

Annual Report 2008-2009

2007-2010 PRIORITIES

- Lobby funds for I-73
- Build Community Infrastructure
- Lobby funds for Education and Increase educational opportunities
- Upgrade Existing Workforce

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Edelen Thanks Membership for Support in 2008-2009

Dear Business and Community Leaders,

I want to thank you for providing me with the opportunity to serve as Chairman of the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce. It has been an honor to be a part of an organization that continues to grow and assist the business community in any way possible.

At the start of my tenure, I declared my vision for the Chamber to have an aggressive information technology initiative. Our Chamber has taken a very active role in achieving this goal. We have surveyed our membership to see what types of technology they currently use, held a novice training in information technology, held a well attended workshop on website optimization and pay-per-click advertising and have already started to prepare for an advanced computer applications course.

While remaining dedicated to the technology goals, this Chamber has also had to diversify its services in the 2008-2009 year. The Chamber facilitated a very successful Summer Youth Employment Program this year by helping 96 youths to learn work readiness skills in high growth - high demand occupations with 20 of them gaining employment due to their experience. The Chamber also entered into an agreement with the Martinsville Mustangs to assist with their marketing and promotions and I am happy to report that we raised more in 2009 than the Mustangs have ever raised in their existence.

This year has also been excellent for the Chamber in many other ways. Membership grew, programs and initiatives exceeded expectations, more businesses were involved and engaged and collaboration with our local elected officials continued.

Fast Track 2009 was the biggest show ever with 157 booths sending record numbers through the doors to view what your businesses have to offer, and our membership has continued to grow adding new members each month and keeping us at a number well above 600, which in this economy is a strong testament to the value that they receive from their membership.

Thank you again for your support this past year. I look forward to working with our business community in years to come.

Sincerely,

Jay Edelen

Chairman of the Board



Chamber Chairman Jay Edelen addresses a crowd of 250 at Cabinet Day 2009.



Mission:

To foster an environment where businesses can be created and flourish.

Vision:

To be recognized as a champion of economic development, educational excellence, leadership development and improving the quality of life.



“This program will prepare our future workforce for 21st Century jobs, benefit the membership of the Chamber and also stimulate the economy through the compensation that they will receive over the summer”.



Summer Youth Employment

In April of 2009, the Chamber submitted a proposal to the West Piedmont Workforce Investment Board Office to facilitate their Summer Youth Employment Program that was funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Stimulus Funds). Through this competitive process, the Chamber ended up receiving the award to provide this program to our youth. With the Chamber’s industry connection, staff knew that they would be the best avenue to deliver this service. Over 400 youth applied to be a part of this program and after determining those with the greatest need, 200 were interviewed by staff and finally 100 were selected to be a part of the program. The youth went through an eight week program. The first week consisted of a pre-assessment training where the youth learned workplace eti-

quette, money management skills and finally, the highly anticipated job placement. They were then placed in a real work experience for six weeks. After completing their work experience they came back to a one week post assessment training to learn how to apply their money management skills, fill out job applications and apply for college and student loans. Each youth was eligible to work up to 30 hours per week for eight weeks with the opportunity to earn close to \$2,000 for the summer.

There were 37 Chamber member worksites that participated in this program with 27 of the jobs being high growth-high demand occupations. These jobs varied from office type settings to working in manufacturing companies, motorsports programs,

chemical companies and childcare. After the programs completion, 20 of the youth had been hired by their work experience for employment. Five of those positions resulted in full time employment and those students working at Patrick Henry Community College received college credit in the area that they were fulfilling their hours.

The total grant for the Summer Youth Employment Program was in the amount of \$257,000, which to date is the largest grant awarded to the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce.

Martinsville Mustangs

This year the Chamber and the City of Martinsville entered into a partnership for the 2009 season of the Martinsville Mustangs. In years past, the City of Martinsville has continually struggled to keep costs of the baseball franchise down and this year they enlisted the Chamber’s help in improving the revenues for the upcoming baseball season. The Chamber’s primary responsibilities

were to sell outdoor signage and set up promotional nights for each home game of the Mustangs. Another priority was to increase the number of attendees at the home games and also increase concessions that were sold at the park.

After a season of 28 home games, the Chamber did, in fact, meet their benchmarks for the Martinsville Mustangs and in many ways exceeded

them. The advertising numbers for the 2009 season exceeded numbers for all prior seasons. Attendance rose 8% which also made for more concessions and souvenir sales. Revenues for the 2009 season were significantly higher than in any other year.

Members Tell All: Why be a Chamber Member?

Each year the Chamber polls its members to determine what Chamber services are the most valuable to its members. The following responses were seen most:

- ✦ A sense of responsibility to support the community
- ✦ Lobbying for Business Interests
- ✦ Referral system
- ✦ Networking opportunities
- ✦ World Wide Exposure on the Chamber's Website
- ✦ Internet information to members
- ✦ Trade Show
- ✦ Workshops, seminars and other training opportunities
- ✦ Marketing and Advertising Opportunities (ribbon cuttings, advertising, quarterly newsletter, Chamber Champions etc.)
- ✦ Member discounts
- ✦ Procurement Portal
- ✦ Discount on Long Distance and DSL Service
- ✦ Value Added Health Insurance
- ✦ Training Programs
- ✦ Community Meetings (Legislative Events, Annual Meeting, Luncheons etc.)
- ✦ Listing in the Chamber's Business Directory



2008-2009 Accomplishments

- Held 11 Business After Hours Events with over 750 attendees
- Held 3 Legislative Events with over 450 attendees
- FAST TRACK 2009 was the Chamber's largest show ever with 157 exhibitor booths
- Graduated 19 individuals from a highly intensive Supervisor Training course
- Hosted a highly attended Annual Meeting and Leadership Recognition Dinner and heard from Marshall Acuff, a well known financial analyst
- Hosted 2 Chamber Nights at the Mustangs with more than 5,000 in attendance
- Surveyed membership to set priorities for 2009-2010
- Conducted the Leadership Development Course with 32 graduating after participating in the 10 week program and graduated 20 from the Youth Leadership Program
- Coordinated 15 ribbon cuttings for new or expanding businesses
- Honored 5 small businesses in manufacturing, retail and service as well as a "Business Person of the Year"
- Supported all Small Business Resources with their services to counsel area businesses and entrepreneurs
- Gained a total of 62 new members for the year
- Presented the Chairman's Award to Kim Adkins in recognition of her leadership and support of the Chamber and its Workforce Development goals
- Continued to publish a quarterly newsletter, annual report, sent weekly email blasts and hosted weekly television show as well as radio show
- Continued to improve Chamber Membership benefits
- Held a Pay Per Click and website optimization training
- Held the First Annual Tour de Scholar with all proceeds going to the Education Foundation
- Held the First Annual Chamber Championship with all proceeds going to the Education Foundation
- Awarded \$3,750 in PIE Grants to local schools
- Helped 100 youth earn real life work experience through summer employment
- Helped the Martinsville Mustangs reach an all time advertising high for the 2009 season
- Continued to lobby for business interest at the Local, State and Federal levels



Fast Track 2009 Draws Thousands



Fast Track 2009 was undoubtedly the biggest expo that the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce has ever held. With 157 exhibitor spaces and twelve being reserved for the official sponsors of the show, record numbers came through the doors.

The chamber of commerce launched its first show in 1992, held for 6 consecutive years and ceased for 2 years due to lack of available space and was revived in 2000. FAST TRACK 2009 was the Chamber's fifteenth show.

The major advertising strategy for FAST TRACK 2009 proved to be beneficial as exhibitors made contacts with potential business to business customers as well as general customers during the public night. The exposure that they receive before, during and after FAST TRACK proves to be invaluable time and time again.



Top Left: Simply the Best takes home Best In Show. **Above:** Even Pot Bellied Pigs come out for Fast Track! **Below:** The sponsors officially kick off FAST TRACK 2009!

"We were very excited to have a sold out expo especially in the economic times we are facing. It proves that Fast Track is a major value to our membership."

- Chamber President
Amanda Witt



Arts & Etc. Set up for "The Taste of Martinsville-Henry County"!

Taste of Martinsville-Henry County a Huge Success

Referred to as VIP Business Night, opening night spotlighted area restaurants and caterers in the VIP area called, "The Taste of Martinsville-Henry County." Each participating restaurant or caterer prepared a minimum of 1,500 pieces or more of an item of their choosing to represent their establishment. In previous years, one ca-

terer managed the entire VIP area but the Chamber wanted to try something different by putting on display the variety of foods right here in Martinsville-Henry County. Presentation was just as important as the food. Each food vendor brings in their own display to showcase what they have to offer, especially when the business decision makers are in the room. Fast Track 2009 had a total of 14 food vendors that saw the value in being

part of such a successful event as Fast Track. "Each year that we are present at Fast Track we draw more and more customers" says Aman Sarway with Hugo's. "This is a way for us to reach a population of the business community that may otherwise not know we are in business. Now that we have meeting spaces and can cater lunches, we want to make sure these folks know that we can offer them a quality product" Sarway added.

2008-2009 Board of Directors

Jay Edelen: Chairman
Coolknobsandpulls.com

Richard Eanes: VC Organizational Improvement, Chairman Elect
Warren Trucking

Phil Gardner: VC Government Affairs
Garnder, Barrow & Sharpe PCs

Dr. Barry Dorsey: VC Economic Development
New College Institute

Paul Ashbrook: VC Membership Services
Ashbrook Audiology & Hearing Aid Center

Marsha Frith: Secretary/Treasurer
Sells, Hogg & Jones, CPAs

John Parkinson: Immediate Past Chairman
Drake Extrusion

Jim Barnett
Barnett Commercial Realty

Dr. Sharon Dodson
Henry County Public Schools

John Engle
Carter Bank & Trust

Dr. Scott Kizner
Martinsville City Public Schools

Avery Mills
Martinizing Dry Cleaners

Brandt Mitchell
The Lester Group

Mary Nester
American National Bank

Andreas Schulze-Ising
Mehler, Inc.

Kim Spencer
EMI Imaging

David Stone
Solid Stone Fabrics

Creed Taylor
Taylor Enterprises & Financial Services

Eddie White
Bassett Furniture Industries

Dr. Jim Wilson
Jim Wilson, D.D.S.

Chamber Staff

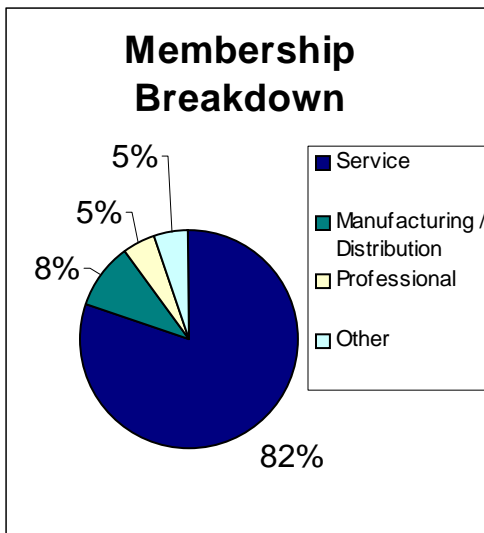
Amanda Witt: President

Sharon Shepherd: Deputy Director

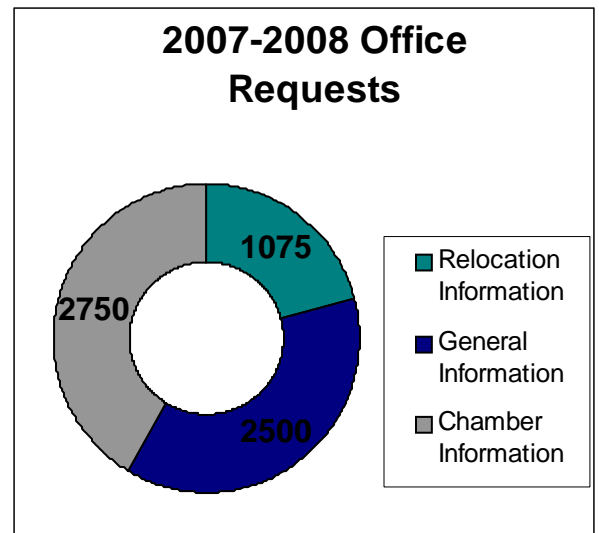
Katie Muehleck: Administrative Assistant

Autumn Clark: Intern

2008-2009 Chamber Statistics



2008-2009 Membership
Total Members: 623
New Members in 2008-2009: 62
Retention Rate: 90%



What's Ahead for 2009-2010?

2009-2010 Chairman of the Board, Richard Eanes has many ideas in mind when it comes to the future of the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce. Through the years he has seen the many issues that the Chamber has fought for and that is why this year, Richard comes on as Chairman with not just one single goal that he hopes to accomplish or solidify but rather several. Those include:

- Continuing the partnership with the West Piedmont Workforce Investment Board to continue to retool and retrain our existing and upcoming workforce
- Continuing to fight for transportation issues that can be an integral part to the future economy of Martinsville-Henry County

- Overseeing the Government Affairs Committee to ensure that the Chamber takes a position on issues that impact the ability of local industry to not only survive but also to compete
- Last but not least, concentrating on the Chamber's membership. The Chamber will continue to expand its programs, launch new initiatives and make a real difference to help to contribute to the success of this community



"We have all witnessed the offshore outsourcing that the furniture and textile industries have been forced into in order to survive. We need to make good decisions to help our existing industries to stay strong and not have to consider offshore or out of state alternatives.

- Richard Eanes

Chairman 2009-2010

The Martinsville-Henry County
Chamber of Commerce

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