

# Chamber Business

Official Newsletter of the Grand Prairie Chamber of Commerce

February, 2006

Volume 7 Number 2

## Mark Your Calendar

### February

23

Taste and Tour of Grand Prairie  
Community Awards

### March

15

State of the City Luncheon

### April

19

Great Texas Scholars Luncheon

### May

5

Chamber Golf Classic

### July

19

Christmas in July

### August

16

Doing Business in Grand Prairie  
Trade Show

### September

16

Fall Fantasy

### November

9

Board Retreat  
Member Orientation

### December

14

Christmas Open House

The Mission of the  
Grand Prairie Chamber of Commerce  
is to promote, strengthen and expand our  
business community.

## WFAA and Family First Came to Grand Prairie, Highlighting the Jewel of the Metroplex. Thanks to all who made our community shine!



# Got A Minute

## Grand Prairie Chamber of Commerce

### Board of Director's Meeting

#### January 2006

#### Ex-Officio Reports

**GPISD** - Sam Buchmeyer representing Superintendent David Barbosa: Mr. Buchmeyer noted that Dr. Barbosa extended his apologies for missing the meeting due to a family illness. He reported that the upcoming School Board meeting would include a review of the new elementary school to be built on Camp Wisdom as well as the selection of one of the five calendars. Mr. Buchmeyer also invited all board members to attend the upcoming Teacher of the Year reception to be held on January 31st.

**City of Grand Prairie** - Christal Kliewer representing Tom Hart / Bob O'Neal: Ms. Kliewer noted that Mr. Hart also extended his apologies for being absent due to a family illness. She reported that the Super Target on Highway 360 at I-20 is proceeding. She also stated that the CVS Pharmacy at LakeRidge and Camp Wisdom will be opening in the spring. The board asked about a couple of construction projects.

**Chairman's Report:** Chairman Lila Thorn reported on a motion being presented by the Executive Board. The first motion being made was to allow the named Ex-Officio Board members to vote when in attendance, but that their attendance not impact the quorum. There was discussion, and then a second by Barbara Baker. The motion carried.

Chairman Thorn also told the Board that the Executive Committee was proposing a Board Contract. The contract is a step for the Chamber to meet current as well as future expectations from the Sorbian - Oxley corporate recommendations. After some discussion, the board agreed and all in attendance signed the contracts.

Mrs. Thorn then notified the board that a replacement has been named for Whitney Strauss' position on the board from Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control. That announcement will be official on January 23rd. That representative should be at the February Board Meeting.

**Community Development:** Jeanine Walker reported on the Leadership program. She also noted the voting of the Alumni committee for their new Chairman. The Community Awards will be held on February 23rd. Roy Wilson noted the board's invitation to attend the Teacher of the Year reception on January 31st, as well as their participation in the selection process as the portfolios are judged on January 17 & 18 or during the teacher interviews on the 31st.

Mrs. Walker reported that the Board of Directors had asked at the Women's Division Executive Board to make a recommendation for a new name. The suggestion was made for the Chamber's "Civic Committee". The word Civic stands for "a community and its citizens". With the program of work that had been done for the last several years and its impact on Grand Prairie, the board agreed that the name "Civic Committee" well represented the good work. There was a motion by Buddy Bridges, with a second by Rudy Martinez to accept the recommended name change. The motion carried. Kelly Giessner then reported on the Civic Committees work in progress. She noted that they have already begun to work on the Christmas in July. She encouraged all board members to consider ways to support that event including purchasing tickets as well as providing auction items. She noted that a change for this year will be that the Officer Installation will be held as a luncheon on January 25th at the Women's Club building. Following that meeting, they will be meeting at the Ruthe Jackson Center for the remainder of 2006. This will provide a consistent location throughout the year.

While there is not an Education Committee on the Chamber's program of work for 2006, there will continue to be a Great Texas Scholars luncheon. Jeanine is currently looking for someone from the Chamber to chair this event. At the same time, the Chamber will begin soliciting for sponsors for the students, as well as scholarships and door prizes. The cost will be \$25 per student this year. Over 400 of the 700 plus forms were picked up from the chamber. There were 272 who completed the program in 2005. The seniors have until February 24th to complete their community service, as well as visits to the school board and city council.

**Marketing & Communications:** Allan Hughes reported that the newsletter has been slightly reformatted. It was noted that the future goal is to have the outside printed in color. He also reported that the solicitation has begun for the hospitality industry to participate in the 2006 Taste & Tour. The cost for attendance will again be \$15 per person. It will include the cuisine of chamber member restaurants, as well as door prizes and booths of local attractions and hotels.

**Membership Development:** Melinda Polley asked Karen Carpenter to report on the Branding Irons. Karen noted the new officers for 2006 as well as the two upcoming ribbon cuttings on January 14th for the Baylor Medical offices and the grand opening of the newly renovated, much expanded south YMCA on January 24th.

Ms. Polley also noted that the chamber is currently soliciting for two new sustaining members. The cost is \$2,500 over their chamber dues. The benefits include the companies listing on the chamber's letterhead, newsletter, website, referral guide, luncheon programs and event programs. The companies are also recognized monthly on the cable channel program "It's Happening in Grand Prairie" as well as an annual newsletter article. The company receives tickets to four events per year, or the choice of a golf team in the annual golf classic. The only limitation is that there can only be one business type per category. Anyone interested is asked to contact the RaDonna Hessel at the chamber office.

It was reported that the January luncheon and business after hours will be combined as hosts of the WFAA Channel 8 Family First visit to Grand Prairie on the 26th. The luncheon cost will be \$17 per person and reservations are required. Ron Jensen has agreed to chair this year's Golf Classic on May 5th. Buddy Bridges will be chairing the Fall Fantasy on September 16th. Chamber members interested in participating on those planning committees are asked to contact the chamber.

**Business Development:** Vince Hrabal noted the Business Development committee will be meeting in January to plan their 2006 goals. He reported the 2006 "Doing Business in Grand Prairie Trade Show" will be August 16th. The annual Procurement Conference has been moved to March, 2007. He also noted the January meeting of the Workforce Coalition which will focus on Health Care costs for businesses with guests from the Dallas Business Journal.

#### Board Notes continued-

**Chamber Partnership:** Greg Giessner reported that the Legislative Committee will be meeting in January to discuss upcoming projects for 2006, including a possible trip to Washington DC in June. He also noted that the 2006 State of the City will be held as a luncheon to encourage more business participation. The committee will also be discussing the needs for either a candidates forum and/or voter's guide for the 2006 November elections.

**Chamber Development:** Tim Bordelon reported that the Board emphasis on membership will be addressed through the new Membership Committee being formed under the leadership of Darin Wilson. Anyone interested in participating can contact either Darin or the Chamber staff. He also noted a new Technology committee is being formed with Chairman Billy Dunn. The Fulfillment committee will continue under Chairman Melanie Gulley.

**President's Report:** RaDonna Hessel invited all board and chamber members to come to breakfast each Tuesday morning, 7:30 a.m. at Outlaws. An ad hoc committee that used to meet on Tuesday mornings has continued to do so after their assignment was complete, and they now continue to meet to discuss a variety of issues regarding the chamber, as well as community events. RaDonna also noted that she will be organizing a luncheon each month will select business owners or managers to hear about their needs and issues within the city. The City manager will attend and will be supporting these meetings. Lila Thorn also encouraged all members to make nominations for the community awards, and to encourage everyone they know throughout Grand Prairie to do the same.

**Adjournment:** With no other business, the meeting was adjourned.



#### Sustaining Member

## City of Grand Prairie

### Top 10 Accomplishments of 2005

1. Built 2,264 new homes worth \$396 million...that's a new home every four hours; issued \$17 multi-family permits, up 53% from 2004; conducted almost 64,000 building inspections, a 10% increase; and issued permits for \$30 million worth of new commercial/industrial structures.
2. Held property tax rate level; and increased property valuations by 6.7 percent, the 11th year in a row for rising values.
3. Citizens voted to continue the ¼ cent sales tax for street improvements; and city invested \$4 million upgrading 14 streets and nine alleys; and leveling 43 "standing water" sites as part of the 2005 street improvements program.
4. Updated technology to improve productivity, including PocketCitation, an electronic ticket writer, to speed traffic ticket writing, eliminate paperwork, and keep better records; the Library's automated catalog system making access available via the internet; revamping gptx.org, gptexas.com, tanglebridge.com, prairielakesgolf.com; and CityNet, all new, customized personnel and finance management software.
5. Completed the Veterans Memorial at 29 Conover just to the south of the Library.
6. Assisted an estimated 2,500 displaced victims of Hurricanes Rita and Katrina through shelters, food, housing, clothing and furniture.
7. Began construction of SH 161 frontage roads from I-20 to I-30; as well as construction of the I-20 off ramps for SH 161.
8. Built a \$3.5 million, 3 million gallon/day sewage treatment facility, with the Trinity River Authority and the City of Midlothian, to serve the southern sector of the city.
9. About 1,000 volunteers built six homes in 27 days for six happy families through Grand Prairie's Habitat for Humanity build.
10. Completed city's Comprehensive Plan for Development, which limits urban sprawl and apartments, creates parks and open space, revitalizes older areas and indicates 120,000 more residents by 2030.

### Top Ten 2006 Goals

1. Open the Bowles Life Center, a \$7.5 million, 38,000-square-foot facility, featuring a resource library, police storefront, activity rooms, fitness equipment area, full-scale gym, jogging track, youth/teen room, aerobics room, kitchenette and lockers.
2. Move Fire Station #7 from Matthew and Polo to Lake Ridge across from Lynn Creek Park.
3. Begin construction of overpass at Belt Line and Main Street; continue construction of SH161 frontage roads; complete overpass at Kingswood/Green Oaks and SH360; complete widening of I-30 in Grand Prairie; complete Camp Wisdom Road widening.
4. Welcome the new Mexican Inn restaurant at Carrier and I-20; Salt Lick Barbeque on Joe Pool Lake across from Lynn Creek Park; Golden Corral at Great Southwest and I-20; LA Fitness at I-20 and SH 360; Harkins Theater at I-20 and SH 360; Starbucks at SH 360 and Mayfield and at Belt Line and I-30; and Lakeshore Condominiums at Seaton Road near the lake.
5. Continue investing in our parks system with the ¼ cent sales tax for parks, including, new gyms, trails, practice fields, picnic shelters and playgrounds.
6. Continue to upgrade existing streets and alleys with the ¼ cent sales tax for streets.
7. Begin construction of IH 30 frontage roads (eastbound Bagdad to MacArthur, eastbound NW 7th to Belt Line, and westbound surplus property to Belt Line).
8. Build \$3 million new water tower at Ragland Road and SH 360.
9. Work toward renovation of the historic Uptown Theater.
10. Continue delivering World Class Service to Create Raving Fans!



### Special Thanks to Our Sustaining Members

Member firms volunteering financial support to the Chamber above and beyond their regularly scheduled basic dues to offset building expense, utilities, insurance and taxes.



If you would like to see your logo\* here every month, contact the Chamber Staff at 972-264-1558.

\*Membership Limited



## 2006 CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Lila Thorn  
Hexter-Fair Title Company



Greetings!

By the time you read this, we will have had our "spotlight" in the news with Channel 8 "Family First Day" in Grand Prairie. I trust you were able to attend at least some of the events, whether it was the Pep Rally at Reagan Middle School; our Community lunch at Ruthe Jackson Center with the live music, special visual arts exhibit or listening to Macie Jepson; the introduction to Bowles Life Center preview with Jim Douglas; or the Job Fair and seminars on career development with Jeff Brady at Nokia Theater. We definitely got off to a running start for the New Year.

You may ask, "Now what?" February is the time for "Taste and Tour" and our Community Awards on February 23 at the Ruthe Jackson Center. You will have the opportunity to enjoy a wide variety of foods from restaurants that are members of Grand Prairie of Commerce. After enjoying all the foods, you can help us recognize our citizens for 2005 that have gone above and beyond. I encourage you to mark your calendar and join in the celebration. Where can you spend an evening like this for \$15.00? Bring your neighbors and friends and get them involved. Also if you have not nominated a community leader for an award, please get a form and do so. There are a number of categories that do not require a chamber membership for eligibility. This is networking extraordinaire.

As you can see we are providing the opportunities for you to get off the sidelines and get involved in your Chamber. Remember the way to maximize your investment is to get involved in the opportunities we provide. The choice is yours. We trust you will join us at our events.

Setting the tone for 2006 has already started. Together we can build a "better" place to live, work, and enjoy life.

"It's a great life!"



Grand Prairie  
Chamber

### News and Notes

Lockheed Martin and Chase Bank Present  
Entrepreneur Expo



The **Entrepreneur Expo** is set for March 17, 2006 at Ft. Worth Convention Center. The Expo is all about owning and managing a successful business. To participate as an attendee or as an exhibitor, please call 817-871-6021

#### Stop Identity Theft

Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott reminded Texas consumers and businesses that all receipts for goods or services paid for with credit or debit cards must now conceal all but the final four digits of the card number. Dec. 31, 2005, was the deadline for all Texas retailers to comply with a law, enacted in 2003, that sought to reduce the chances of identity theft by requiring retailers to print no more than the last four numbers of the card or the card's expiration date on the receipt.

#### Government Contractor Compliance Assistance Seminar

Hosted by the U.S. Department of Labor's Regional Director of OFCCP

**Target audience:** Government Contractor and Subcontractor Corporate HR staffs and other Corporate Executives involved in hiring decisions and Affirmative Action Programs.

**Date/Time:** Friday, February 3, 2006 8:30am - 12:30pm **Location:** The Irving Arts Center at 3333 N. MacArthur Blvd, Irving, TX 75062 [Meeting Room Suite 200] **Ph:** (972) 252-2787

**Cost to Attend:** ~FREE~

#### Great Texas Scholars Luncheon

If you are interested in volunteering to work on the Great Texas Scholars Luncheon, please call Lynn at the Chamber office 972-264-1558. We are looking for Business Leaders to act as sponsors, scholarships, bus riders, goodie bag assemblers and distributors, registration, set up and traffic directors.

#### Luncheon Reservations

Each month it is important that you call the chamber at 972-264-1558 to let us know if you will attend the Luncheon. We must provide a count for the event to the provider. That count determines not only how much food will be provided, but also how the chamber will be charged. *Even if you enjoy Entrepreneur status, you should call the chamber so we can have an accurate count.*

### Leadership

Leadership Grand Prairie tackled the fascinating world of Transportation from every aspect. 2006 is the 50th anniversary of the Interstate Highway system, and the timely topic led the class to travel on existing highways and discuss future projects. Jim Sparks, Director of Transportation for Grand Prairie, talked about upcoming projects and gave insights on progress of such anticipated thoroughfares such as Highway 161. A trip to Texas Department of Transportation in Ft. Worth displayed TransVision, the state-of-the-art video system that helps traffic officials and newscasters keep the Metroplex flowing. In addition, it is this center that updates the large highway LED signs that advise of traffic tie-ups and Amber Alerts. A quick visit to the GP Airport advised the class the success of the latest expansion - all new hangers are already reserved. Careflite, the lifesaving medial transport service, gave a tour and shared their expansion plans as well. The train yard was next... A Union Pacific representative told the class this traditional transport saves money

for many businesses such as GM, which is just one of the financial reasons that this area is reliant on rail transport, and discussed the rail future in Grand Prairie. Lastly, the class visited hometown Traffic Control- Grand Prairie is in the process of getting its own video network to help traffic flow, and a stop at the City Sign Shop revealed the complexity of keeping street lights running and street signs well marked. A lively discussion about what the class as individual leaders and as a team could do to promote mass transportation to aid in reducing ozone concerns closed out the day.

Ronnie Bates, Streets Services Manager for our city, chaired a committee of alumni which also included Kenny Tyler, **K&J Plumbing**, who accompanied the class and Joe Landon, **Texas Trust Credit Union**. This committee also acquired the lunch sponsor, **Texas Trust Credit Union** and the transportation sponsor, **City of Grand Prairie**, which also provided drivers. Thanks for the great souvenirs, too, Ronnie! Way to go, gentlemen!

## Welcome to the Chamber



Baylor Family Medicine at Lake Ridge  
4927 Lake Ridge Parkway  
972-641-9000



Y.M.C.A.

### 2006 Referral Guide is in Progress

This Community Directory and Referral Guide publication is a great business tool as Chamber members use it to refer business. It is also used for new businesses and citizens who come to the community looking for products and services as they begin to enjoy our wonderful community.

Sales for Ad space has begun. Get in on the chance to place an ad in a publication that gets the attention of over 6000 Metroplex businesses, residents and newcomers.

### Civic Committee

The Civic Committee has kicked off its year with excitement in the air. We now have a new name reflecting the work we have always done - bridging Grand Prairie businesses with the community. Bridges connect people and places and make commerce happen. These are the very things the Women's Division accomplishes. Bridges make travel easier, give people a path to follow and sustain support to the other side. These are qualities the Women's Division has always possessed. The Civic Committee is a bridge that connects business and community to make our city a better place in which to live and conduct business. I charge all of our members, active or not, to be the bridge. Talk about our Chamber, talk about the Civic Committee, talk about its history, its program of work and its mission. Come support our direction, build your business, learn about the city and its happenings. I'm proud of our city, Chamber, committee and its members. This month we will be hosted by Ms. Ruthe Jackson as she takes us back to a slower time where the heritage of Grand Prairie begins. Take a look at our upcoming events and mark your calendars for a great year!

President - Kelly Giessner

#### Chamber Civic Committee 2006 Program

February 22- Historical Perspective by Ruthe Jackson  
March 22- Parks and Recreation by Rick Herald  
April 26- Combined meeting w/Chamber for Great Texas Scholars  
May 24- Scholarship Luncheon  
June 28- All About Grand Prairie Libraries  
July 19- Christmas in July: Speaker Dr. Keith Meister  
August 16- Chamber Trade Show  
September 27- Grand Prairie Arts Council by Libby Clawson  
October 25- Medical Center of Arlington Dr. Angela Walker Cancer Awareness Month  
November/December 6- Grand Prairie Charities Spotlight

All Civic Committee Luncheons will be held at the Ruthe Jackson Center on the 4th Wednesday of the month beginning at 11:30am.

## Grand PRAIRIE CHAMBER LEADERSHIP

### 2005 SLATE OF OFFICERS

#### CHAIRMAN

**Lila Thorn**  
Hexter-Fair Title Company

#### CHAIR-ELECT

**Darin Wilson**  
National Poster Group

#### MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

**Melinda Polley**  
Trinity Analytical Services

#### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Tim Bordon**  
Ripley Entertainment, Inc.

#### CHAMBER CITY PARTNERSHIP

**Greg Giessner**  
Giessner Insurance Agency

#### BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

**Vince Hrabal**  
Grand Prairie Disposal

#### MARKETING & COMMUNICATION

**Allan Hughes**  
Traders Village

#### TREASURER

**Gail Wills**  
Gail Wills, CPA

#### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**Jeanine Walker**  
Bon Air Service Co.

#### PAST CHAIRMAN

**Roy Wilson**  
Northwood University

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Lisa Arnold**, Arnold Bros Dry Cleaning & Laundry

**Barbara Baker**, Grand Prairie Ford

**Buddy Bridges**, TXU Electric Delivery

**Karen Carpenter**, Texas Trust Credit Union

**Spencer Clemson**, Product Sales

**Billy Dunn**, BDunn & Company, LLC

**Kelly Giessner**, Civic Committee Chairman

**Jim Gilbert**, Comcast

**Don Goldsmith**, Grand Bank of Texas

**CW Higgins**, The Thompson Group

**Arthur James**, The Transparent Church

**Rudy Martinez**, AT&T

**Mike Medrano**, Texas Roadhouse

**Tom Monahan**, Applebee's

**Sandi Morrison**, Commerce Title

**Paula Newman**, Lone Star Park at Grand Prairie

**Keith Odum**, NOKIA Theatre at Grand Prairie

**Renaldo Ramirez**, Sun Chemical

**Brenda Reuland**, American Eurocopter

**Danny Reyes**, U.S. Post Office

**Don Stanfield**, Stanfield Realtors

**Hannah Stone**, Lockheed Missile and Fire Control

**Emelda Valcarcel**, Medical Center of Arlington

**Anita Wells**, DFW Group

#### EX-OFFICIO

**Ray Allen**, Slate Representative

**Dr. David Barbosa**, GPISD Superintendent

**Charles England**, Mayor

**Tom Hart**, City of Grand Prairie

**Clem Maddox**, Comcast

**Bob O'Neal**, City Economic Development

PAST CHAMBER CHAIRMEN WHO MAINTAIN  
ACTIVE BOARD STATUS

**Jayne Christian**, Creative Embroidery

**Mildred Walker**, Lynn Creek Marina/The Oasis  
Restaurant

**Pat Watson-Capps**, Watson & Assoc.

#### CHAMBER STAFF

**RaDonna Hessel**, President

**Beverly Grogan**, Vice President

**Lynn McGinley**, Vice President

**Darcy Harris**, Office Manager

**Greg Cashman**, Membership Services



## Pete Hudson to speak at February Luncheon

The speaker at the Monthly Luncheon on February 15th will be Pete Hudson. Pete is one of a team of Trainers working with Brian Tracy, a world renowned leader in reinventing and enhancing your personal and business life.

Would you like to:

Create a strong rapport and trust with more clients

Enhance presentation skills to get clients emotionally involved

Learn to relax throughout the selling process

Develop a tenacious resolve to close more business

Handle objections with confidence and ease

Pete has over 15 years of sales, management and training experience. He currently trains thousands of sales professionals, managers and business owners across the country every year. Pete continues to develop an impressive repertoire of training material on a wide variety of topics that are essential to leading the pack in today's competitive business environment.

Join us at the Chamber Luncheon on Wednesday, February, 15th, 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at the Ruthe Jackson Center 3113 S. Carrier Parkway. Call the Chamber for reservations 972-264-1558. **Reminder: EVEN IF YOU ARE IN THE ENTREPRENEUR'S CLUB, PLEASE CALL THE CHAMBER OFFICE TO MAKE RESERVATIONS SO WE CAN PROVIDE THE RUTHE JACKSON CENTER WITH AN ACCURATE COUNT FOR LUNCH.**

### Taste and Tour and Community Awards Come Experience the Best of the Best



Bring your friends and family to the annual *Taste and Tour of Grand Prairie*. The date is Thursday, February 23rd. The fun starts at 5:00 p.m. and you may graze on all of the goodies until 8:00 p.m. The community-wide event will be held at Ruthe Jackson Center, 3113 S. Carrier Parkway.

After tasting everyone's delectable specialties, you may cast your vote for Grand Prairie's best restaurant. You will also be able to enter drawings for terrific doorprizes from our vendors. In addition to the wonderful food, information about our hotels and exciting tourist attractions will be available to the partygoers!

The cost for both the Taste and Tour event and the Community Awards presentations that will follow is only \$15 - a bargain for eating all night at Mardi Gras! Tickets are available at the Chamber of Commerce or you can make a reservation by calling us at 972 264-1558.

*Taste and Tour of Grand Prairie* participants to date are:

**Applebee's**

**Barbara's Cakes and Cookies Boutique**

**The Brass Bean**

**Buffalo Wild Wings, Grill and Bar**

**Johnny Carino's**

**Lone Star Park at Grand Prairie**

**Los Lupes**

**Louis Tussaud's Palace of Wax & Ripley's**

**Believe It or Not!**

**Marquez Bakery**

**Marsala's Ristorante**

**The Oasis Restaurant**

**Outlaw's BBQ and Catering**

**Ruthe Jackson Center**

**Texas Roadhouse**

**Traders Village**

### Thank you Community Awards Sponsors

Celebrating our successes and those individuals that bring them about is important in our community. Each year, community businesses help us recognize Outstanding Community Leaders by providing award sponsorship. To date, the 2006 recipients are sponsored by:

**CPC Travel & Creative Embroidery**

**Bill Thorn Real Estate**

**Blackburn Insurance Agency**

**Grand Bank of Texas**

**Grand Prairie Disposal**

**Maurine Forrester**

**Medical Center of Arlington**

**Product Sales in honor of Dan Clemson**

**Sandi Salisbury**

**TXU Electric Delivery**



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