet monthly to coordinate fundraising, operations, advertising and marketing aspects of the building.

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Communications Award for *The Circuit* at the annual Florida Association of Chamber Professionals Conference in Sarasota. 8. In August the Chamber hold a Candidate’s Breakfast/Forum, moderated by WJHG’s Tom Lewis, for the seats of State Rep, County Commission and School Board. 9. In September the Ambassadors celebrate the grand opening of Nautilus Station, yet another shopping center bringing more eateries and shopping to Panama City Beach. 10. The Chamber sells Coca Cola at the annual Indian Summer Festival held at Frank Brown Park on October 13-15th. 11. The Installation of the Board takes place at a dinner at Capt. Anderson’s on November 1st; the 2006 Committee Chairs are recognized. 12. La Borgata welcomes Alan Jackson to Panama City Beach at their Groundbreaking on November 30th.



Chamber's Accomplishments of 2006

We are an active Chamber, whose committees, councils, award-winning publications and frequent events throughout the year are designed to keep our members informed and our visitors happy. Following is a partial list of what your Chamber accomplished during the past year.

- Created seven new committees (to add to the EDC committee) at the Annual Board Retreat in January. The new committees and committee chairs included: Governmental Affairs & Transportation, Hospitality Training, Tourism Development, Technology, Special Events, Workforce and Membership.

- Created the President's Council, comprised of resort executives in Panama City Beach. The Chamber distributes pertinent information on the community to Council members to enhance their marketing portfolios, and holds periodic marketing meetings for Council members to share ideas and information.

- Formed three new positions: A Vice President of Relocation, a Webmaster and a Director of Business Development.

- Responded to over 5,000 phone calls per month from visitors, chamber members, local businesses and relocation requests.

- Awarded over \$13,000 in scholarships and mini grants to local schools.

- Sent 25 packets of PCB information and demographics to targeted restaurants, retailers and attractions.

- Held the Annual Awards Dinner at the Boar's Head in January, recognizing local community leaders for their contributions to Bay County through the Hank Swicord Distinguished Services Award and the Pioneer of the Year Award.

- Held the Annual Installation Dinner at Capt. Anderson's in October, recognizing outgoing Board members, installing the new Board, and recognizing Committee Chairs.

- Held ten "Friday at the Beach" breakfasts at Edgewater Beach Resort and Bay Point Marriott Resort.

- Instituted a New Member Welcome Day, currently held on the last Thursday of every other month to welcome each month's new members and fill them in on Chamber opportunities.

- Showcased over 100 businesses and organizations at the 14th Annual Business Expo, attended by thousands.

- Hosted six Business After Hours for networking opportunities.

- Held ten 12 @ 12 Luncheons, updating local officials and Chamber members on current events.

- Held two informative workshops, both open to the public: February - *Travel Trends Workshop* by Peter Yesawich of Yesawich, Pepperdine, Brown & Russell, America's leading marketing, advertising and public relations agency serving travel, leisure and lifestyle clients. March - *Hurricane Mitigation Workshop* by Jody Hill, Executive Director of Florida Interfaith Networking in Disaster (FIND) and an expert in the field of hurricane preparedness and recovery.

- Hosted a Candidate's Breakfast/Forum for the seats of State Representative District 6, County Commission Districts 2 and 4, and School Board Districts 1, 3 and 5 at Edgewater Beach Resort, moderated by WJHG Channel 7's Tom Lewis.

- Hosted a HobNob cocktail party at Capt. Anderson's in November for the Board and EDC to meet and greet their newly-elected officials.

- Held six EDC meetings attended by County, City and Airport officials, TDC and EDC Board members, to address current economic challenges facing our community.

- Held Leads meetings twice a month (and started a second Leads Group in April due to such high attendance), sharing leads to help businesses grow.

- Celebrated 102 ribbon-cuttings and grand opening ceremonies, and 8 beautification award ceremonies. Held 12 Ambassador Meetings and 24 Ambassador Lunches.

- Welcomed 195 new members and re-

tained 96% of current members.

- Launched a new website in October featuring an interactive map, faster load time, ability to update and refreshen content, new ad styles and sizes, new subpages such as Dining, Real Estate, Attractions and Golf for better targeted ads, added Hot Deals, Jobs and Shopping pages to benefit residents, visitors and members. The Chamber's website currently receives 20,000 hits per month.

- Participated – along with our EDC – in the formation of the Regional Airport Commerce Council (RACC), whose mission is to deliver a coordinated information campaign to the public that is supportive of the Airport's development efforts.

- Hosted The Inaugural Beaches Chamber Golf Classic in October, benefiting the United Way of Northwest Florida and the Chamber's New Building Fund.

- Staff attended two chamber conferences, the FACP (Florida Association of Chamber Professionals) in July and the ACCE (American Council of Chamber Executives) in August.

- Attended a three-day trade show in Chicago attended by thousands of businesswomen, marketing our beautiful resort destination.

- Distributed 10,000 2006 Business Directories to companies and families moving to the area.

- Distributed thousands of 2006 Official Vacation Planners at meetings, seminars, conferences, trade shows and visitor requests.

- Recreated *The Circuit* into a colorful, glossy news magazine that won the FACP's 2006 Outstanding Communications Award. Increased circulation from 2,000 to 5,000.

- Maintained a database of Redevelopment Updates, listing all development projects in the area with contact information, completion date, and the project's net number of units.



Calendar of Events

January & February 2007

January 4	Thursday	Executive Board Meeting	February 8	Thursday	City Council Meeting
12:00 noon, Peoples First Bank			6:00 pm		
January 4	Thursday	County Commission Meeting	February 13	Tuesday	TDC Meeting
2:00 pm			9:00 am, City Council Chamber		
Panama City Hall			February 14	Wednesday	Board Meeting
January 9	Tuesday	12@12 Luncheon	3:00 pm		
12:00-1:00 pm		<i>by invitation only</i>	Vision Bank		
Peoples First Bank			February 9	Friday	Friday at the Beach
January 10	Wednesday	Board Meeting	8:00-9:00 am		<i>Guest: Simon Property Group</i>
3:00 pm			Edgewater Beach Resort		
Vision Bank			February 20	Tuesday	County Commission Meeting
January 11	Thursday	City Council Meeting	9:00 am		
6:00 pm			Panama City Hall		
City Hall Annex			February 22	Thursday	City Council Meeting
January 12	Friday	Friday at the Beach	2:00 pm		
8:00-9:00 am		<i>Guest: Mayor Gayle Oberst</i>	City Hall Annex		
Edgewater Beach Resort			February 23	Friday	Annual Awards Banquet
January 18	Thursday	County Commission Meeting	6:00-10:00 pm		
2:00 pm			Boardwalk Beach Resort		
Panama City Hall			February 27	Tuesday	TDC Meeting
January 18	Thursday	After Hours	9:00 am, City Council Chamber		
5:30-7:30 pm			February 27	Tuesday	Airport Authority Meeting
Saltwater Grill			10:00 am		
January 23	Tuesday	TDC Meeting	Airport Board Rm (2nd FL)		
9:00 am, City Council Chamber			February 27	Tuesday	EDC Meeting
January 23	Tuesday	Airport Authority Meeting	3:00 pm		
10:00 am			Vision Bank		
Airport Board Rm (2nd FL)					
January 25	Thursday	City Council Meeting			
2:00 pm					
City Hall Annex					
January 30	Tuesday	EDC Meeting			
3:00 pm					
Vision Bank					
February 6	Tuesday	County Commission Meeting			
9:00 am					
Panama City Hall					
February 6	Tuesday	12@12 Luncheon			
12:00-1:00 pm		<i>by invitation only</i>			
Peoples First Bank					
February 8	Thursday	Executive Board Meeting			
12:00 noon, Peoples First Bank					

2007 Annual Awards Banquet

Friday, February 23, 2007

Boardwalk Beach Resort

9450 S. Thomas Drive

Reception 6 PM

Program & Dinner 7PM

Ladies Semi-Formal ~ Men Coat & Tie

\$35 per person Sponsorships Available Call For Information (850) 235-1159

New Members

Alisa Stone, Realtor
American Express
Andy's Flour Power Bakery, Inc.
Arbonne International by Sharon McMahon
B & C Technologies
Beach Appliance Parts & Service, LLC
Bell Signs
Cabana Cay
Carillon Beach Resort & Spa
Cellular Express Plus, an Authorized Agent of Cingular
Coastal Sportswear
Compass Title Insurance Agency
The Corral
Emerald Coast Cuppy's, Inc.
Cute & Sassy Children's Boutique
Dooley Mac Constructors of NW Florida, LLC
Drain Doctor Plumbing
Emerald Coast Bingo, Inc.
Granite Cafe
Hurricane Shutter Solutions
Infinity Blu Resort Condominiums
J.S. Paluch Company, Inc.
Joel Prather PhD PA
Kelly Klein Sold Mine
Kitchen & Bath Center
L.A. Concepts Salon
Magic Memories
Meridian Shelton Partners, LLC
Neves Media Productions
Patient Practitioners, LLC
Performance Food Group - Powell
Roebuck Auctions
Ronnie Gilley Properties
Star Real Estate Group
The Fudge Factory/D&L Enterprises of Bay Co.
The Heat Shack
Top Shelf Storage II, LLC
Turner's Fine Furniture - On The Coast
Women's Civic Club of Panama City Beach

Emerald Coast Building Materials 1yr
England Thims & Miller, Inc. 1yr
GulfCrest Condominiums (R) 1yr
Gulf Environments 1yr
Irby Electric Express 1yr
James Auto Center, Inc. 1yr
JRA Architects, Inc. 1yr
Legacy Boating Club 1yr
Panama City Living Magazine 1yr
Preble Rish 1yr
ReMax Real Estate Center 1yr
ResortQuest Central Reservations (R) 1yr
Seacoast Supply 1yr
Vacation Resorts (Landmark Holiday Beach Resort) 1yr
Wingate Inn 1yr
Acquire Land Title 2yr
Bay County Commissioner Mike Nelson 2yr
Bay County Commissioner Bill Dozier 2yr
Bay County Commissioner Jerry Girvin 2yr
Countrywide Home Loans 2yr
Creative Catering at the Beck Avenue Cafe 2yr
DeBest Pizza, Inc. d/b/a Dominio's Pizza 2yr
Jane Dama 2yr
MidSouth Bank 2yr
North Florida Safety Council - 2yr
Sea Screamer 2yr
Tim & Theresa Garrett 2yr
Brewer Amusements of Panama City Beach 3yr
Century 21 Commander Realty, Inc. 3yr
Florida First Capital Finance Corporation 3yr
Fred Astaire Dance Studio 3yr
H & R Block 3yr
Kilgore's Brick Pavers, Inc. 3yr
Panama City Weddings 3yr
Professional Service Industries, Inc. 3yr
Ralph Cellon, Jr. 3yr
Sunnyside Beach & Tennis Resort (R) 3yr
Vanguard Bank & Trust Company 3yr
Visual Arts Center of Northwest Florida 3yr
World Gym Fitness Center 3yr
StorterChilds Printing Company 3yr
Target Marketing 3yr
ARINC 4yr
Bay Mini Storage, Inc. 4yr
Beachcomber By The Sea 4yr
Calypso Beach Cafe & Sports Grille 4yr
Coastal Community Bank 4yr
Frimet to Z Auto Center 4yr
Kerrigan and Merritt, LLC 4yr
Louis P. Alessandrini 4yr
Ritz Food Stores 4yr
Saltwater Grill 4yr
SeaBreeze Winery 4yr

Southern Escrow & Title, LLC 4yr
Affordable Beach Rentals (R) 5yr
American Red Cross/Central Panhandle Chapter 5yr
Daystar Cleaning, Inc. 5yr
Escape to Tropical Breeze Resort 5yr
Gene Mitchell 5yr
Northwest Florida Surgery Center 5yr
St. Bernadette Catholic School and Child Development Center 5yr
Long Beach Resort (R) 5yr
Tim Allen & Associates 5yr
Advanced Lawn Control, Inc. 6yr
Covenant Hospice 6yr
Hampton Inn at Panama City Beach 6yr
Healthpark/Seawind Medical Center 6yr
Hospice of the Emerald Coast 6yr
Travelodge 6yr
Bay County Property Appraiser's Office 7yr
Gulf Coast Community College Small Business Development Center 7yr
Security Equipment Company, Inc. 7yr
11 Condos at Regency Towers (R) 8yr
BankTrust Bank 8yr
Cash Register Systems, Inc. 8yr
Hall Insurance Agency 8yr
Paddock Club Apartments 8yr
Prudential Shimmering Sands Realty 8yr
Scampy's 8yr
Beach Weddings & Renewals, Inc. 9yr
Inside Story Interiors 9yr
Muriel T. Ellis 9yr
Wachovia Bank 9yr
Bay County Assoc. of Realtors 10yr
Camper's Inn, Inc. 10yr
Padgett Business Service 10yr
Neighborhood Press 10yr
Sea Foam Motel (R) 10yr
Stephen & Associates (R) 10yr
Lollye on the Beach (R) 10yr
Driftwood Lodge (R) 11yr
Minute Man Security 11yr
Intercity Oz, Inc. 12yr
Leitz Office Products 12yr
Muzak of Florida 12yr
Boardwalk Beach Resort 13yr
Carr Engineering & Construction 13yr
Culligan Water Services 13yr
The Summit (R) 14yr
Altel Communications 16yr
Goodwill Industries 16yr
Chateau (R) 18yr
Aquatic Realty (R) 19yr

Renewals

Allstate Employer Services, LLC 1yr
Belton Hearing Center 1yr
Big Brothers Big Sisters of NW Florida 1yr
Bonefish Grill #7091 1yr
Bruner-Mongoven Land Surveying, Inc. 1yr
Buzz Leonard Chrysler Jeep Mazda
Mitsubishi 1yr
Counts Real Estate Group, Inc. 1yr

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Update from Tom Mixon & Skip Alford *Member Services*



Well, it is great to be back at the *number one* Chamber in the area. As usual, the Chamber is busy as ever. The Chamber has brought in over 200 new members this year due to Lynn's hard work. We have a new publication we are working on, the Bay Area Rental Guide, for both for Commercial and Residential properties. This publication will also be put on our website and we will print 20,000 copies quarterly.

Another new area on our website is our Members to Members Discounts Page and our Hot Deals Page. This is a great place to promote your

business to over 1,000 Chamber members. Check it out on our website www.pcbeach.org. Finally, as Lynn moves into Business Development we are looking forward to welcoming Skip Alford as our new Member Services rep. Skip has been a major supporter of this Chamber for many years, and has a lot of history as a Past Chairman of the Ambassadors.

If you have any questions or comments, need anything, or are looking for a way to promote your business, call or email Skip or myself. We are here to serve you.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Update from Lynn Kandler *Director of Business Development*



2007 promises to be a great year for business. I am looking forward to beginning my new position as Director of Business Development. I will be responsible for development of recruitment strategies for business and industry and for assisting with the design and implementation of marketing initiatives, as well as retention and expansion programs for our existing members.

In other words, I want to hear from you about what you would like to see coming to our area, and how I can help you increase your business. I

will also be working closely with our Economic Development Council to encourage economic growth and promote the area.

Our mission statement reads: Support, encourage and expand tourism and business development while preserving the quality of life in our community.

We are committed to following our mission and are excited about the future growth of this region. Please call or email me with your input.

AMBASSADORS

Update from Skip Stoltz *Ambassador Chairman*



Hello from the Ambassador team of The Greater Panama City Beaches Chamber of Commerce. 2006 went by so fast! At our Board Planning Retreat it was unbelievable what the Beaches Chamber had accomplished in one year. It just goes to show you why you should get out and be a part of what's going on.

Thank you to all the Ambassadors and Chamber Staff for all you do. I

want thank our meeting sponsors...in November, Jay at Tony Romas, and in December, Francesca at Schooners. A special thanks to our Christmas party sponsors Gordon Anderson and Karen Blackerby at Calypso Beach Café, and Rick Dye at AmSouth/Regions Bank.

I hope you all had a blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

AROUND TOWN

Updates on Community, Workforce, Governmental Affairs & Military

Navy News

Capt. Hal Harbeson, Commanding Officer

Naval Support Activity Panama City

If you see smoke over the Naval Support Activity Panama City, chances are there is no cause for alarm. The winter months signal the start of the prescribed burn season at the base, when we work with the Florida Division of Forestry to burn overgrown vegetation on 327 acres of wooded acreage around the activity. We burn only when ideal conditions exist, dissipating the smoke and ash vertically with minimal impact on our neighbors.

Secretary of the Navy the Honorable Dr. Donald C. Winter visited NSA Panama City in conjunction with the National Defense Industrial Association Expeditionary Warfare Conference in Panama City Oct 25. In between attending a Bay County Military Affairs Committee event and addressing the conference, Secretary Winter had breakfast with some of the top enlisted Sailors from around the base and received briefings and presentations at the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Panama City. Winter was so impressed with what he saw that he changed his travel plans and returned to NSA PC that afternoon to visit the Navy Experimental Dive Unit and the Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center. What an honor for our base and the community!

The activity was also honored in a different way on Dec. 7 when we hosted local members of the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association in remembrance of that day in 1941 that President Roosevelt said would live in infamy. Survivors Newton Brooks and Ronnie Everitt, their families and other association members were special guests at a ceremony that included remarks by Capt. Gary Windhorst, commanding officer at the Center for EOD and Diving. The honored guests shared their stories with service members and employees and assisted in presenting awards and advancements to several deserving Sailors.

For more than 50 years now, a group of volunteers from across the activity have coordinated a huge effort to provide a special holiday party for approximately 100 kids who may not otherwise have a Christmas. This year's Children's Christmas Party was held on December 13 for children nominated by Bay District Schools. The volunteer committee shops for and wraps gifts specifically selected for each child, and Santa and his elf makes a special landing at NSA PC to deliver the presents.

On a sad note, we continue to grieve with the family of US Army Cpt. Shawn English, who was killed in Iraq on Dec. 3. Before his assignment as an individual augmentee in Iraq, English was the commander for Delta Company 577 Engineering Battalion and senior liaison officer stationed at the Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center. An education fund for Cpt. English's children has been set up at AmSouth Bank. For more information on this effort please call (850) 747-4522.

Gulf Coast Workforce Board

Joe Chavarria, Gulf Coast Workforce Board

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board represents a public-private partnership consisting of 35 members from the tri-county area that makes up this workforce region (Bay, Gulf and Franklin counties). The Board was chartered in 1996, and serves as the policy and oversight body for many types of governmental and other grant funds that support workforce development in our region. The funds for this region range from five to eight million dollars annually. Funds received by the Board are used to provide a myriad of services all ultimately designed to develop a world class workforce.

The Board's strength is in the selection of service providers who work diligently to carry forth the vision of the Board. The Gulf Coast Workforce Board has been the top performing Board in the state for three years running, and they openly attribute their success to their hard-working community partners and volunteer board members. Service providers include: Gulf Coast Community College, Bay District Schools, Royal American Management, Gulf District Schools, Franklin County School District, and Franklin County Public Library, the Bay County EDA, the Gulf County EDC, the Carrabelle Chamber of Commerce, and the Bay County Chamber of Commerce.

The Workforce Center, operated by Gulf Coast Community College is the largest provider of services funded by the Board. Last year the Board and its providers provided training to over 1,600 individuals, assisted over 5,500 individuals in becoming employed, provided job search assistance to over 11,000 job seekers, and registered services to over 1,200 employers.

Gulf Coast Workforce Board Reminds Business Owners of Florida's Minimum Wage Increase Requirement

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board would like to remind area businesses that Florida's minimum wage increased as of January 1, 2007. The minimum wage is now \$6.67 per hour for all hours worked in Florida. This represents an hourly increase of 27 cents over last year's state minimum wage of \$6.40 per hour.

The new Florida rate is \$1.52 over the current federal minimum wage of \$5.15 per hour. The Florida minimum wage was created by a state constitutional amendment approved by voters in November 2004, and requires annual increases, based on the rate of inflation, to the state's minimum wage.

For "tipped employees" meeting eligibility requirements for the tip credit under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), employers may count tips actually received as wages under the FLSA, but the employer must pay "tipped employees" a direct wage in an amount equal to the minimum wage of \$6.67 minus \$3.02 (2003 tip credit existing under the FLSA), or a direct hourly wage of \$3.65.

Continued on Page 26

GRAND OPENINGS

and Re-Openings, Groundbreakings & Beautifications

Reported by the Ambassador Committee



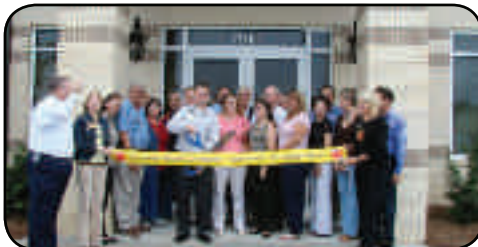
Northwest Florida Title, 10/19



Innovations FCU Beautification, 10/24



Jane's Expressions, 10/26



Bank Trust, 10/27



County Pier, 10/30



AmSouth Bank, 11/2



Liza's Kitchen, 11/2



Big Airbrush, 11/29



La Borgata, 11/30



Inside Story Interiors, 12/7



Hibiscus By The Bay, 12/12



Coastal Sportswear, 12/14



Cellular Express Plus, 12/19



Enterprise Rent-A-Car, 1/4



Compass Title Ins. Agency, 1/10

MEMBERS ARE SAYING...

Philip Sherrill, Grand Panama Resort:

"Well beyond the introduction to the business community, membership in the Chamber has offered my business a partnership and a forum for building our region during such promising growth. The Greater Panama City Beaches Chamber of Commerce is set for success."

MEMBER NEWS

2006 New Year's Eve Masquerade Ball

If you missed the 2006 Masquerade Ball held at Edgewater Beach Resort, perhaps you missed the most unique New Years Eve Party for 2006 – proclaimed the most sought-after ticket by the Panama City News Herald.

This exclusive black tie affair held by Mark Hess Promotions has certainly set the stage for an annual event. "I was pleasantly surprised with the overwhelming participation of our guests," said Hess. "They all displayed a magnificent array of masks! We are looking forward to next year."

The Masquerade Ball was also held as a benefit to the Visual Arts Center supporting their effort in presenting the Titanic Artifacts Exhibition beginning May 25th.



Viva Las Vegas at the Fifth Annual Mask Parade

Las Vegas is coming to Panama City... experience a lively, fun-filled night in the entertainment capital of the world without ever leaving town! Covenant Hospice invites you to discover the energy of Las Vegas at its Fifth Annual Mask Parade Gala on Saturday, March 3rd at 6:00 pm at the Edgewater Beach Resort.

Covenant Hospice is a not-for-profit organization that brings comfort, support, and dignity to life's last journey for terminally-ill patients and their families regardless of their ability to pay. The Mask Parade Committee is dedicated to raising \$70,000, which will help Covenant Hospice continue to



provide this special kind of caring in Bay and Gulf counties. The Mask Parade Gala features silent and live auctions of beautiful clay masks created by national celebrities and local artists, a full dinner and live entertainment. Covenant



From left: Mark Hess, Kristen Sholtis and Shannon Malkin celebrate New Year's at the First Annual Masquerade Ball at Edgewater Beach Resort.

Hospice promises a high-rolling night in the city of lights as guests stroll the "Vegas Strip" encountering magicians, mimes and performers. Enjoy vignettes recreating both favorite old-school Vegas lounge acts as well as current Vegas performances.

Gala Co-Chairs, Cil Schnitker and Judy Pariseau say they are delighted to have so many local businesses getting involved as sponsors this year. "It's a great opportunity for businesses and it helps Covenant Hospice continue the mission of providing special end-of-life care in our community. We're grateful for everyone's support," said Schnitker.

Current sponsors include: Cher, The Family of Forest A. Revell, Wild Bill's Bingo, Durden Foundation, Modeo Exquisite Gifts, Berg Steel Pipe, Wal-Mart 23rd Street, Trustmark Bank, Heyman Family Foundation, Bay Point Women's Club and Sam's Club.

Some of this year's celebrity mask artists include Courteney Cox & David Arquette, Ben Stiller, Carrie Underwood, Coach Bobby Bowden, Coach Urban Meyer, Governor Jeb Bush, Kirk Douglas and many Vegas entertainers. Bay County artists such as Paul Brent, Patrick Reynolds and Roland Hockett are just a few of the many local residents who've participated in the Mask Parade year after year. The public is invited to attend an opening

reception and guided walking tour of the Mask Exhibit at 3:30 pm on Friday, February 16th beginning at the Visual Arts Center. Masks will be exhibited here and at Estate Treasures, Bay Bank & Trust and Modeo in downtown Panama City through March 1st. There is no charge to attend. Masks can also be viewed online at www.covenanthospice.org/mask.

Mask Parade Gala tickets are \$75 per person and can be purchased at Covenant Hospice, located at 107 W. 19th St. in Panama City, or call (850) 785-3040.

NAI Emerald Coast Commercial Real Estate

NAI Global, an organization of leading independent brokerage companies providing enhanced services to the commercial and institutional real estate market, announces their new office in Panama City, NAI Emerald Coast. Broker/President Bill Fenimore, Broker/Executive Vice President Brian Hinton, Coordinator/Administrative Assistant Sarah Dailey, and Vice President of Marketing and Public Relations Marilyn Garrett-Fenimore are working together to provide innovative services with leading edge technology for the Emerald Coast commercial real estate market. NAI Emerald Coast Commercial Real Estate is located at 1714 W. 23rd St., Ste. I in Panama City. Call (850) 785-5430 or visit www.naiemeraldcoast.com.

Beach Care Services

During 2006 Beach Care Services provided assistance to over 600 individuals. Most of these people work for minimum wage, and they don't have medical benefits or paid leave in the event of absence due to illness or other hardship. BCS is the only social service agency on the Beach, and the level of service provided to needy citizens during the past year was possible only because of the on-going financial support received from Panama City Beach businesses, churches, civic clubs, and individuals. We are extremely thankful for the support received from this community. And of course BCS simply could not be successful without our all volunteer staff and dedicated Board of Directors, all of whom work very hard throughout the year toward the mission of "Locals Helping Locals."

MEMBER NEWS

Tenth Annual Christmas Lighting Contest

The 10th Annual City of Panama City Beach Christmas Lighting Contest on December 12th was another glorious sight! This year's winners include:

Residential/Traditional: 1st Place Blaine Lashbrook of 180 Treasure Palm Dr.; 2nd Place Thomas Cunningham of 118 Palm Crossing; 3rd Place Ed & Kathy Mullen of 114 Coral Drive.

Residential/Creative: 1st Place Robert Anglin of 144 Heritage Circle; 2nd Place Robert & Eloise Cox of 107 Bid-A-Wee-Lane; 3rd Place Donna M. Fletcher of 121 Sandollar Drive.

Commercial/Traditional: 1st Place Princess Condominiums at 6415 Thomas Drive; 2nd Place Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort at 11127 Front Beach Road; 3rd Place Ray's Garden Shop at 331 Magnolia Drive.

Commercial/Creative: 1st Place Calypso Beach Café at 15612 Front Beach Road; 2nd Place Emerald Bay Inn at 285 South Hwy 79; 3rd Place Coconut Creek Family Fun at 9807 Front Beach Road.



Eighth Annual Death by Chocolate

A night of delectable desserts from the Emerald Coasts's finest restaurants awaits you on March 6th at the Marina Civic Center. The 8th Annual Death by Chocolate will take place from 5:30 to 7:30 pm along with a silent auction. The event is sponsored by Emerald Coast Business Women, Inc. Tickets are \$15 and are available at the following locations: The Greater Panama City Beaches Chamber of Commerce at 415 Beckrich Road, Ste. 200; NHC Home Care at 1830 Lisenby Ave.

in Panama City--call Debbie at (850) 769-5256; BankTrust at 2315 S. Highway 77 in Lynn Haven--call Nicole at (850) 265-2021 and BankTrust at 100 Beckrich Rd. (850) 233-2303; Covenant Hospice at 107 W. 19th Street in Panama City--call Cynthia at (850) 785-3040; and Chuck Bond-Allstate Agency at 621 Tyndall Parkway in Panama City (850) 747-1187.

Ambassadors

The Chamber welcomes two new Ambassadors, Sharon McMahon and Dr. Gurprit Sekhon, and presents Gregg Ward with a gold badge.

The Ambassador Badge System works on points; attendance at each event = 25 points. New Ambassadors receive a white badge after reaching 75 points, a gold badge at 500 points, and a platinum badge at 5,000 points. Recruiting another Ambassador to the program gains another 25 points. Congratulations Ambassadors...keep up the good work!

Chamber Travels to Chicago

In early November, four members of the Beaches Chamber travelled to

Chicago to promote Panama City Beach at the annual Chicago Women's Show. The PCB booth was visited by thousands of business women and their associates, friends and family, looking for a fun place to vacation and possibly relocate. The Chamber promoted and distributed marketing materials from a number of local properties including the Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort,



The Chamber promotes Panama City Beach to Chicago. From left: Lynn Kandler, Debi Knight, Tom Mixon and Marta Rose.

Royal American Hospitality, Ibis Lake, Grand Panama Beach Resort, Infinite Blu, Osprey Motel, Island Reserve and Bridge Harbor. For more information on marketing your property at future trade shows call Marta at (850) 235-1159.



New White and Gold Ambassadors, from left: Sharon McMahon from Arbonne International, Gregg Ward from Wild Heron, and Dr. Gurprit Sekhon from Gulf Coast Medical Center Beach Primary Care.



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AROUND TOWN

Updates on Community, Workforce, Governmental Affairs & Military

Continued from Page 22

Both the Florida notice and the federal minimum wage notice must be posted in a conspicuous and accessible place in each establishment of employment.

Florida's minimum wage poster is available for downloading in English and Spanish from the Agency for Workforce Innovation's webpage at http://www.floridajobs.org/resources/fl_min_wage.html.

For information regarding FLSA compliance log on to <http://www.dol.gov/dol/compliance/comp-flsa.htm>.

Local Government Update

Bert Howell, Bay Solutions

Bay County

Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) highlights for last month are as follows:

- The exchange of Hwy 388 with the FDOT was approved without the County taking on any additional roads that might be interpreted as indirectly contributing to the financing of the new airport.
- One hundred acres in two parcels (one on the Beach) has been proposed as a density swap by St. Joe Company to facilitate the provision of affordable housing.
- The Master Water Plan was presented by PBS&J and indicated that County capacity will rise sufficiently to meet need requirements.
- BOCC went on record as objecting to the City of Parker CRA because they have no ad valorem tax in Parker.

City of Panama City Beach

City of Panama City Beach Council highlights are as follows:

- Rick Russell has been appointed to the vacant Council position and has taken office.
- Councilman Jeff Ferguson was elected to become the new Vice Mayor.
- Staff has been directed to study the use of monument signage on Panama City Beach Parkway and Hutchison Road.
- The City has adopted the Uniform Method of Collection for future taxes, fees, and assessments. The Method is utilized as a standard tool throughout the State.
- The Seahaven DRI public hearings were continued; this is first Development of Regional Impact in the city limits of the City of Panama City Beach.

Airport Authority

The Airport Authority received strong reports on the progress of letting the contracts for the new airport; groundbreaking is still projected for March 2007. It was announced that the sale of the existing airport will be announced at the January 2007 meeting as negotiations are still in progress.

Florida Dept. of Transportation

The Citizens Public Hearing on the FDOT Updated Five Year Plan was held in December. The Beaches will see continued improvements to Hwy 79 as far north as the Interstate. Also Front Beach Road west of the city limits to the intersection with Panama City Beach Parkway is slated for resurfacing. All previous FDOT commitments to the new airport are carried forward in the updated plan.

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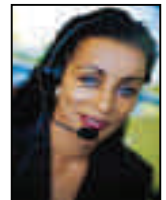
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