The Central Louisiana Chamber of Commerce

There's no place like home

May 2007

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Chamber Connection

"The Chamber Means Business"

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From the Chairman – A Brent Caplan

As noted by Elton Pody, the Chamber co-sponsored an Economic Development Forum last month with our partners at Cleco and Cenla Advantage Partnership.

The presentations by Dr. Morrison point to the need for continued diversification of our local economy in order for us to be competitive in the face of continuing economic globalization. To ensure we can compete at the global level, your Chamber will continue to lead this charge.

If we are to lead this charge we must continue to maintain relationships with government at all levels. This month Elton and I will lead a delegation from Central Louisiana to Washington D.C.

Economic growth begins with infrastructure. The delegation will present infrastructure packages to our U.S. Senators, members of Congress and key staff.

These infrastructure needs are a result of meetings with Central Louisiana Police Jurors and municipality leaders. This visit to Capitol Hill provides us an opportunity to share information about the Chamber's 2007 Legislative Priorities. I look forward to giving you a full report on these meetings in next month's newsletter.

From the President – Elton Pody

The Alexandria/Pineville metropolitan area continues to be recognized and gain national attention.

In 2005, *Business Development Outlook Magazine* ranked us at number 13 for having the best available housing in the country. The U.S. Department of Commerce, in Sep 06, listed us as experiencing the ninth highest growth in personal income.

Just this past month *Inc. Magazine* listed our metro area at number 77 for simply being the best overall citiy in the nation. This ranking is out of 393 areas; and is up 199 places from the 2006 ranking of 276th. Only Baton Rouge (at 59) was higher in the State.

Among the best small places for business and careers *Forbes Magazine* ranked our area at number 40 when it comes to the cost of doing business and at number 48 for job growth.

These rankings show a continued positive swing for Central Louisiana. The Chamber works very hard for this region and is extremely happy about this uptrend YOU have helped to make possible through your investment in the Chamber.

While these numbers are great, we will not stop our economic development (ED) efforts. On Apr 27, we held our fourth ED Forum to discuss, with our allies, the potential for continued growth of our region. Dr. Ed Morrison of the Purdue University Center for Regional Economic Development, provided insight on Regional Development and The New Global Economy and New Trends and Directions in Workforce Development.

If you do business in Central Louisiana, I want to invite you to be part of a

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Military Appreciation Month

Congratulations to Christie Berger Phillips

Relocation of Abstracting & Legal Research to 910 Foisy Ave in Alexandria

May is National Military Appreciation Month, a time to honor the men and women in uniform who served and are serving our country. During the almost 231 years of our nation's history, well over 80 million Americans have served in the military.

Memorial Day is a day of remembrance for those who have died in our nation's service and is commemorated on the last Monday in May. Memorial Day was officially proclaimed on May 5, 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic. It was first observed on May 30, 1868, when flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery.

The first state to officially recognize the holiday was New York in 1873. By 1890 it was recognized by all of the northern states. The South refused to acknowledge the day, honoring their dead on separate days until after World War I. That's when the holiday changed from honoring just those who died fighting in the Civil War to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war.

There are two local Memorial Day ceremonies you may want to attend: May 24 @ 11:45am, Warrior Memorial Park, Fort Polk; May 28 @ 11:45am, Alexandria National Cemetery, Pineville.

By Mary Ann Clary, Military Affairs Chair

Networking With Your State Legislators

Congratulations to Mike Peirson

Expansion of All About Parties located at 1707 Metro Drive (Union Station) in Alexandria

The Central Louisiana Chamber of Commerce is providing you the opportunity to network with your State Legislators and leaders. On May 30, the Chamber is hosting a Day at the 2007 Regular Fiscal Legislative Session. The day will include a luncheon for Chamber Board members and an evening reception open to all Chamber members.

The Board of Directors are invited to have lunch with the Central Louisiana Legislative Delegation at 11:30am, at the Camelot Club in downtown Baton Rouge. The Cenla Legislators will provide a brief overview of the Session. Board Members planning to attend must RSVP to the Chamber Office no later than Friday, May 25.

Additionally, the Chamber will host a Legislative Reception beginning at 6:00pm on the grounds of the Pentagon Apartments. This event is open to all Chamber members interested in visiting with your Legislators.

If your business is interested in being a sponsor of the event, contact the Chamber Office at (318) 442-6671.

Sponsors will be listed on invitations and signage.

By Deborah Randolph, Governmental Affairs Chair

Education Division Making Strides

Congratulations to Tina Frick

Relocation of Buds & Blooms to 4501 Jackson St Ext (Mardi Gras Plaza) in Alexandria

The Education Division continues its plan of work through the activities of its three committees chaired by Mr. Haywood Joiner, Ms. Sherry Smith, and Rev. Joseph Franklin.

The Post-Secondary Education Committee (Mr. Joiner) is following up on the Strategic Vision for Post-Secondary Education and recommended the creation of a local post-secondary education coordinating committee. That recommendation was accepted by the Board of Directors and will be implemented in the very near future.

The Quality of Life Committee (Ms. Smith) is, in conjunction with the Convention and Visitors Bureau and GAEDA, addressing issues associated with hospitality and customer care.

The High School-to-Work Transition Committee (Rev. Franklin) is considering a number of "best practices" which can help our community foster a smoother transition from high school to the work force and through that to better meet the needs of regional employers.

By Dr. Tom Armstrong, Education Chair

Federal Government Contracting Workshop

The Central Louisiana Chamber of Commerce is hosting a free Federal Government Contracting Workshop on May 23, 9-11am. The workshop will be conducted by Ms. Shelia Wallace of the Louisiana Procurement Technical Assistance Center (LA PTAC).

Covering the registration process and places to register your business for contracting and marketing purposes, this workshop will provide a wealth of information in preparing small business for the journey toward contracting.

Representatives from Camp Beauregard, Fort Polk, VA Medical Center, USDA and the Bureau of Federal Prisons will be on hand to discuss their specifics and answer questions.

To register for this free workshop call the Chamber Office at (318) 442-6671. Space is limited, so secure your seat today. For more information about LA PTAC visit www.la-ptac.org or email kdptac@kricket.net.

Congratulations to Roy O Martin III

Grand Opening of the MARTCO OSB Plant in Oakdale

Legislative Committee Hard at Work

The Chamber of Commerce Legislative Committee, chaired by Joe Brocato, Jr., has begun meeting to review the hundreds of bills filed by State Legislators that are related to business and industry in Central Louisiana.

The committee meets at the Chamber Office on a weekly basis, Mondays at 4:00pm.

When appropriate, the committee makes recommendations to the Chamber's Executive Committee to support or oppose legislation.

Positions adopted by the Executive Committee are presented to the full Board of Directors for consideration.

In the near future, a list of bills along with the positions adopted by the full Chamber Board will be posted to the Chamber's web site at www.cenlachamber.org.

By Deborah Randolph, Governmental Affairs Chair

Congratulations to Lauren Gay Coleman and William F. Henderson

Relocation of Coleman & Henderson Attorneys at Law to 910 Foisy Ave in Alexandria

Membership Renewals

In April, the following businesses, organizations and individuals renewed membership with the Chamber. We want to say "Thanks" for continued support of economic development and growth in Central Louisiana.

Alexandria Municipal Employees Credit Union
Alexandria Wellness Center
Alpine Lawn & Landscape LLC
Amerinet Consulting LLC
Ashley Home Store
Horace Austin
Auto Paint and Supplies Company Inc
Ballard & Associates Inc
Scott Brame
Buelow-Miller Real Estate Inc
Cajun Landing
CHRISTUS Medical Group
Coleman & Henderson Attorneys at Law
Cracker Barrel Old Country Store
ENJOY Christian Center
Ethel's Florist Etc
Ferrellgas Inc
Fowlco Printing Company and Invitation Station
Gray Walk Realty Advisors LLC
H & E Equipment Services LLC
H & H Appliance Sales & Service
Holiday Inn Express & Suites
Hospice Care of Louisiana
Irma's Accounting/Bookkeeping/Notary
H David Jones III DDS
Jump-N-Jive
Kisatchie-Delta Regional Planning & Development
Lawrence & Associates
Louisiana Physical Therapy Centers of Pineville
Louisiana Wireless
M & M Dodge Inc
Open Air MRI of Cenla
Opus Broadcasting Alexandria LLC
Patton Diamond Center
Peoples State Bank
Procter & Gamble Manufacturing Company
Rapides Animal Medical Center
Rapides Parish Medical Society
SSA Consultants
Snell's Limbs & Braces Inc
Southerner Motel dba Shree Corp
Spangler's Tours Inc
State Farm Insurance—Rosa Fields
SuddenLink Media
Visual Concepts and Designs LLC
Wells Fargo Financial
Whitco dba Alexandria Powersports
Williams Fence & Aluminum
WNTZ TV – Fox 48

Congratulations to Crosstex Energy

$90 Million Pipeline Expansion near Natchitoches

Central Louisiana Chamber of Commerce

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We're on the Web!
See us at:
www.cenlachamber.org

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workshop we are hosting at the Chamber Office on May 23, 9-11am. This will be a great opportunity for you to begin contracting with the Federal Government. We have had a great response from the local agencies and look forward to seeing you.

Congratulations to Octavia Jackson of MedExpress

A Brent Caplan presents the award for Red Coat Ambassador of Quarter, Jan-Mar 07. "Thanks" to Tunk's Cypress Inn for sponsoring the award by providing a gift certificate.

Schedule of Upcoming Events

May 7th, 2:00pm
Ribbon Cutting (100-Years)
Alexandria Historical & Genealogical Library & Museum
503 Washington Street
Alexandria

May 10th, 5:00-7:00pm
Business After Ours
Sponsored by Tunk's Cypress Inn and ADs The Parish Yellow Pages
Tunk's out Highway 28 West (Kincaid Road)
Boyce

May 15th, 8:00am
Executive Committee Meeting
Chamber Office

May 15th, 10:00am
Ribbon Cutting
Edward A Kaplan Attorney at Law
4501 Jackson St, Ste A
(Mardi Gras Plaza)
Alexandria

May 16, 11:00am
Ribbon Cutting
Wells Fargo Financial
4508 Coliseum Blvd, Ste F
Alexandria

May 17th, 7:30-9:00am
Morning Coffee/Ribbon Cutting
Sponsored by Guillory Payroll Solutions
201 Johnston St, Ste 200
Alexandria

May 17th, 4:00pm
Board of Directors
Chamber Office

May 17th, 5:00pm
Ribbon Cutting
Holiday Inn Express
2340 MacArthur Drive
Alexandria

May 18th, 11:00am
Ribbon Cutting
Barksdale FCU
3500 Jackson Street
Alexandria

May 21st, 11:30am
Strategic Luncheon
Sponsored by Louisiana Occupational Health Services (LOHS)
Best Western Conf Cntr
2720 MacArthur Drive
Alexandria

May 22nd, 11:00am
Ribbon Cutting
Creating Self Images
101 Fendler Parkway
Pineville

May 23rd, 9:00-11:00am
Federal Government Contracting Workshop
Chamber Office

May 24th, 5:00-7:00pm
Business After Ours
Sponsored by Louisiana State University-Alexandria
Weldon "Bo" Nipper Bldg
LSUA Campus

May 28th
Chamber Holiday
Memorial Day

May 30th
Day at Legislature
11:30am – Luncheon
6:00pm – Reception
Baton Rouge

May 31st, 11:00am
Ribbon Cutting
Liberty Tax Service
3328 Monroe Street
Alexandria

Welcome New Members

U First Financial
Jack Evans
(318) 442-6103

Unitech Training Academy
Danny Head
(337) 988-9350

Lue Jean Washington
(318) 445-2790

Alltel
Susan Lucas
(318) 473-4858

Edward Jones
Tim Holloway
(318) 445-1857

American Eagle Airlines
Kathy Cargile
(800) 433-7300

American National Insurance Company
Doug Jones
(318) 448-8302

Plastipak Packaging Inc
Linda James
(318) 640-9266

Home Instead Senior Care
Raegan LeMaire
(318) 442-1505

Sandy Mazur, Vice President of Franchise and Licensing for Spherion Corporation speaking to business leaders at the Strategic Luncheon on Apr 23rd, regarding "The Great Divide: The Employer-Worker Disconnect."