



NHACCE Gazette

The Newsletter of the New Hampshire Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives

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2005

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Call 753-4562 or e-mail: maltziedeign@verizon.net for information or to be added to the e-mail list.

Member Retention

In the last issue, the question was posed, “How does your chamber retain members?” From Ruth Preston of the Greater Claremont Chamber of Commerce came an answer. Ruth suggests several ways in which to help retain members as well as maintain member relations.

The best method of retaining members of course is a good, old-fashioned face-to-face visit—as often as possible. Calling ahead is one way to ensure that your contact person will be there—even if for a brief chat. Before your visit, remember to be sensitive to busy hours. For example, do not visit a restaurant during meal times. If you stop by and they happen to be unavailable, remember to leave a business card so they know their chamber is working for them.

Do you have something new to show your members? Bring it by and talk about it with them. The Greater Claremont Chamber of Commerce recently had new street maps made and they have been hand delivering them to the membership. There are plenty of reasons to pay a visit!

The next best method is contact by phone. There are many reasons to call such as updating your membership

information, reminders of upcoming Business After Hours, a ribbon cutting, or other scheduled events.

Including members on chamber committees is yet another way to stay in touch. You might invite them or one of their employees to serve on one.

Another way to retain members is to hold a forum with a topic of interest and provide refreshments or a light meal. Remember, the more the membership knows about how you are serving their best interest, the more they will support the chamber and its activities.

Ruth feels that the least effective way to contact members is through the written word. Since we are a society that generally does not read wordy mailings, if you do send one, remember to keep it simple. The Greater Claremont Chamber sends out simple referral cards to their membership. Every time the chamber refers a business to a member, they receive a card. These are just a few ways in which to retain members.

*Ruth Preston, Executive Director
 Greater Claremont Chamber of Commerce*

Have another suggestion? Feel free to forward your ideas to Beth Maltzie at maltziedeign@verizon.net. Perhaps they could be included in a future issue!

NHACCE Conference Report

Earlier in March, approximately 30 chamber of commerce executive directors from all corners of the state gathered at the annual New Hampshire Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (NHACCE) Winter Conference held at Church Landing in Meredith. The conference provided a time for chamber executives to get together to enhance their knowledge of the profession, to network with each other, and to enjoy some leisure time with their peers.

Church Landing, the beautiful new accommodation property overlooking Meredith Bay, was exquisite. The attendees were treated to two wonderful lunches and an extraordinary meal at the Annual Dinner on Thursday night, where the first ever “Blue Plate Special” awards were presented to Tracey McGrail (Exeter Chamber) and Clint Bean (Hanover Chamber) for their many years of service and dedication to NHACCE.

While the networking and leisure time were enjoyed and appreciated, the main objective of the conference was to provide an opportunity for growth for the attendees. The first day began with the subject matter, “The Chamber Career” presented by Joe Belivaqua of the New England Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (NEACCE). It was followed by presentation by Geoff O’Hara of the Northeast Region of the U.S.

Chamber of Commerce concerning Executive Director Compensation. Jim Roche, the President and CEO of the Business and Industry Association (BIA), provided an update on that important group’s activities. Such issues as budget cuts and expanded gambling were discussed in order for chambers to decide where to throw their lobbying interest. It is certain that many attendees went back to their boards and spoke of the importance of being heard on these issues.

A new slate of officers was unanimously elected. The new officers for this year include: President Theresa Pinto of the Greater Laconia/Weirs Beach Chamber, Vice-President “Doc” Noel of the Hampton Beach Area Chamber, Treasurer Chris Hodgdon of the Greater Nashua Chamber, Secretary Linda Bonetti of the Merrimack Chamber, Directors: Ruth Preston of the Greater Claremont Chamber, Brian McCarthy of the Lincoln-Woodstock Chamber, Paul Hartgen of the New Hampshire Lodging and Restaurant Association, and Past President Tom Dowling of the Greater Keene Chamber.

During the afternoon, Barbara Miller of the Peterborough Chamber of Commerce spoke on “Positive First Impressions.” It was followed by “Correct Chamber Money Formula” by former NHACCE Secretary Tracey

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NHACCE Conference...continued from page 1

McGrail, outlining the vast array of dues formulas used by chambers. Barbara Miller then addressed the process of "Finding and Writing Grants."

Consecutive sessions regarding IRS Compliance matters were followed by a discussion on the suitability of chambers to form a non-profit 501c3. A popular seminar was given by B.J. Eckardt, President of the Board of the Greater Laconia/Weirs Beach Chamber entitled "License to Steal: Imitating Success." She suggested many helpful revenue-raising hints. Both sessions were well received and, undoubtedly, many directors went back to their communities anxious to find sponsors for their annual meetings.

Tim Sink of the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce spoke about employee theft. It was an eye-opening, real life look at theft within a non-profit organization and how implemented safeguards can prevent such occurrences.

The conference sponsors included Public Service of New Hampshire, The Northeast Utilities System, The Chamber Publishing Group, East Commerce Solutions and Ocean National Bank. I look forward to the next conference and hope to see you there!

Brian McCarthy, Executive Director
Lincoln-Woodstock Chamber of Commerce

were electives I felt would help me the most in an immediate way. I was able to return to Lincoln-Woodstock armed with a much more professional level of knowledge and confidence. Attending also gave me a real drive to implement what I had learned. The incredible quality of the instructors also impressed me. They not only knew their stuff, but also were entertaining and kept the classes totally engrossed.

Perhaps the most amazing thing about the Institute is that the learning never stops. Everyone is in a class with the same year students. Our class of 26 first-year students had great opportunities to share information, compare methods, and just listen and learn.

The class will stay together for four years and we have an incredible network that we can draw from whenever we have questions, need help, or want to share ideas.

Another invaluable part of the Institute is coming home with a confidence that you are indeed, a chamber professional. You will know just how you are doing when you can spend time with your peers. You will return to your community with a renewed confidence and vigor. To learn more, visit www.uschamber.com/institute.

Brian McCarthy, Executive Director
Lincoln-Woodstock Chamber of Commerce

Institute for Organization Management

The Institute for Organization Management—better known simply as the "Institute"—is the best investment of your chamber's dollars and your time. If you are a chamber of commerce executive director or president, you need to attend. This is especially true if you are new to the chamber world and hope to stay in the non-profit or association profession into the future.

I attended the winter Institute in Tucson. It was, without question, the best thing I could have done. I learned more in one week at the Institute than I did after a year on the job.

The Institute is very much akin to college for chamber directors. You attend five days of classes a year for four years. Once you have completed the four years, you can attach the designation "IOM" to your name, signifying you are a graduate and a trained professional in your chosen field.

The required courses included: The Chamber Professional, Effective Presentations, The Leadership Challenge, and Budgeting and Preparing Financial Statements. The electives I included for my first year were: Increasing Board Effectiveness and Secrets of Successful Chamber Executives. Other classes I included were: Best in Class—Lessons Learned from Award Winning Chambers, Sponsorship Solicitation and Programs, and Working with Members, Committees and Boards. These

Comings and Goings



Division of Travel and Tourism Selects Assitant

Director – Congratulations to Margaret Joyce who has been selected for the position of Assistant Director of the Division of Travel and Tourism. For the past five years, Ms. Joyce has served as the Director of Communications for the division. Director Alice DeSouza states that, "Margaret's understanding of state government processes, combined with her passion for travel and tourism marketing and her love for this state, render her more than qualified for this position. I feel very fortunate to have her as my second in command!"

Small Bites

New Hampshire has once again been named the "Most Livable State" for the second year in a row! New Hampshire won over second place Minnesota and third place Vermont according to Morgan Quitno Press.

"Awards like this go a long way when trying to attract new visitors and encourage business owners to expand or relocate to New Hampshire," New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development Commissioner Sean O'Kane said. "This designation allows us to shine the spotlight on our state before both national and international audiences. It's a great marketing tool."

NH Travel & Tourism "Fast Facts"

Great Resources!

- Need a comprehensive index of tax, accounting, and related resources? Visit www.taxsites.com.
- Providing handy rate pages such as standard deductions, tax news, tips and tax forms, try www.bankrate.com/brm/itax/default.asp
- The website of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), a professional association for accountants, not only gives news and developments, but also links to selected sites. See it at: www.aicpa.org.

Since tax season is upon us, "enjoy" some of these tax reference sites! This section is reserved for websites that provide information geared toward helping businesses succeed. If you have a favorite website you would like to share, please e-mail maltziedezign@verizon.net.



Meet The Executive



We are proud to introduce one of our newest NHACCE directors, Brian McCarthy of the Lincoln-Woodstock Chamber of Commerce. Brian has been on the job for a little more than a year. This was his first such position, having spent 22 years as a journalist/editor with *The Record Enterprise* and *Summer and Winter Week*, headquartered in Plymouth.

Brian attended the Institute for Organization Management in Tucson last January and enjoyed it immensely (see his article within this newsletter). He has already introduced several new events and has helped to bring the chamber into a much more solid financial position.

Brian was raised in the Derry area, graduated from Pinkerton Academy, and attended both Hesser College in Manchester and Biscayne College (now St. Thomas University) in Miami, Florida. He is a veteran of the U.S. Navy. He lives in Ashland with his wife, Gayle, who works for the American Red Cross. He has one daughter, Erica Lin, 27; a son-in-law, Jim; a grandson, Brian James, 4; and a granddaughter expected to arrive in mid-May. Welcome Brian!



Talking Points

This section invites you to share your views on one selected topic. This newsletter's challenge is as follows. . .

Challenge: What Is Your Chamber's Biggest Fundraiser?

To submit an article for this topic, it should include items such as:

- Event or product name
- Why you decided to hold the event or produce the product at that particular time of year?
- Where do you hold the event?
- Who is your target audience?
- What makes this event/product special?
- How does it help your membership?
- How has this event/product changed over the years to adjust for cost or involvement?
- What else would you like to share with other chambers?

The next newsletter is due out July 1.
Article submission is June 15, 2005.

Perhaps there is a successful outcome to one of your daily challenges or a belief that can be shared to find common ground with other NHACCE members. If you have other ideas, or have found something that works well for your chamber, let us know. E-mail your views on this subject or any topic suggestions to Beth Maltzie at maltziedezign@verizon.net.

Talking Points Suggestion

Theresa Pinto, Executive Director of the Greater Laconia/Weirs Beach Chamber of Commerce and NHACCE President, answers the last issue's question, "How Does Your chamber Recruit New Members?" . . .

Anyone who knows me, knows that I am not a big fan of membership drives. As a matter of fact, I have done my best to avoid them. Yet almost without fail every year someone at the beginning of the fiscal year makes the suggestion. This year my resistance was low and we managed to come up with an idea that I could live with—a Membership Challenge—sounds so much better, doesn't it?

Instead of spending a few harried days on the phone trying to drum up business and twist arms, we are going to spend the entire year making referrals. The challenge is between our chamber ambassador team and our board of directors. They will compete with one another to see which group can successfully make the most new member referrals.

Our goal is 500 members, so we have set the entire challenge around a race theme called the "Laconia 500." We have one car to denote the board members; another car for the ambassadors and our member specialist staffer is our pace car. Each month at our Business After Hours event, we will recognize and award a prize to the individual (ambassador or board member) who has referred the most new members in the previous month. These are considered our "pit stops." Prizes are gathered as giveaways

for our regular Business After Hours events, so we simply select one from that pool and award it to the "lead" individual of the race. At the end of the year, we will award a grand prize to the winning team, as well as an individual winner.

Instead of asking our board members and ambassadors to sell a membership, we are simply asking them to make a firm referral. By generating good solid leads for our member specialist to follow-up on, they are eliminating legwork and pre-sale activity.

We use business card sized referral cards with each board member and ambassador receiving a supply. When they meet a business that they feel is interested in membership, they simply give them a business card with a referral note and their name on it.

Our membership challenge began in February. I think the media and talk surrounding the challenge will get more people involved. To date we have 15 new members. The participants are becoming more competitive and I feel very comfortable with the 500-member goal.

So, lesson learned. Sometimes you need to do things you don't really want to do. The key is compromise and coming up with an idea or event in which you feel comfortable. In the end, the board will be pleased that we did a membership drive and I will be pleased because we did something a little different and achieved our goal of membership.

"The key is compromise and coming up with an idea or event in which you feel comfortable."

Upcoming Events

APRIL . . .

Monday, April 4-Wednesday, April 6: *Discover New England's Annual Tourism Summit*
Join your tourism colleagues, international tour operators and travel press at the Mount Washington Hotel & Resort at Bretton Woods in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. Contact: 603-271-2665.

Thursday, April 14: *Year of Growing Sales Seminar #2*
"How to Generate, Identify & Qualify Sales Leads." 8-10 a.m. with registration at 7:45 a.m. New Hampshire Community Technical Collge, 320 Corporate Drive, Portsmouth, NH (Pease International Tradeport). This seminar follows up the successful 2004 seminar series, "The Year of the Customer." Each session has two components: 1) Two local experts present a 30-minute "how to" workshop and 2) Clients and/or company representatives who have worked with local experts share success stories. For more information, visit www.portsmouthchamber.org/yogs2.cfm. Cost: \$10/chamber member, \$15/non-member. Registration required. Call 603-436-3988, ext. 14 or e-mail ggriffith@portsmouthchamber.org.

MAY . . .

Monday, May 9-Wednesday, May 11: *29th Annual Governor's Conference on Tourism*
Entitled "New Visions-New Directions." Held at the Mount Washington Hotel & Resort, Bretton Woods. Cost for all three days: \$235/members, \$315/non-members. To register or for further pricing information for various days, contact the NH Travel Council at 603-665-9559, fax them at 603-665-9009 or e-mail: nhtcnk@star.net. To make reservations at the Mount Washington Hotel, please call 800-258-0330 or e-mail: jmical@mtwashington.com.

Thursday, May 12: *Year of Growing Sales Seminar #3*
Focusing on how technology may be used to support your salespeople and enhance the sales process. For more information, visit www.portsmouthchamber.org/yogs2.cfm. Cost: \$10/chamber members, \$15/non-members. Registration required. Call 603-436-3988, ext. 14 or e-mail ggriffith@portsmouthchamber.org.

Monday, May 23: *7th Annual Business to Business Expo*
Hosted by the Mt. Washington Valley Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau. Educational workshops, an expansive trade show and networking opportunities await exhibitors and participants. Mount Washington Hotel, Bretton Woods. Contact: 603-356-5701, ext. 6.

Tuesday, May 24: *BIA Annual Business Meeting and Reception*
Center of NH, 700 Elm Street, Manchester from 5:30-7:30 p.m. For more information, contact the BIA at 603-224-5388 or e-mail: mail@nhbia.org.

JUNE . . .

Thursday, June 2-Friday, June 3: *NEACCE Summer Conference*
Watch for your invitation to the New England Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives Summer Conference.

Thursday, June 9: *NHLRA Presentation at Hampton Area Chamber of Commerce*
New Hampshire Lodging & Restaurant Association's President, Paul Hartgen, has been invited to speak to members of the Hampton Area Chamber of Commerce about how "Tourism Enriches New Hampshire." Location: Ashworth by the Sea, Hampton. Contact: 603-926-8718.

CALL FOR ARTICLES

You will notice on the last page of this newsletter a section entitled *Next Time . . .* In the next newsletter we'd like to feature ideas about **your chamber's biggest fundraiser** of the year. Include:

- Your event
- Planning ahead
- Pulling it off
- What you've learned

Let us know so we can share it with others!

E-mail: maltziedezign@verizon.net

Call: 603-753-4562 after 5:30 PM



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