Chamber Connection

August 2010

- The Board of Directors of the Chamber has appointed a Nominating Committee for the purpose of selecting persons to be nominated for three-year terms on the Board of Directors of the Chamber. Those terms would begin Sep 2010 and be completed Dec 2013. Should you have any recommendations for consideration by the Nominating Committee they should be addressed in writing to: Bonnie Lemoine, Chairman of the Board, Nominating Committee, The Central Louisiana Chamber of Commerce, PO Box 992, Alexandria LA 71309-0992. In addition, a member or a representative of a member can be placed in nomination for a position on the Board of Directors of the Chamber if petitions bearing the genuine signatures of at least ten percent (10%) of the members and representatives of members in good standing of the Chamber are submitted. Nominations must be received at the Chamber at the address stated above on or before **Aug 9, 2010**.

- The Chamber staff is putting the finishing touches on our annual Cenla Area Cost of Living Index submission to the American Chamber of Commerce Researchers Association (ACCRA). This ACCRA index measures the relative price levels for consumer goods and services in nearly 400 areas of the country. The result is a useful and reasonably accurate reflection of the cost differentials for professional and executive household spending patterns. The ACCRA index provides us with an additional tool to market Cenla to our existing businesses considering expansion or relocation, as well as outside businesses seeking new opportunities. The survey is comprised of 62 very specific products running the gamut from food prices to utility rates to apartment and housing costs. The derived "market basket" cost total has traditionally shown our area as notably below the national average, providing us national exposure in a respected format to developers and individual companies. In 2009, the Alexandria Metro area's ACCRA index score was 92.5, with 100 being the national average. It will be a few months before we receive the results for the 2010 ACCRA index.

- The Chamber staff recently completed 51 visits to Central Louisiana industries the Louisiana Department of Economic Development deemed "economic drivers" for the State. LED requested each region complete a certain number of visits in 2010 and we actually led the way by being the first to finish. Known as "Synchronist Visits", the information gathered remains strictly confidential, but will be highly instrumental in helping us (and the State) in identifying expansion opportunities, companies at risk, as well as company and community problems. We are doing everything we can to retain these industries and help them expand when the time right. We hope to share 2010 trend information and a synopsis of the results in the very near future. These Synchronist Visits are vital to our economic survival and we will continue visiting others in FY2011.

- We want to **"Thank"** everyone for helping us make our map project a tremendous success. The map company, VillageProfile.com, was highly impressed with the level of participation and the sales rep, Steve Gimbut, felt welcome wherever he visited whether or not you were able to support the map project. We have a total of 54 sponsors and are very excited about the map and grateful to you. The map is scheduled to hit the streets in the first quarter of 2011.

- Upcoming Events

  Aug 11 @ 1:00pm, Ribbon Cutting, Natural Mystic, 5420 Highway 28 East, Libuse
  Aug 12 @ 5:00pm, Ribbon Cutting, Little Cakes with Big Attitude, 4216-A Michiels Drive, Alexandria
  Aug 17 @ 11:00am, Ribbon Cutting, Geaux Cajun, 4216-A Michiels Drive, Alexandria
  Aug 18 @ 11:00am, Ribbon Cutting, Walker Kia, 1515 Dorchester Drive, Alexandria
  Aug 19 @ 11:00am, Ribbon Cutting, Gulf Coast Teaching Family Services, 1300 Jackson Street, Alexandria
  Aug 19 @ 5:00pm, Business After Ours Sponsored by Hancock Bank, 4716 Jackson Street Ext, Alexandria
  Aug 25 @ 11:30am, Legislative Luncheon, Sai Convention Center, 2301 North MacArthur Drive, Alexandria

- Welcome to Our New Members

  Farm Fresh Produce – Keith Baum, (318) 715-3682
  Guardian Hospice Care LLC– Julie Wray, (318) 484-4418
  Little Cakes with Big Attitude LLC – Robyn Schwartz, (318) 445-5226
  The Marks Lawrence Company LLC – Spencer Marks, (318) 445-5931
  Rapides ARC – Debra Hunter, (318) 445-5287
  Vaughn Automotive of Alexandria – Eric Irons, (318) 561-8212