

Your Chamber Connection

Issue #64



September 2005



In our October 2004 issue, I wrote about "Speed Networking" and suggested Chambers ought to try it. The

North Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce did, and here is Exec **Sharon Powers** report:

"It was very successful with over 90 people attending (our breakfasts usually draw about 50). The energy level was extremely high, and everyone wanted to do it again."

GUEST COLUMN: Is the glass half full or half empty?...why we chose to use YCC time and time again!



By

Scott Taylor, VP Membership, Greater Fort Wayne Indiana Chamber of Commerce.

"I recently read the following: A shoe

factory sends two marketing scouts to a region of Africa to study the prospects for expanding business. One sends back a telegram saying: SITUATION HOPELESS STOP NO ONE WEARS SHOES STOP

The other writes back triumphantly: GLORIOUS OPPORTUNITY STOP THEY HAVE NO SHOES STOP

How splendid! Now that's elementary, as they say, "But how does this relate to why we have used YCC time and time again?" you may ask. Well, it points to the possibilities (or lack of, depending on how you look at it). Let's take, for example, a glass of water. Fill it with liquid and some evaporates, but some remains...much like retention at each of our Chambers. We fill it to the top with countless new members that the talented folks at YCC help us to capture during our membership events...some of those members choose not to renew after a year or so (they evaporate), but let's look in the glass...still much remains, more so than before we filled it... this is a process to be repeated. After

partnering with YCC four times now...we have managed to keep our glass full and have seen our membership climb to record numbers. Sure, some members drop, but let's remember the possibilities. Do you see the glass half full or half empty? Just something to think about...

CONGRATULATIONS DEPT: This year's crop of 8 CCE inductees include our good friend **Tom Manskey**

of the **Fort Smith (AR) Chamber of Commerce**. Tom has been in chamber work since 1991. Previous to Fort Smith, Tom held the positions of main street project coordinator in Daingerfield



(TX), economic development director in Port Arthur (TX), president and CEO of the Rockwall (TX) Area Chamber of Commerce, and president and CEO of the Lufkin/Angelina (TX) County Chamber of Commerce. Last year's crop of 15 included another good friend, Ken Higdon of the Temple (TX) Chamber of Com-



This Chairwoman and one of her Pink Ball Cap teams are agreeing on "one for all and all for one" theme. They teamed up with about 20 other **Madison Wisconsin** teams to bring in **281 new members** and **\$68,533** for the **Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce** in their **1st Membership Event**.

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merce. Ken became a consultant to chambers of commerce across the nation in 1988, assisting them with mem-



bership programs. In 1992, he took over at the Temple Chamber.

CHALLENGES DEPT: Katrina and Rita have gone, but the aftermath will linger for a long time to come. What happened on the Gulf Coast and the rebuilding may be the biggest challenge the cities, the businesses, the residents, and the Chambers of the area may ever, ever have. This made me wonder what challenges Chambers may face in the near future, say in the next 5 years. With this in mind, I sent out a simple survey to Chamber Executives across the country on "What do you think will be a Chamber's biggest challenge over the next 5 years?" This went out to large and small Chambers, stand-alone Chambers, and major city satellite Chambers. I tried to pick Chambers from every coast and border. In other words, I wanted a variety of answers, and that is what I got. Here are some of them:

"The biggest challenge for Chambers over the next 5 years will be to meet the "supply and demand." Businesses are getting tighter with their budgets, and Chambers will have to be creative to come up with ideas of what more they can do for businesses. Businesses will "demand" to see what the Chamber can "supply" for their money. Chambers will have to improve on the technology of what they can offer to businesses. Websites are now, and will be in the future, important to businesses. Online services will be one of the demands for business convenience. Knowing your legislators and being able to relay what the businesses need will continue to be high on



Even the Pink Panther celebrated in **Killeen, Texas** as the volunteers brought in **258 new members** in their **third** successful Membership Event.

each member's list. But just finding the time to get out and hit the street to personally visit businesses and let them know you are there for them will be a powerful tool. I am interested in what other Chambers have come up with to meet members' needs." **Gwen Wilburn, Independence Kansas Chamber of Commerce**

"Chambers must continue to examine their programs and activities in the face of a global economy and the need for regional partnerships to compete for business. We must reinvent ourselves as the global thinker and doer. The leadership we provide will set the example for government and other organizations whose focus is inward and often too territorial to share resources." **Jim Rich, Beaumont Texas Chamber of Commerce**

"I think the biggest challenge will be to remain

relevant given generational differences and advances in technology." **John Crutchfield, The Greater Killeen Texas Chamber of Commerce**
 "Competition from competing organizations for our mission." **Douglas S. Kinsinger, Greater Topeka Kansas Chamber of Commerce**
 "Connecting with the new wave of young volunteers. Volunteer dependent organizations cannot do business as usual in the future. We, the oldtimers in this pro-



In **Springdale, Arkansas**, the teams arrived for their shifts in many ways. On parade floats, limos, fire trucks, and this team arrived on real camels! It worked because in their **1st Membership Event**, they brought in **232 new members** and **\$53,342**.



THREEPEAT! This quartet of Chamber leaders from **Victoria, Texas**, contemplate what they will do in their next Membership Event after their **third Membership Event in a row** brought in **over 250 new members**. President Phyllis Hunt (in pink dress) along with the Chairman of the Board (blue slacks) and the Board Director of Membership (blue jeans) and the Chamber Membership Director. **They did 254 new members this time!**

profession, are really going to struggle developing programming to engage this demographic."

Perry Webb, Springdale Arkansas Chamber of Commerce

"To remain 'relevant' to an every changing business community and to create a program that meets the needs of all of the constituencies that a chamber serves." **Larry Mankin, Santa Clarita Valley California Chamber of Commerce**

"Demonstrating that they are "relevant" to their members."

Steve Snyder, California Chamber of Commerce

"Dealing with and changing to meet the generation roll over. Baby Boomers are retiring and Gen. "X"ers are moving into management and CEO positions which have and will continue to dramatically change how business is done. Chambers will need to change how they conduct

business to match these new styles."

Matt McCormick, Cedar Hill Texas Chamber of Commerce

"Engaging the top level community leaders in the Chamber. I believe we're going to have an increasingly difficult time recruiting CEO's for the Board and other key assignments."

Gary Plummer, Springfield Illinois Chamber of Commerce

"I think that the biggest

challenge to chambers over the next five years will be remaining relevant in a world with so much competition for business membership and attention. **Amy Olson, Greater Madison Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce**

"Just how politically active should we be? Will being politically active help or hurt our fundraising efforts?" **Michael Dalby, San Angelo Texas chamber of Commerce**

"Keeping our Boards loaded with the right community leaders... not second level managers. **Jim Cherry, Texarkana Texas Chamber of Commerce**

"Greater pressure from the business community for strong programs with measurable success but less funding available and higher cost for personnel (including insurance) which is a huge portion of chamber overhead." **Phyllis Hunt, Victoria Texas Chamber of Commerce**

(Ed. Note: These comments are in no particular order. Ps: Please organize relief efforts in your community. The Chambers along the Gulf Coast need all our help desperately!)

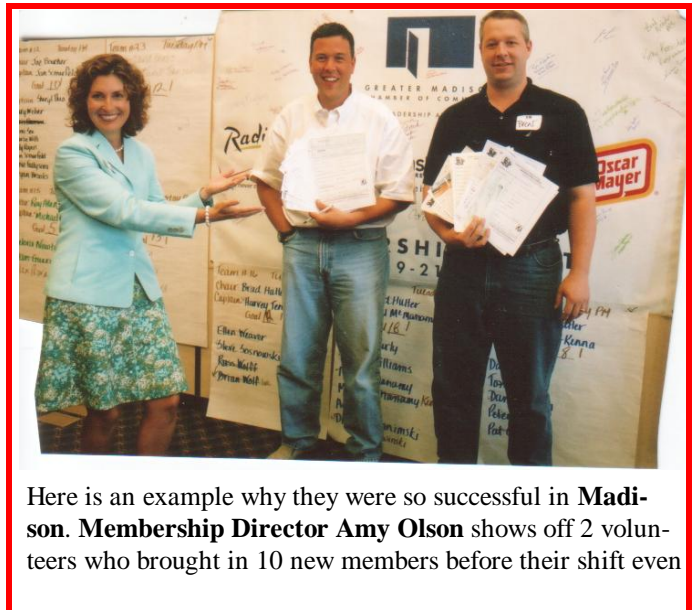
ANCIENT HISTORY DEPT: One day, God created the dog and said:

"Sit all day by the door of your house and bark at anyone who comes in or walks past. For this, I will give you a life span of twenty years.

The dog said: "That's a long time to be barking. How about only ten years and I'll give you back the other ten?"

So God agreed.

On the next day, God created the monkey and said: "Entertain people, do tricks, and make them laugh. For this, I'll give you a



Here is an example why they were so successful in **Madison**. Membership Director **Amy Olson** shows off 2 volunteers who brought in 10 new members before their shift even

twenty-year life span."

The monkey said: "Monkey tricks for twenty years? That's a pretty long time to perform. How about I give you back ten like the dog did?" And God agreed.

On the next day, God created the cow and said: "You must go into the field with the farmer all day long and suffer under the sun, have calves, and give milk to support the farmer's family. For this, I will give you a life span of sixty years."

The cow said: "That's kind of a tough life you want me to live for sixty years. How about twenty, and I'll give back the other forty?" God agreed again.

Then on the next day, God created man and said: "Eat, sleep, play, marry and enjoy your life. For this, I'll give you twenty years."

But man said: "Only twenty years? Could you possibly give me my twenty, the forty the cow gave back, the ten the monkey gave back, and the ten the dog gave back; that makes eighty, okay?" "Okay," said God, "You asked for it."

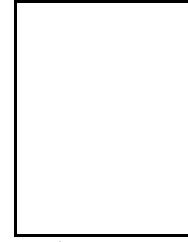
So that is why the first twenty years we eat, sleep, play and en-

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

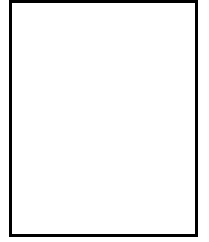


Jimmy and President Larry Mankin of the Santa Clarita Valley California Chamber of Commerce, celebrate passing the 1800 member mark during their fourth Membership Event. The total was **117 new members** and

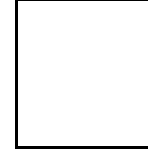
Look for us in Fairbanks, AK; Oakland & Modesto CA.; Joliet, IL.; Greenville, Cedar Hill, Wichita Falls, and Midlothian, TX over the next few months. All our results and future Events can be found on www.chamberconnect.com.



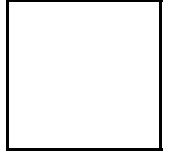
Lorraine Deitchman



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

Each edition, informative and enjoyable reading!
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