

Chamber Business

Official Newsletter of the Grand Prairie Chamber of Commerce

January, 2006

Volume 67 Number 1

Mark Your Calendar

January

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Family First

February

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Taste and Tour of Grand Prairie
Community Awards

March

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State of the City Luncheon

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Great Texas Scholars Luncheon

May

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Chamber Golf Classic

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Christmas in July

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Doing Business in Grand Prairie
Trade Show

September

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Fall Fantasy

November

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Board Retreat
Member Orientation

December

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Christmas Open House

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

Channel 8 Family First Comes to Grand Prairie

Thursday, January 26, 2006 the Grand Prairie Chamber, the City of Grand Prairie along with its citizens and businesses will have the opportunity to welcome WFAA Channel 8 and their viewing audience into our community. After an absence of several years, and with a slightly different format the Family First segment will be filmed in Grand Prairie.

In the past, Family First consisted of an evening Town Hall meeting, highlighting a specific topic. The program now happens only four times a year, and includes a full day of filming and live shots during their 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. morning news, 12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m. noon news and their 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. evening news, ending the day with the town hall meeting at 7:00 p.m.

While plans are still underway, the tentative schedule includes a morning visit to a local middle school with a pep rally, a midmorning visit and shots of the Southern sector with Joe Pool Lake, TangleRidge, and the new homes and economic development in that area.

During the noon hour, the Chamber will be hosting its monthly luncheon, but it will be expanded to include some of the local arts, music, and with a guest speaker from Channel 8.

During the afternoon there will be a visit to the Police/Fire Training Center, and to the new Bowles Life Learning Recreation Center. The community will be able to show its progressive programs and activities, along with our citizen's commitment towards the quality of life.

Beginning at 5:00 p.m. there will be a community exposition and job fair tentatively scheduled at Nokia Theatre at Grand Prairie. Area organizations, businesses, churches and others will be able to display their information. Area and Metroplex businesses will have booths available with employment opportunities.

The evening will end with the Town Hall Meeting that will begin at 7:00 p.m. and hosted by News 8 anchor, Jeff Brady. The topic will be on Career Development and Employment Opportunities.

The Chamber looks forward to the opportunity to have our entire community highlighted and we will welcome the many visitors who will come from the Channel 8 viewing audiences. If your business or organization would be interested in taking part in the day, we will be looking for vendors at the Expo, as well as members to assist with the day's activities. Contact RaDonna Hessel at the Chamber for more details. Also be watching your mail and email for details and invitations as the day's schedule is solidified.

Grand Prairie Chamber of Commerce 2006 Program of Work

The Chamber Board is proud to present the *Program of Work for 2006*. If you would like to be involved in any of these committees or activities, we have listed the Board liaison for each area of work.

Chamber Partnerships

Government Relations Committee
State of the City Luncheon
Legislative Reception
Grand Prairie Day in Washington
Voter's Guide
Community Development

Greg Giessner, Giessner Insurance Agency
972-262-5151

Leadership Grand Prairie / Leadership Alumni

Community Awards
Women's Division (with name change)
Teacher of the Year
Great Texas Scholars Luncheon

Jeanine Walker, Bon Services Company
972-263-8839

Marketing & Communication

Taste & Tour of Grand Prairie,
Hotel/Attraction Trade Show

Allan Hughes, Trader's Village
972-647-2331

Referral Guide
Newsletter
Map

Membership Event Development

Fall Fantasy
Luncheons
Branding Irons
Golf Tournament
Business After Hours
Prairie Lights

Melinda Polley, Trinity Analytical Services
972-606-1558

Business Development

Procurement Conference / Trade Show
Business Development Committee
Clean Company
Grand Prairie Work Coalition

Vince Hrabal, Grand Prairie Disposal
817-261-8812

Chamber Development

Technology Committee
Fulfillment Team
Membership Committee

Tim Bordelon, Ripley's Entertainment
972-263-2391

Got A Minute
Grand Prairie Chamber of
Commerce Board of Director's
Meeting December 2005

Chamber Development: Darin Wilson reported that the Chamber staff has sent letters to the 2005 Sustaining member companies for their 2006 support. They have first option/right of refusal. If they do not commit to continuing their support, then solicitation will begin to fill the remaining positions. Darin also noted that WFAA Channel 8 will be filming a Family First segment in Grand Prairie on Thursday, January 26th. As a part of that day, the chamber will be moving its January luncheon on the 26th to host a part of the event.

Community Development: Lisa Arnold reported the Leadership class has had great support from the Alumni and various business sponsors. She also encouraged board members to make nominations for the Community Awards. Nominations will be accepted through January 31st. The form is on the Chamber's web site. Gail Willis encouraged members to take the nomination forms out to their businesses and other organizations to extend the process and pool of nominees. It was also noted that the Chamber will be looking to participate in the Meet and Greet the Troops at DFW airport again in 2006. Any board members or chamber members interested in assisting with the process were asked to contact Lisa Arnold.

Workforce Development: Tim Bordelon reported that the Great Texas Scholars presentations were cancelled due to weather. The senior students have until December 19 to pick up their forms, and then until February 24th to turn them back in to the chamber completed. The Great Texas Scholar luncheon will be in April with former CIA agent Jim Olson as the speaker. Members will be again asked to sponsor the students (\$25 per student), provide goodie bag items, door prizes and scholarships.

Chamber / City Partnership: The Chamber staff is working with the Texas Association of Businesses to coordinate a trip to Washington DC. Chamber members will be invited to participate. The cost has yet to be determined. It was also reported that the 2006 State of the City event will be held as a luncheon, which will help alleviate some of the cost for attendees. There will still be sponsorship opportunities. The hope is that more of the community and business leaders will be able to attend.

Marketing & Communications: Allan Hughes reported that the Taste and Tour of Grand Prairie will be held on Thursday, February 23rd. Restaurants, attractions and hotels will again participate and promote their businesses.

Business Development: Don Goldsmith noted the Business Development committee will be meeting with Ron McCullar in December. He also noted the Procurement Conference has been moved to February 2007, so their committee will be planning a Trade Show to be held in August of 2006.

President's Report: The board was informed that the Property acquisition and parking lot loan has been closed and the project was completed well under the original budget. An update was also provided on the Prairie Lights event.

Board Retreat / Program of Work continuation: The Board discussion turned to completing the 2006 Program of Work. Following the Board Retreat, the Executive Board provided their recommendations. Following the discussion, Jeanine Walker encouraged all board members and Chamber members to sign up on any of the chamber events and committees in 2006.

2006 Budget: The Board then discussed the Budget presented by the Chamber staff to the Executive Board, and then Board of Directors for approval. The need and encouragement for emphasis on new members was a part of the discussion. There was then a motion by Melinda Polley, with a second by Jim Gilbert to approve the budget as presented.

Women's Division: A question was asked by Kelly Giessner regarding the name change and directive from the Board. Various members of the Board responded with their opinions and support.

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

Sustaining Member status is limited to one per business category. If you have not made arrangements to continue your sustaining member status in 2006, please call the chamber office immediately. Each year, sustaining member status is offered to the previous years supporters as a priority.

Call RaDonna at 972-264-1558.



Sustaining Member

Fun-loving spirit, faith keep social worker at her best

ARLINGTON, TX- Her grandmother, Mary Beamon, was an evangelical missionary with a great sense of humor and a passion for helping those lost and in need. And there isn't a person who works at the Medical Center of Arlington with Debra Ellis-Barry who doesn't see her grandmother in her every day as she works with patients.

"I can remember my grandmother always telling me to 'keep Jesus first in all you do and keep work fun,'" says Barry, "I think of her often, especially when I'm working with a challenging patient."

Debra Ellis-Barry, LBSW is a social worker in the Case Management department at Medical Center of Arlington who brings her own personal flair to patient care. A graduate of Texas A&M Commerce with a master's degree from Amberton University, Barry is pursuing her doctorate at Argosy University in north Dallas while working full time for the patients at MCA's inpatient rehabilitation unit. And while she juggles a demanding full-time job and school, she still visits many of her patients after they've left the hospital.

"Sometimes months after they've left us at MCA and gone home, I'll get a call from a patient or their family member wanting to visit. I just love that," said Barry.

Whether it's to their home or a nursing home she'll visit by phone and visit in person when able, because even after 16 years in social work she says everybody is a priority.

Barry, along with the team of therapists, nurses and doctors at MCA, work with many elderly patients who are often recovering from a stroke or physical injury. Barry says that when she's working with someone who is challenging a therapists or nurses, she pulls from her years of working hospice or psychiatry or chemical dependency.

"It's so important to remind these patients that they do have a choice," says Barry, "So often they feel like everyone else is in charge of their life. So you break it down for them. Tell them they have a choice to move, to get around, to make decisions for themselves. And it's important that they hear from me that they still have rights."

Anyone in healthcare can tell you it's often easier said than done. But, it's with the sense of humor and compassion learned from her family and grandmother that Barry often breaks through to these patients. One in particular, started a chain of events that has the entire unit calling on Barry regularly to, of all things, play the piano.

Barry shared that she once had a patient that was estranged from his family, was uncooperative and often mean to therapists and nurses. This patient was just ready to lie down and let himself pass on. Barry persisted and continued to talk with him, trying to find some kind of connection. The connection turned out to be playing music.

Barry had studied classical piano in college and the patient had the ability to play by ear.

"So one day, I just took him into the therapy gym and set him down by the piano," said Barry, "At that time his hands were still very unstable so I'd just play a few things and ask him questions. I've always wanted to play by ear and would often ask him to show me things."

It didn't matter if his hands were slow and it took a while because Barry was there however long it took. Before long the patient opened up in many ways, improving in therapy and in family relationships and at the keyboard.

Barry and her patient took to playing music while other rehabilitation patients were in the gym doing group exercises with their therapists. The musicians would take requests and some of the patients would even pull themselves off benches and out of wheelchairs to dance in place. Months after their time at the keyboard began, the patient left MCA with a strong bond to Barry and renewing bonds with his family.

"There were so many things we were able to do to make his life better," said Barry, "Even one of his children who had given up on him was willing to take him back in. It was very rewarding."

In many ways, it wasn't just rewarding for Barry and her patient. The staff of the rehabilitation unit will often call and beg her to come and play for them during group therapy. While many of the older patients request hymns and traditional songs from church, the staff loves when Barry plays just about anything.

"Everybody just loves it when Debra plays," said Bola Sijuwade, Director of Case Management, "She's amazing."

"Sometimes one of the nurses from the department will call me," says Barry with a chuckle, "and get me all worried telling me to get down there because they need me. I'll show up and they'll have the piano bench pulled out and are ready to listen."

This is just one of the ways Barry is good not only for her patients, but also for her co-workers. According to her, the role she plays is in focusing communication and redirecting passions that encourage teamwork.

"It's a great group," says Barry, "we work on moving forward."

And that's what they do. The inpatient rehabilitation team moves forward, with great outcomes for patients and a focus on their satisfaction. And while they do satisfaction rounds multiple times a week, they don't forget what Grandma Beamon would say, "Keep it fun!"

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.



2006 CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Lila Thorn
Hexter-Fair Title Company



Greetings!

As we look forward, it is always good to look back and review the progress we have made.

Just to name a few, in 2005:

-We celebrated our 60th Anniversary, honoring our past Chairman and the growth we have experienced.

-We are enjoying a new parking lot.

-We volunteered with the City in working with the evacuees, three of whom are working for the City.

-And, we continued our activities and meetings that support the Chamber mission.

WHAT A YEAR!

Now, it is time to look ahead to 2006 and to new growth. The opportunities are abundant. It is up to each of us to decide what our commitments will be.

Will we stand on the sidelines and maintain the status quo, or will we decide to join in the game and commit to do our part?

I had someone say to me the other day that we can be "bitter" or we can be "better". As I thought about that, it occurred to me that there is only one letter different. It simply is a question of whether we focus on "I" or whether we focus "E"veryone. Together, we can make it happen.

There is no better jump-start than Channel 8, WFAA TV bringing "Family First to our great City on January 26, 2006. They will be spending the entire day in our Community and doing "promos" on the TV station throughout the day sharing how grand Grand Prairie really is. Our Chamber luncheon will be at noon that day. Then in the evening the Family First Show will be "Personal Career Development" along with a Job Fair. Mark your calendar now and make plans to attend these events and being along a friend.

I challenge you to look ahead and get involved making

- A better you
- A better place to work
- A better community
- A better Chamber
- A better City
- A better world

Don't get caught standing on the sideline, because

"It's a great Life!"

Lila

Join NOW and SAVE \$60 !!!!

Join the 2006 Entrepreneurs Club! Every month the Chamber holds a membership luncheon to provide an opportunity to network with other businesses. Members have the option of paying \$160 at the first of the year to join the Entrepreneurs Club. **What's in it for me??** This prepays you or your designee for the year, provides for monthly reminders of the luncheon, a permanent name badge, and saves you money! These luncheons include the Trade Show, Christmas in July and the Great Texas Scholar Luncheon.

Call the Chamber of Commerce office, 972.264.1558, to sign-up and save \$60!



1998

Looking Back As We Continue Forward A Retrospective of Service for 60 Years



2005

Sally Thorne Bond

This year marks the 60th Anniversary of the Grand Prairie Chamber of Commerce. Throughout the year we plan to feature a retrospective from Past Presidents/Chairman of the Chamber.

In 1998 I had been practicing law with Thorne & Thorne for 12 years. I had been married to Curtis Bond for 2 years and had just given birth to my daughter, Kelsey Bond. (Kelsey is now 8 and my son Austin is 6) I followed the lead of Tag Taggart, and he left some big shoes to fill.

I had been involved with the Chamber for a number of years. I had worked with many other civic organizations such as the Boy and Girls Club, YMCA, D/FW Medical Center, etc...The Chamber was a real challenge for me, because Grand Prairie was experiencing tremendous growth, and we needed to be a part of that growth. We opened Target, Home Depot, Benny's Bagels, and numerous other establishments. The Branding Irons were doing double duty to keep up. I couldn't have been prouder of their efforts.

Business retention and membership services were at the top of my to do list. We had to do more than just take membership dues, we needed to offer a service. Our committees acted as a unified voice for the business community. We sought out effective health insurance coverage for our members. We organized breakfast, lunch, and evening networking opportunities. We instituted affordable advertising through the newsletter.

The volunteers and staff were then, and will always be the back bone of the Chamber of Commerce. Those who devote tireless hours supporting the projects and goals of the Chamber, those who go above and beyond to promote the business community, and those who truly believe in the great community which we know as Grand Prairie are the Chamber of Commerce. It always inspired a great sense of pride in me to view the pictures of the past Chamber Presidents. I knew I could draw on their faith to guide me in the right direction.

Sally, thank you for your leadership and commitment to the Grand Prairie Chamber.



Grand Prairie
Chamber
News and Notes



Grand Prairie Police Department Annual Material Drive

The Grand Prairie Police Department is working again this year with the National Drug & Safety League/ National Child Safety Council on the annual material drive for our child safety and drug education programs. This literature will be handed out to our students within Grand Prairie as well as at special youth-oriented events. Make donations payable to: National Drug & Safety League by January 16th. Mail them to Grand Prairie Police Department, attn: Lt. Dixon, 9801 Conover Dr. Grand Prairie, TX 75051.

"Managing Health Care Costs"

The Grand Prairie Chamber Workforce Coalition will present a discussion of "Managing Health Care Costs" on Thursday, January 26th at 9:00 a.m. at the Chamber office. The speakers will be Marianne Fazen, Executive Director, Dallas-Ft. Worth Business Group on Health and Jennifer Gardens, associate with The Dallas Business Journal. Please RSVP to 972-264-1558.

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

Leadership

It is often said that Grand Prairie does not have good health care because of the absence of a hospital within the city limits. However, Leadership Grand Prairie took a look at Healthcare issues and found out there is a myriad of care available to residents. Besides the numerous doctors and nurse practitioners providing daily service to those needing care, we have an amazing amount of alternative medicine options open to residents and workers in the city. Grand Prairie is also advantageously located midpoint to several outstanding hospitals that offer that extra level of care. A tour of Parkland Hospital showcased the robotic pharmacy and the historic Emergency room that services many residents of Dallas County. For a tour of a private corporately run hospital, the class visited Medical Center of Arlington, which is home to a State-of-the-art Sports Medicine clinic which treats the Dallas Stars and the Texas Rangers. Both establishments offered a talk with their executives as the class learned about challenges facing the health industry and how each facility plans to respond. A tour at just those two facilities taught the class that we have outstanding medical service available to the citizens. The class also discussed the role of the leader in the community and the Volunteer opportunities which are available every day to aid in the human services effort.

Sponsors for the day included Northwood University, Medical Center Arlington and Dallas County Commissioner Ken Mayfield.

Special thanks to the alumni committee which planned an informative day, that included Dr. Dean Peyton, Jane Peyton, Emelda Valcarcel of Medical Center of Arlington and Marilyn Little from Ken Mayfield's office.

Women's Division Welcomes a New Chairman

When I think of Women's Division the first thing that comes to mind are the women within it who work so hard to accomplish its goals. I think of the pride its members have always had and how important it was for a business woman in Grand Prairie to be part of this group. I am honored to be chosen as Chairman of the Women's Division for 2006. I will fulfill the needs of this organization to the best of my ability and work hard to integrate our programs with the Chamber's mission statement. As I reflect on the past year I recall the accomplishments we've had with our programs, the hard work, and the rewarding feeling we have when we look back at what we've done. 2006 will welcome more challenges for this group as we continue to work with the Chamber as a whole to accomplish more and increase our involvement. We will strive to grasp a broader audience with our programs, offering a chance to network with a greater percentage of businesses; hence benefiting the most from our membership with the Chamber. Watch for exciting news from the Women's Division every month in the Chamber newsletter. This historical organization, established in 1960, has celebrated 45 years in Grand Prairie. From its inception it has been the goal of women to support each other in business, build relationships and mentor to those pursuing their dreams. I look forward to building relationships with everyone within the Chamber this year and I hope each of you will consider visiting one of our Women's Division Luncheons to see what we have to offer you!

-Kelly Giessner, 2006 Chairman

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 Bordelon
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, Women's Division President
Jim Gilbert, Comcast

Don Goldsmith, Grand Bank of Texas
CW Higgins, The Thompson Group
Arthur James, The Transparent Church
Rudy Martinez, SBC

Mike Medrano, Texas Roadhouse
Tom Monahan, Applebee's
Sandi Morrison, Commerce Title

Paula Newman, Lone Star Park at Grand Prairie
Renaldo Ramirez, Sun Chemical
Brenda Reuland, American Eurocopter
Danny Reyes, U.S. Post Office
Don Stanfield, Stanfield Realtors
Chris Thomas, NOKIA Theatre at Grand Prairie
Emelda Valcarcel, Medical Center of Arlington
Anita Wells, DFW Group

EX-OFFICIO

Ray Allen, State 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
Melanie Gulley, Membership Services

Welcome to the Chamber



Bamboo Gardens
1700 W. Polo Rd. #110
972-522-1616



Braum's Ice Cream and Dairy Store
500 E. Hwy. 303
972-263-9709



Crisis Pregnancy
2305 Oak Lane, Ste. 101
972-642-3877



Allstate/ Sampson Financial Service
130 E. Bardin, Ste 142
817-784-1815



Gold Star Homes
301 E. Renfro
817-447-2111



Bright Works Services
Dallas, Texas
972-871-8676

The Branding Irons are the Welcoming arm of the Chamber. You will find these dedicated individuals anywhere the Chamber is greeting guests. If you are at a function and need assistance or a warm welcome, they are handsomely decked out in their maroon vest, shirts or blazers, waiting to make you feel welcomed. If you would like to become a Branding Iron, call Beverly Grogan at the chamber office 972-264-1558



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