

Your Chamber Connection

Issue #65



January 2006

FLASH, FLASH! Early Thaws in Fairbanks, AK & Wichita Falls, TX!

EARLY THAW IN FAIRBANKS, AK DEPT: It may have been minus 23 degrees Fahrenheit outside, but at the **Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce Membership Event**, it was HOT, HOT, HOT! Between Tuesday, November 29th at 8:28 am, and Thursday, December 1st at 3:07 PM, the volunteers of the Greater Fairbanks Chamber melted the snow and brought in 192 new members, a state record, with only four shifts, and 92% of the dollars in by close!

Alaska may be very, very cold in the winter, but the Chamber members and the community support were very, very warm. You haven't had real hospitality until you visit Alaska in the winter. The scenery was breathtaking (so was the temperature), and the snow was literally pure white and clean! The food was fantastic. Mother's meatloaf has nothing on Musk Ox meatloaf or Buffalo meat hamburgers.

Jimmy, in his multi-colored garb, was the talk of the town. But so was the Membership Event. It was an unqualified success! Our heartfelt thanks go out to Lanien Livingston, President & CEO, and to Pamela Dalton, Membership Director, along with

all the great Chamber staff for having us there to facilitate their Membership Event.



GUEST COLUMN: **Membership Events vs. Membership Drives – is there a Difference? By Phyllis Hunt, President & Ceo, The Victoria TX, Chamber of Commerce.** I get calls all the time from Chamber Execs I have met across the state and across the country asking about our membership “events”. The biggest question I am often asked is –



President, Phyllis Hunt, of Victoria.



President/CEO Lanien Livingston checks an address with a volunteer before she goes outside in the minus 18 to 23 degrees weather at the **Greater Fairbanks (AK) Chamber of Commerce Membership Event**. The volunteer sellers sold **192 new memberships**, and the volunteer runners brought in **\$55,650** over 3 days in their 1st Membership Event.

isn't this just another membership drive? Does the program Your Chamber Connection provide really make a difference? The answer is an emphatic: **YES, IT DOES!** We love working with Your Chamber Connection because the program does far more than bring in new members. Let me tell you what I see as the three main benefits of this program. **CASH, LOTS OF IT, AND QUICKLY!** This program centers on

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cash payments. Dues are paid by check, cash or credit card, or they are not counted in the results. In three days' time, with relatively little effort, your chamber can see a cash infusion of \$30,000 or more. And best of all, you are not asking your current members for this money. You are getting it from folks that do not currently give. You are not returning to the well to ask for more money from those that give and give but instead are spreading the responsibility of chamber operations to more businesses in the community. Your current members will thank you for this. **150+ VOLUNTEERS IN THE COMMUNITY WILL NOW KNOW AND UNDERSTAND WHAT IT IS THE CHAMBER DOES FOR THEM.** That's probably 149 more than will have understood this before the campaign starts! One of the beauties of this campaign is that Your Chamber Connection comes into your community and lets the members know what the chamber is doing for them. And by the time they have to repeat the story and make the sale, they know and understand it themselves. Great word of mouth advertising!

IDENTIFIES NEW VOLUNTEERS AND NEW EMERGING LEADERS FOR THE CHAMBER. This event basically addresses the SOP (Same Old People) problem that every chamber faces. By its very nature we look to new leadership to run each campaign. We look for folks we don't normally ask to help or folks not currently on our board – people with great credibility, great contacts and great charisma. And they find helpers who find helpers. Pretty soon, over the course of 3 days, you will see 150 fresh new volunteers, many of whom have never helped the chamber before. And when they get excited, you are there to connect them to your programs and get them involved. Some of our



There were freezing temperatures and a sleet storm in North Texas while the **Wichita Falls Board of Commerce and Industry** Membership Event volunteers worked their magic. When it was over, the heat from the Event brought immediate warmth to **President Tim Chase and VP for Membership, Emily Waite**. The volunteers brought in **353 new members and \$76,154**. Volunteers like **Judy Garrett** (above) never seemed to stop selling for 3 days. All told, Judy brought in **24 new members and \$6,580**, all collected! Not bad for a second Membership Event! **That totals 616 new members in 19 months!**

best new board members and volunteer leaders were identified through these Membership Events. Will you keep all these new members? NO. Should you care? Not really. I see this program as a great infusion of cash, (every other year with some residual effect in between). It also contributes to a gradual growth in membership because the new members that do take advantage of their membership will renew and stick around. But most of all, the program is FUN. Fun for the staff, and fun for the volunteers. For

us, it has become a source of pride for our community. And that, in itself, is



The teams at the **Joliet (IL) 4th Membership Event** were a little too loud so the sheriff came by to lock up **President Russ Slinkard**. But the sheriff couldn't find Russ so he cuffed one of the Chairmen. Joliet increased their rolls by another **127 new members and \$32,490**.



A kiss smack back to you! That's what these volunteers from the **Midlothian (TX) Chamber of Commerce** seem to be saying to Jimmy. They are part of a group of volunteers that together brought in **175 new members** in their first Membership Event.

probably the biggest selling point of all.

A DOG'S WISDOM DEPT: A visit to the vet revealed a potpourri of wisdom framed on the examining room wall. Reading it over and broadly smiling, I realized that with a few word changes, this could be A Membership Director's Wisdom. See what you think!

A Dog's Wisdom..... Rules are made to be broken. ▶ Look cute when you misbehave. ▲ Comfort should never be underestimated. ▼ Obedience is important; train the people you love. ◀ Never ask permission; just do it. ▶ "No" can have many meanings. ▲ Loving dogs is a sign of intelligence. ▼ Take advantage of those big, baby brown eyes of yours whenever necessary. ◀ When all else fails, look pathetic. ▶ If you stare at somebody long enough, eventually you'll get what you want. ▼ Keep your

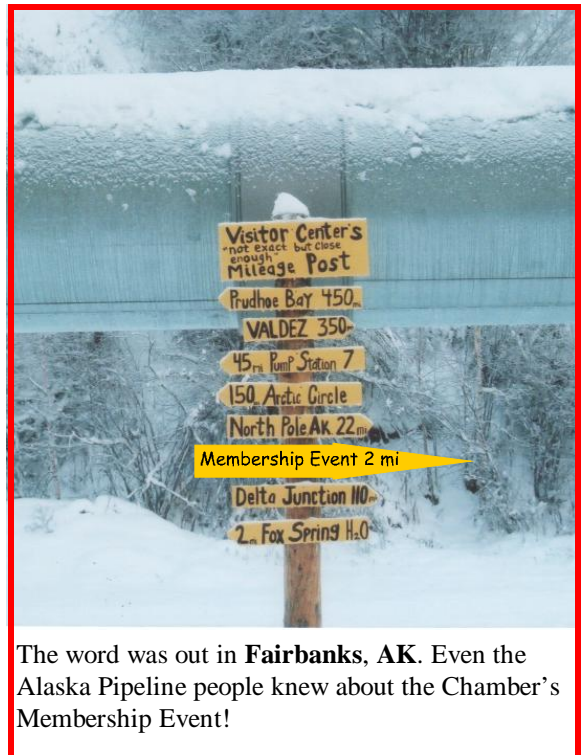
ears to the ground. ◀ Being built for pleasure, not for speed, has its advantages. ▶ Cleanliness is highly over-rated. ▼ If this is how man treats his best friend, imagine what he does to cats. ◀ Always give people a friendly greeting. ▶ If it's not wet and sloppy, it's not a real kiss.

▲ Remember to always show them where to pet you. ▼ Be ready for a tummy rub at a moment's notice. ◀ Leave room in your schedule for a good nap. ▶ If you've got it, flaunt it. ▲ Get attention anyway you can. ▼ Learn to follow your nose. ◀ Don't be afraid to make your mark. ▶ If it's not nailed down, it's free game.

▲ When you go out into the world, remember, always take time to smell the roses.... and the trees, grass, rocks, fire hydrants. ▼ Anytime is treat time. ◀ Start saving when you are

young. ▶ There is no such thing as too much food. ▲ Indulge your cravings. ▶ Real dogs don't eat quiche. ▼ Be creative; there are lots of toys around the house; just look. ◀ If things don't go your way, take your toys and go home. ▶ You're never too old to learn new tricks. ▲ Finders' keepers, losers' weepers. ▼ The one with the most toys, wins. ◀ Always make time to play. ▶ Don't go out without I.D. ▲ Don't play too ruff! ▼

T he other day one of our Chamber heads told us about a visit he had from someone who considers himself one of our competitors (he does, we don't). This "gentleman" had the cheek to actually harangue the Chamber head that he "couldn't believe they would work with THAT



The word was out in **Fairbanks, AK**. Even the Alaska Pipeline people knew about the Chamber's Membership Event!

MICKEY MOUSE company” instead of working with his company. That person was really disturbed and the Chamber Executive had to ask him to leave his office.

Rather than take offense at his remark, we appreciate him for comparing us to Mickey! After all, Mickey and friends were the brainchild of one of the greatest innovators, Walt Disney, in the last 75 years. Walt Disney changed attitudes and business strategies in today’s world. He changed marketing rules, planning rules, entertainment rules and much, much more.

We believe our company is molded after the Walt Disney concept. We are innovators. We are entertainers. We are MONEY MAKERS for Chambers of Commerce from coast to coast. When we finish a Membership Event, the volunteers are much more closely integrated into the Chamber. When we finish a Member-

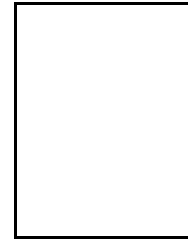
ship Event, the Chamber has increased both its bank balance and the size of the Chamber’s membership rolls.

So I would like to thank that uncivil Membership drive individual and hope that he gets over his attitude eventually, and if he sends us his address, we will put him on our newsletter list.

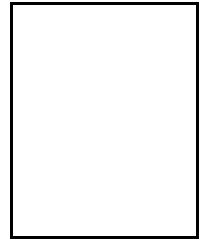


Lorraine, Jimmy, Marilyn, and I hope everybody enjoyed a wonderful holiday season and wish all our Chamber clients as well as all Chambers a **Totally Successful**

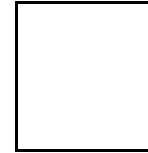
When considering membership development, consider a membership EVENT with **Your Chamber Connection, Your Membership Development Partner** at **800/678-6241**.



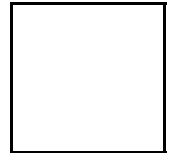
Lorraine Deitchman



Jimmy Cusano



Macy Deitchman



Marilyn Sewell

Use of the materials in this newsletter is always permitted when it is for the good of a chamber or its members!

All the best from Lorraine Deitchman, Jimmy Cusano, Marilyn Sewell, and Macy Deitchman

Look for us in Round Rock, Bay City and Nacodoches, TX; Ft. Smith and Paragould, AR; Trenton, NJ and North Las Vegas, NV, over the next few months. All our results and future Events can be found on www.chamberconnect.com.

Each edition, informative and enjoyable reading!
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