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"The Chamber Means Business"

From the Chairman – Martin Johnson

Congratulations to Deborah Randolph who was chosen as the 2011 Chair Designate of our Chamber of Commerce. Deborah has served our Board of Directors for 6-years. I also would like to welcome Cory Lair of Bancorp South Bank to our Board of Directors.

Last month, our board met with several of our legislative delegates: Sen. Riser (Dist 32), Sen. LaFleur (Dist 28), Rep. Chandler (Dist 22), Rep. Dixon (Dist 26), Rep. Roy (Dist 25). We thanked them for their support of our legislative agenda, specifically for getting the

funding approved for the last unfunded portion of Hwy 28 West. We also discussed the importance of securing the funding for a Hwy 167 off-ramp near the Coughlin Industrial Park where we have several major employers. Plastipak recently completed a 350,000 sq ft warehouse expansion and several other companies are contemplating expansion plans, so the need to provide an additional traffic outlet is critical.

Finally, we are coming to the end of our 5-year capital campaign. We thank all of

the firms and individuals that contributed to this effort. The funds have been used to market our area to prospects, some of which have located here and created many new jobs. We still have a couple of major prospects we are working with and also still must address our shortage of industrial sites. Chair of our Economic Development Division, Brady Baudin, Elton and I will be contacting you to renew your commitment to our efforts.

Please contact us at (318) 442-6671 for all of your needs.

From the President – Elton Pody

A recent announcement by the Department of the Army to relocate an 825-soldier infantry training brigade from Fort Riley, Kansas, to Fort Polk, will **increase Fort Polk's economic impact by \$100M** per year. This new training brigade is scheduled to "stand up" in the Spring of 2009 and will train Foreign Security Force Transition Teams.

This is the second such announcement made by the Army in less than one year that is indicative of Fort Polk's importance in the War on Terror and helps solidify the post's future.

The other announcement,

made in December 2007, is the establishment of a Battlefield Surveillance Brigade of approximately 1,200 soldiers to gradually arrive and be fully on-board by 2013.

These announcements stem from coordinated planning efforts to campaign for adding additional units to Polk. The parishes of Vernon, Beauregard and Rapides spearheaded this effort.

A few years ago, the DoD began planning to diminish U.S. armed forces stationed in both Europe and the Far East by several thousand.

Realizing the potential impact this could have on Fort Polk and the communities of Central Louisiana, we began focusing efforts to gain additional soldiers at Polk.

In mid-2007 a delegation from your Chamber and Vernon Parish officials traveled to Washington D.C. to meet with US Army leadership to discuss the possibility of relocating an additional 4,000 soldiers to Fort Polk.

Fort Polk, the State's largest non-governmental employer, already has nearly 10,000 soldiers assigned and impacts our economy by more than \$1.3B per year.

Resource Guide for Education and Training

In an effort to provide current and prospective businesses and employers, as well as individual employees, a snapshot of locally available post-secondary education and training options, some time ago the Chamber created an on-line "Resource Guide for Post-Secondary Education."

At a time when some form of education or training beyond high school is increasingly important, it is intended that the "Resource Guide" will serve as an introduction to the many opportunities available in the region.

Those opportunities include vocational training, both specialized and general, certificate programs, associate degrees, baccalaureate degrees, and graduate degrees.

Also included in the guide are training providers who offer a range of services including numerous training and incentive programs available to companies who partner with a post-secondary education provider to

upgrade the skills of their current workforce.

The "Resource Guide" is only as good as the information provided, so we are requesting those education and training sources who have posted their offerings take a moment to view your information found at www.cenlachamber.org/EducationDirectory.html and utilize the template form to fax updates to the Chamber at (318) 442-6734.

Additionally, if you provide some type of training to the general public and are not listed in our "Resource Guide", please complete the form and fax it with your information to be included at no cost.

The "Resource Guide" is one of the many initiatives by the Chamber's Education Division designed to strengthen educational opportunity in the region.

Strong business, a robust economy, and the bright future of Central Louisiana are dependent on a strong educational and training system and an educated workforce.

Resources for Businesses Affected by 2008 Hurricanes

We certainly hope that neither your business nor your home were significantly affected by the two recent hurricanes Central Louisiana experienced, or if so, are now "Back up and Running."

As a result of Hurricane Gustav, the following parishes in Central Louisiana were declared federal disaster areas by President Bush: Allen, Avoyelles, Evangeline, Grant, LaSalle, Rapides, and Vernon. The only Central Louisiana parish declared a disaster area at this time as a result of Hurricane Ike is Vernon.

As a member of the Chamber, we want to ensure you are informed about resources available to you in the event your business was impacted by the storms; either by property damage or financial loss.

Assistance is available in the form of counseling, technical assistance, disaster loans, workforce assistance, disaster unemployment, tax deadline extensions, temporary housing, and contracting opportunities.

Please visit www.cenlachamber.org/pdf/HurricaneResourceSheet.pdf to view the resource sheet that explains each service and where to go to obtain assistance.

For additional information or to sign up for e-mail updates on business assistance, visit www.LouisianaForward.com/BizHelp or call LED's Business Recovery Information Center at (877) 610-3533.

SBA Award Deadline Announced

The Chamber will accept nominations for the 2009 Small Business Person of the Year Award through November 1, 2008. This will allow enough time to review packages and submit the winner to the SBA before their established deadline of November 15, 2008, which was just announced.

The Cenla Chamber winner will be honored at the Chamber's Annual Meeting this December and the winner will then compete at the regional and state levels. Award criteria and format for nomination package is available in our on-line newsroom at www.cenlachamber.org/newsroom/2008/news_SmallBusinessPerson2009_02jun08.html. Nominations and questions should be directed to Jay Ellington at the Chamber, (318) 442-6671.



Congratulations to Erina Valenzuela for Grand Opening of Lil Cajun House located at 2154 North Mall Drive in Alexandria

Gain Visibility with Central Louisiana Business Leaders

The Chamber has begun the process of publishing our 2009 Membership Directory and Buyer's Guide and we need your help, as we are currently soliciting sponsors for the directory. The directory cannot be printed, provided to all our members, and distributed in area hotel rooms without your sponsorship.

The success of many businesses is based primarily on good advertisement. Reaching the right audience with the right message is what really counts. As an advertising medium, there simply isn't a better business-to-business buy than this publication.

Our directory is an added bonus to membership with the Chamber, and many use it faithfully for their business needs. As Chamber members, we highly encourage using our directory for your business and personal transactions, giving fellow members the first opportunity to meet your needs.

Purchasing an ad in the directory is an excellent method to gain visibility with Central Louisiana's leading business people.

We have several options to fit your budget; you can view our rate sheet at www.cenlachamber.org/pdf/2009DirAdRates.pdf to determine which is best for you and then return the contract found at www.cenlachamber.org/pdf/2009DirAdContract.pdf either by mail or fax.

This year the advertisement will be posted to our on-line version of the directory for viewing by our "virtual" visitors.

Your response is needed by Oct 15, to help us with a timely publication. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Chamber at (318) 442-6671.

We appreciate your continued support, which makes this publication possible.

Membership Renewals

In September, 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 and encourage you to support them.

Alexandria Golf & Country Club
 Alexandria Pathology Lab LLC
 Allstate Insurance – Suzanne Ford
 Central Louisiana Home Health Care
 Cunningham Business Systems LLC
 D & T Wholesale Inc
 DCI of Alexandria Inc
 Dagwood's Sandwich Shoppe
 Despino Tire Service
 Diamond Grill
 Faith Foundation Hospice Inc
 First Federal Bank of Louisiana
 Hahn Roofing
 Kathy Hanley
 Hematology Oncology Life Center LLC
 Key Realty
 Kingdom Security LLC
 KLAX TV-31
 The Louisiana Maneuvers and Military Museum
 MAS Inc

Maxwell Properties Inc
 McDonald's of Alexandria
 Parc England / Bistro on the Bayou
 Remedy Staffing
 Renegade Harley-Davidson
 Sabine State Bank
 Sauve & Associates LLC
 Smackin' Mack's Catfish Restaurant
 Standard Enterprises Inc
 State Farm Insurance – Field Office
 Super 1 Foods
 Surplus Warehouse
 Sylvan Learning Center
 Templin Forestry Inc
 Torbett Financial Strategies Ltd
 Village Profile.com Inc
 Volunteers of America
 Laura Weems Interiors
 White Steeple Books & Music
 The Willamette Valley Company

Central Louisiana Chamber of Commerce

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



On Sep 22, our Strategic Luncheon guest speaker, Michael Carlson, presented "Leveraging Generations" and discussed Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. The event was sponsored by LaCapitol Federal Credit Union.

Renewal Community Workshop

The Central Louisiana Chamber of Commerce and Kisatchi-Delta Regional Planning & Development District are offering a brief, informal workshop for businesses throughout the region located in the Renewal Community on Oct 15, 3-4pm, at the Chamber of Commerce. This presentation is specifically organized **prior to** the Oct 31 deadline for Commercial Revitalization Deduction applications.

If you have conducted new construction or substantial renovations to your Renewal Community-located business, you could participate in a share of \$10M in accelerated depreciation opportunities available for the Central Louisiana Renewal Community. Learn about the Renewal Community tax savings opportunities and prepare for the upcoming deadline. Don't miss this opportunity!

Welcome New Members

- Tractor Supply Company – Wilbur Craig, (318) 473-9167
- BancorpSouth – Eugene Scriber, (318) 619-2920
- Bob Madison Consulting, (318) 623-4646

Schedule of Events

- Oct 9 @ 3:00pm
Post Secondary Education Committee
Chamber Office
- Oct 10 @ 11:00am
Ribbon Cutting
Anytime Fitness
3493 Highway 28 East
Pineville
- Oct 10 @ 2:00pm
Ribbon Cutting
Renegade Harley-Davidson
2030 North Mall Drive
Alexandria
- Oct 14 @ 8:00am
Executive Committee
Chamber Office
- Oct 15 @ 8:00am
Legislative / Infrastructure Committees
Chamber Office
- Oct 16 @ 8:30am
Quality of Life Committee
Chamber Office
- Oct 16 @ 11:00am
Ribbon Cutting
Francesca's
416 Michiels Drive
Alexandria
- Oct 16 @ 5:00-7:00pm
Business After Ours sponsored by
Coldwell Banker Pelican Real Estate
1471 Dorchester Drive
Alexandria
- Oct 20 @ 11:30am-1:00pm
Strategic Luncheon sponsored by
Spherion Staffing & Recruiting
"Cenla Infrastructure Projects"
Sai Convention Center
2301 North MacArthur Drive
Alexandria
RSVP to (318) 442-6671
- Oct 23 @ 1:00pm
Ribbon Cuttings
Sassy Girl Jewelry and Kitchen Warehouse
1503 Wimbledon Drive
Alexandria
- Oct 28 @ 11:00am
Ribbon Cutting
Enterprise Rent-A-Car
1966 Monroe Highway
Pineville
- Oct 29 @ 11:00am
Ribbon Cutting
Still Waters Hospice
3033 Jackson Street
Alexandria