

Annual Report 2007-2008

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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Parkinson Thanks Membership for Support in 2007-2008

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 serve with so many board members that have been extremely dedicated to leading this organization over the past year.

At the start of my tenure, I declared my vision for the Chamber to increase workforce development efforts in Martinsville-Henry County. We have taken many steps to make my vision a reality including: continuing the partnership with the Workforce Investment Board and Henry County Adult Education with the Business IQ Program. To date, over 100 employees at Chamber member businesses have earned this credential and over 300 have been or currently are enrolled in the program. We have maintained a strong presence in the workforce development arena both locally and regionally with our President serving on the regional board and many of our board members working closely with our educators and economic development officials. Finally, we are preparing to launch a Manufacturing Technicians Certification program with collaborative efforts from the Workforce Investment Board, Patrick Henry Community College, the Martinsville-Henry County EDC and many local industries. This program will give the business community a pool of skilled and disciplined applicants from which to choose their workforce from.

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

Fast Track 2008 was the biggest show ever with 155 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 just years ago was a milestone of its own.

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

Sincerely,

John Parkinson

Chairman of the Board



Chamber Chairman John Parkinson addresses a crowd of over 300 at the Annual Leadership and Recognition Dinner.



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.



“Other benefits of I-73 are better market access, increased appeal for business relocations, faster population growth, increased tourism, better road safety and improved quality of life”.

I-73 Proves to Have Huge Economic Impact

An independent analysis commissioned by the Chamber and C-PEG, projects that Interstate 73 will have a huge economic impact on the region from the Virginia/North Carolina border to the Roanoke Valley. The report, prepared by Chmura Economics & Analytics, says the benefits of I-73 outweigh the costs by a 2:1 ratio and that the road would pay for itself in fewer than 10 years. The report was funded by the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission and the Harvest Foundation of Martinsville to inform the region of the potential impact of the highway, which has received approval from the Federal Highway Administration.

The benefits of I-73 total \$8.1 billion, according to the report. That includes the benefits of the actual construction plus the initial 10 years after construction. The cost is estimated by the Virginia Department of Transportation at \$4.0 billion in 2017 dollars.

The report predicts that approximately 5,300 new jobs will be created by construction each year, estimated to take nine years. After the completion, by 2020, the road will have created nearly 2,500 new jobs.

“Just as Interstate I-81 has contributed to the prosperity of formerly small towns such as Harrisonburg and Winchester, I-73 has the potential of attracting new businesses that spark new growth in the Roanoke metro area and re-establishing the health of the Martinsville area.” said Chris Chmura, president of the firm. After the road opens, Chmura estimates there will be 140 new service businesses, including hotels, restaurants and gas stations. A majority of the jobs created would occur in the City of Roanoke followed by Henry, Franklin and Roanoke counties. By 2025, nearly 20 percent of the economic impact of the new business is expected to take place in the Martinsville-Henry County area.

“We anticipate significant business development in the Martinsville area after the road is built,” said Chmura.

The local governments along the corridor — the cities of Martinsville, Roanoke and Salem and the counties of Franklin, Henry and Roanoke — also will benefit significantly. Tax revenue to those jurisdictions is expected to total nearly \$10 million a year by 2020. The Commonwealth of Virginia will benefit even more with an average of \$15 million a year in new tax revenue by 2020. “These figures demonstrate that financial benefits accrue to governments as well as to the communities,” Chmura said. The highway will benefit businesses in more ways than by simply bringing them more customers. Since the road will be constructed to interstate highway standards, it will provide approximately \$150 million in annual cost savings for current businesses as a result of improved travel efficiency.

Focus on Leadership

Each year the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce holds its Leadership Development and Youth Leadership Development programs. Every year, the number of participants in the programs continues to climb. **This year 36 candidates graduated from the Leadership Development Program and 20**

graduated from Youth Leadership with three being awarded with \$1,000 scholarships.

The Chamber’s goal is to expose potential leaders to the many aspects of leadership in Martinsville-Henry County. Each participant will be a Leadership Alumni and be placed in

a board bank and have the potential to practice their leadership abilities with organizations in the community that match their interests.

Youth participants are exposed to many types of leadership and careers in hopes of attracting them back to Martinsville-Henry County.

Members Tell All: Why be a Chamber Member?

Each year the Chamber polls its members to see what benefits of their membership are most valuable to them. 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



2007-2008 Accomplishments

- Launched the Procurement Portal online allowing businesses to do business locally with other Chamber members
- Launched the Education Foundation, a separate 501c3 charged with raising private funds for education
- Partnered with the Workforce Investment Board Office in 4 Target Recruitment events
- Was instrumental in launching the Manufacturing Technician Certification Program by securing industry participation
- Held 12 Business After Hours Events with over 800 attendees
- Held 3 Legislative Events with over 300 attendees
- FAST TRACK 2008 was the Chamber's largest show ever with 155 exhibitor booths
- Hosted a highly attended Annual Meeting and Leadership Recognition Dinner and heard from the former Governor and U.S. Senate Candidate, Mark Warner.
- Hosted 2 Chamber Nights at the Mustangs with more than 5,000 in attendance
- Surveyed membership to set priorities for 2008-2009
- Continued to work with school systems to manage the Chamber's Partnership-In-Excellence Program
- Conducted the Leadership Development Course with 36 graduating after participating in the 10 week program and graduated 20 from the Youth Leadership Program
- Coordinated 27 ribbon cuttings for new or expanding businesses
- Honored 4 small businesses in manufacturing, retail and service as well as a Small Business "Team" of the year
- Supported all Small Business Resources with their services to counsel area businesses and entrepreneurs
- Gained a total of 95 new members for the year
- Presented the Chairman's Award to Lance Heater in recognition of his leadership and support of the Chamber
- Hosted a forum for the state candidates
- Continued to publish a quarterly newsletter, annual report, sent weekly email blasts and hosted weekly television show
- Continued to improve Chamber Membership benefits
- Launched the first Information Technology Training Program
- Continued to lobby for business interest at the Local, State and Federal levels



Fast Track 2008 Draws Thousands



Fast Track 2008 was undoubtedly the biggest expo that the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce has ever held. With 155 exhibitor spaces and ten 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 2008 was the Chamber's fourteenth show.

The major advertising strategy for FAST TRACK 2008 proved to be beneficial as exhibitors made contacts with potential business to business customers as well as customers during the public night. The exposure that they receive before, during and after FAST TRACK proves to be invaluable time and time again.

"We were very excited to have a sold out expo which allowed us to showcase all of the thriving businesses and organizations that are in Martinsville-Henry County."

- Chamber President
Amanda Witt



Top Left: Simply the Best takes home Best In Show for the Second Consecutive year. **Above:** Thousands mill about FAST TRACK 2008. **Right:** Even Tacos come out for FAST TRACK!



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. Binding Time owner Bonnie Hale said she registered for "The Taste of Martinsville-Henry County," because she wanted the exposure. "I wanted to show everyone what we have here," she said. Each restaurant or

caterer could display one or two food items. Binding Time chose scones, which are a sweeter-type of biscuit filled with cream, strawberries, blueberries, apples, chocolate chips or any type jams or fillings. "Everyone loves them," said Hale, referring to her customers who have tried her scones.

2007-2008 Board of Directors

John Parkinson: Chairman
Drake Extrusion

Jay Edelen: VC Organizational Improvement, Chairman Elect
Coolknobsandpulls.com

Richard Eanes: VC Government Affairs
Warren Trucking

Dr. Barry Dorsey: VC Economic Development
New College Institute

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

Marsha Frith: Treasurer
Sells, Hogg & Jones, CPAs

Dr. Jim Wilson: Secretary
Jim Wilson, D.D.S.

Lance Heater: Immediate Past Chairman
Southwestern Virginia Gas Company

Jim Barnett
Barnett Commercial Realty

Vern Berry
Berry-Elliott Realtors

Ken Brown
Smart Machines

Dr. Sharon Dodson
Henry County Public Schools

Tim Gette
Virginia Museum of Natural History

Natalie Harder
Patrick Henry Community College

Melissa Holland
CP Films, Inc.

Dr. Scott Kizner
Martinsville City Public Schools

Charlie Mattox
Applied Felts

Avery Mills
Martinizing Dry Cleaners

Brandt Mitchell
The Lester Group

Barry Nelson
Nelson Automotive Group

Mary Nester
American National Bank

Andreas Schulze-Ising
Mehler, Inc.

Phil Solomon
Solomon Flight Instruction

David Stone
Solid Stone Fabrics

Chamber Staff

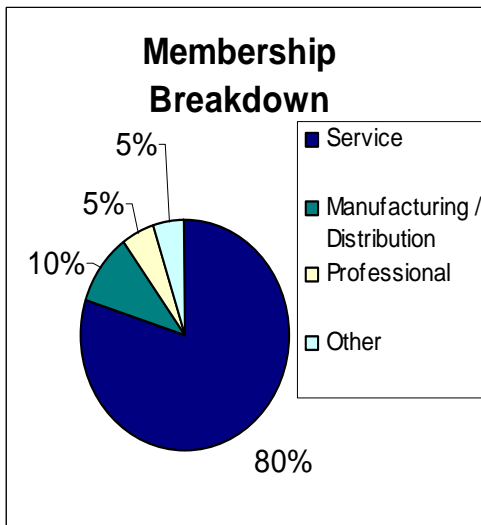
Amanda Witt: President

Sharon Shepherd: Deputy Director

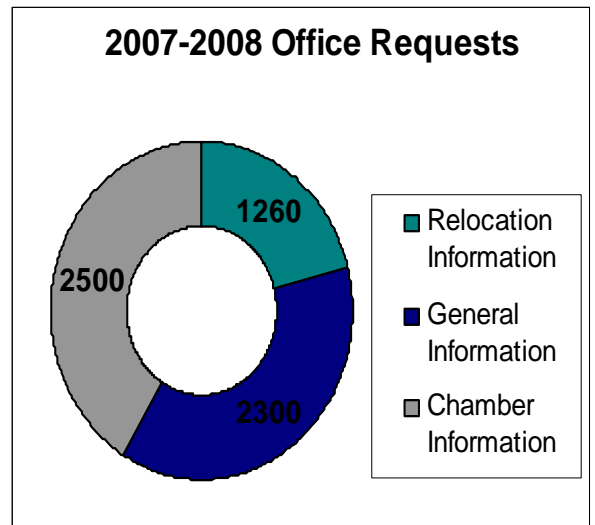
Ann Dollarhite: Administrative Assistant

Autumn Clark: Intern

2007-2008 Chamber Statistics



2007-2008 Membership
 Total Members: 614
 New Members in 2007-2008: 95
 Retention Rate: 90%



What's Ahead for 2008-2009?

2008-2009 Chairman of the Board, Jay Edelen has many ideas in mind when it comes to the future of the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce. Information Technology and E-commerce play a very important role in today's business world and it is the Chairman's hope that the membership utilizes these tools to grow and be globally competitive right here in Martinsville-Henry County.

In Jay's opinion, The internet is the great equalizer. It has fundamentally changed the way that the world does business. Utilizing E-commerce websites, small entrepreneurs can now reach out to a national and international audience from their home base, no matter where they are located.

Specific goals for the Chamber in 2008-2009 include:

- Educating the membership of the importance of having email and a web presence.
- Building off of the first round of information technology training, offering advanced instruction in Microsoft Word, Access, Excel and Power Point.



- Expanding those classes to touch on web development.
- Adding instruction on search engine marketing strategies including pay-per-click advertising and website optimization to achieve high keyword rankings.

Although his platform for the Chamber in 2008-2009 is Information Technology, he has not forgotten how important Workforce Development is and how successful the Chamber's progress was in the past year. Efforts will continue in all facets to ensure that the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce's mission is met.

"You can be competitive globally from anywhere in the world and in my opinion Martinsville-Henry County is at the top of the list."

**- Jay G. Edelen
Chairman 2008-2009**

The Martinsville-Henry County
Chamber of Commerce

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