



Chamber Links!

EXTRA! EXTRA! WE NEED YOU!

Chamber Membership has Many Benefits!

Chamber membership has many benefits! The excitement and enthusiasm for your River Region Chamber of Commerce continues to grow as those in the business community become increasingly aware of the tremendous impact this organization is having, and will continue to have, on the business climate in the entire region. Membership is growing daily and we encourage you to join now and make an investment in the success of your business! Here are just some of the benefits of that investment:

REPRESENTATION: The Chamber serves as the "Voice" of business at the local, state and

national level on policies that impact area businesses.

INFLUENCE CHANGE: Participation on Chamber committees allows members to

contribute to positive changes in and around the River Region.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Access to a membership list that is constantly growing and will soon represent a majority of businesses in the region.

REFERRALS: First priority for referrals to area newcomers, tourists, and others who will contact the Chamber for suggestions.

EXCLUSIVITY: Invitations to



Women's Seminar—July 2007, Bull's Corner

members-only events to hear updates and discuss timely issues face-to-face with area leaders and elected officials.

BE "IN THE KNOW": Chamber events and updates keep members current on a variety of matters that affect the business community.

RECOGNITION: Membership plaques and (see Page 2)

Volume 1, Issue 1
JANUARY 2008



WANT TO INCREASE THE VISIBILITY OF YOUR BUSINESS?

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Call 985-359-9777 for this and more advertising opportunities!

Inside this issue:

Welcome New Members!

COMPANY	NAME	ENROLL DATE	PHONE	LOCATION
The Athlete's Foot	Danica Francois	10/15/2007	(985) 652-7244	LaPlace
Xerox/Superior Office Products	Ryan Bunch	10/15/2007	(504) 382-6143	Destrehan
Oil Mop, LLC	Shaw Thompson	10/30/2007	(504) 394-6110	Belle Chasse
Safeland Storage	Paul Beaulieu	10/30/2007	(337) 735-9343	Reserve
Watkins Family Chiropractic	Charles Watkins	11/9/2007	(985) 653-9606	LaPlace
Advantage On-Hold	Annette Wray	11/29/2007	985-764-1445	Destrehan
Jo's Creole T-Cakes	Jo Banner	12/13/2007	225-265-1770	Vacherie
Eagan Insurance Agency	Wayne Roussel	12/17/2008	504-836-9600	LaPlace

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Thanks for your contribution



Shell Chemicals Norco

Continued from page 1:

Chamber Membership: *Look what's in it for you!*

stickers are viewed by the public as a sign of responsible business practices and most importantly, credibility.

EDUCATION: Seminars dealing with everything from taxes, technology, to new business start-ups and marketing are available to members.

NETWORKING: Opportunities to talk one-on-one with fellow business professionals through card exchanges, luncheons, banquets, committee meetings, and much more.

ADVERTISING: Highly visible sponsorship options at various events throughout the

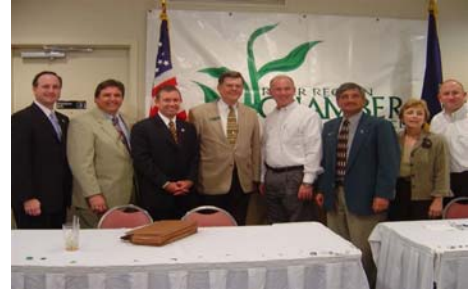
year reach a limitless number of potential clients/customers. Newsletter and website advertisements and fax/mail blasts will be regularly sent to Chamber members.

AND MORE...

Membership in the River Region Chamber of Commerce is indeed a wise investment for your business! For additional information call the Chamber office at 985-359-9777.

Take this opportunity to "Grow with Us!"

www.riverregionchamber.org



Local delegation pictured with meeting sponsors and Chamber leadership at the Annual Legislative Forum

"Message from Outgoing Chairman" Blaise Gravois

I have to continually ask myself, has it been two years already? It's true, time flies when you're having fun. Serving as your Chairman for the past two years has been a great experience for me. I have made many new friends and enjoyed working with all of our members in bringing the River Region area to a new level that we are all proud of. Just as in sports, the coach is only as good as its players. I am proud to say that The River Region Chamber of Commerce has a great team, from all the board members and volunteers and especially from the Executive Director, Chassity McComack. Many volunteers put in many hours working on projects that have made the entire River Region known to people throughout the state and beyond.

The 2008 calendar has many new opportunities for each member to receive value for your membership. From the Annual Banquet to the Crawfish Boil and Super Raffle, the Chamber will continue to offer different events to address the needs of its members.

As your River Region Chamber continues to grow, I ask that you continue to support the efforts of the Chamber and please participate in all the Chamber has to offer. I look forward to working with the new officers for 2008 and wish them continued success. This is your Chamber, and through your efforts this Chamber will continue to grow for many years to come. You can keep up with the events by following the web site at www.riverregionchamber.org. If you have not visited our new office, please come by and look at the opportunities that the office has for its members. Again, it has truly been a pleasure serving all of you.

PUBLIC POLICY: Addressing Issues that Affect Business and Community

The River Region Chamber of Commerce believes that collective action can affect change more than any one business working alone. Through advocacy and other public policy efforts, we provide a vehicle for businesses throughout the River Region to make a difference.

Over the past year, the Public Policy committee has addressed several issues that affect business and community. In September, the committee hosted four public *Meet the Candidates* events in advance of the elections for Parish President, Sheriff, Court of Clerk, City Council, and State

Representative. All candidates, business owners, and concerned citizens had the opportunity to exchange dialogue on visions and future plans, as well as to express concerns.

Public Policy is seeking individuals in St. John and St. James Parishes to serve as spokespersons. These individuals will address parish councils, school boards, and other governmental bodies regarding issues that affect business and community.

Henry Friloux, Committee Chair
Owner, *Echo Ventures, Inc.*

For further information, contact Henry Friloux at 504-416-0986.

Please join us to support the issues that matter to you!



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

Richard Drexel, Committee Chair
Owner, Business Solutions

On December 19th the Business Development Committee hosted a meeting for businesses located along the central corridor in LaPlace to obtain feedback on issues that matter most to them. The primary area of concern for business owners was signage from the street level. Penny Freeman, Chair-Elect, and Richard Drexel, Committee Chair, will work on behalf of the Chamber with parish governments to help create a more "user-friendly" business climate, assisting businesses in securing the resources needed to thrive.

Beginning on Wednesday, January 9th at 11:30am, the committee will introduce a monthly series of Lunch and Learns for Chamber members at the Chamber office. The workshops will provide an opportunity

to present information on a range of topics to our members in an informal setting over a lunch hour. The purpose is to educate, facilitate dialogue, and create an atmosphere of communication and collaboration.

"The secret in life, is for a man (or woman) to be ready for his opportunity when it comes."

-Disraeli

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COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE: Promoting Awareness

Annette B. Wray, Committee Chair
Owner, Advent Communications, Inc.

During the past few months, the Communications Committee has made great progress in improving public awareness of the Chamber throughout the community. A few of the projects that the committee has been working on include *Chamber Links* quarterly newsletter, marketing materials, and media opportunities.

The newsletter will keep the business community connected with Chamber happenings and updates. Additionally, it will provide opportunities for advertisement. Con-

tact the Chamber office if you are interested in taking advantage of the advertising opportunities. *Chamber Links* will be circulated throughout St. Charles, St. John, and St. James parishes to member companies as well as to the general public.

During the November General Membership meeting, the Chamber, along with *Advantage On-Hold* awarded free advertising opportunities for six lucky members. The members had the opportunity to record 30 seconds of customized on-hold

messaging. The advertisements are featured on the Chamber's telephone system.

Chamber Links Advertising Rates

Front Page (bottom banner)	\$150/issue
Back Page (1/2 page)	\$300/issue
Interior Ads	\$50/issue

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: Actively Seeking Value Added Benefits

Penny Freeman, Committee Chair
Owner, Preferred Companies

Over the past year, the Membership Committee has worked to recruit new members, increase member participation, refine the Ambassador program, and provide networking opportunities among members. From 2006 – 2007 membership grew from approximately 200 to 277 members. The current retention rate is 93%. Our goal is to increase membership by 20% for 2008. Keep your eyes open for the rollout of our new membership campaign!

Our Ambassadors serve as the first point of contact for new members after joining the

Chamber. Their purpose is to fulfill the first step of our membership retention efforts by informing them of programs, services and benefits and by mentoring them. Ambassadors are liaisons, providing one-to-one communication from new members back to the Chamber staff.

Our Ambassadors are: Cindy Abraham – *LaMaison Magnolia Reception Hall*, Chesley Cashio – *AM-PM Services*, Sonny Barrient – *Factory Choice*, Kim Bourgeois – *LA Federal Credit Union*, Victoria Bryant – *The Arc of*

St. Charles, Joanne Cain – *Manpower*, Donnel Faucheux - *Latter & Blum Realtors*, Frank Fontana – *Office Depot*, and Matt Lundy – *Rewarding Events & Incentives*.



DISC Seminar Participants



River Region Chamber Annual Banquet News

3rd Annual Chamber Banquet Dougie V's Esperanza Restaurant January 25, 2008 7:00pm—9:00pm

The River Region Chamber of Commerce will host its 3rd Annual Banquet on Friday, January 25, 2008 from 7:00pm – 9:00pm at Dougie V's Esperanza Restaurant in Luling. It will serve as the first General Membership Meeting for the year and as the official induction of the 2008 Board of Directors.

An exciting addition to this year's banquet will be the presentation of *Business of the Year Awards* in the following categories:

- ✦ *Small Business of the Year*
- ✦ *Large Business of the Year*
- ✦ *Community Leadership Award*
- ✦ *Shining Star*

Two additional awards, *Committee of the Year* and *Board Member of the Year*, will

be given at the discretion of the Chairman of the Board. The evening will also feature a business presentation by Dr. Loren C. Scott and a bit of light-hearted humor by Kent Gonsoulin.

All members are encouraged to attend the kick-off event for 2008! It will be a great opportunity to meet fellow members and mingle with friends. Tickets are \$50/person. The attire for the evening is dressy. Contact the Chamber office to make your reservation.

Visit the Chamber website for more information at:

www.riverregionchamber.org



Dougie V's Esperanza Restaurant
"Under Luling Bridge next to Ramada Inn"
13899 River Road
Luling, Louisiana
985-785-1399

EDUCATION COMMITTEE: Providing Business Perspective for Education

The Education Committee has been working collaboratively with the St. John and St. James Public School Systems, and Junior Achievement of Greater New Orleans to bring the program to several schools in the River Region. The Junior Achievement programs focus on the key content areas of entrepreneurship, work readiness, and financial literacy.

The Workforce Development Task Force and the River Parishes Education Initiatives (RPEI) have partnered to heighten community and parental involvement in schools throughout St. Charles, St. John, and St.

James parishes. The partnership works to enhance the quality of education, increase the number of skilled workers for the future, address education issues, and improve quality of life for all people throughout the River Parishes.

To make a financial contribution to one of the above initiatives or to learn more about volunteer opportunities, please contact the Chamber office.

The St. Charles Parish Public School System will introduce an *Engineering Pathway* for high school seniors at the start of the

2008/2009 school year. The program will target students who are interested in pursuing careers in the field of engineering and will consist of two courses. The courses will be held at St. Charles' state-of-the-art Satellite Center where each student receives a laptop for use throughout the duration of the program. Curriculum for the program is being developed with input from an advisory board. The advisory board is made up of representatives from local industries, University of New Orleans, Nicholls State University, and local engineering firms.

Frank Fontana, Committee Chair
Store Manager, Office Depot

"Our progress as a nation can be no swifter than our progress in education. The human mind is our fundamental resource."

- John F. Kennedy

2008 SPOTLIGHT: Lunch & Learn Workshops—Free to Members!

Location? All Lunch & Learn Workshops are held at the River Region Chamber of Commerce Office Conference Room. Don't forget to bring your lunch!

(Drinks will be provided!)

When? Second Wednesday monthly

Time? 11:30am (Will last approximately 1 hour)



Trudy Torres of Iberia Bank & Friends

To Register for Lunch & Learns, call the Chamber at 985-359-9777.

DATE	TOPIC	PRESENTER(S)
Jan 9th	How to hire using the DISC Personality Profile System	Eddie Esposito & Richard Drexel (Referral Institute)
Feb 13th	Marketing Your Business	Lakeisha Hammett (Hammett Enterprises)
Mar 12th	Time Management	Craig Marinello (Referral Institute)
Apr 9th	How to Make an Effective Sales Presentation	Bob Levin (Outstanding Business Cards)
May 14th	Internet Safety	Anthony Landreneau (LA Federal Credit Union)
Jun 11th	Identity Theft	Kim Bourgeois (LA Federal Credit Union)
Jul 9th	How to Network your Business	Annette Wray (Advent Communications, Inc.)
Aug 13th	How to do Business with the Government	Jan Labat (PTAC)
Sep 10th	Employee Job Descriptions and Evaluations	Richard Drexel (Business Solutions, Inc.)
Oct 8th	Employees Benefit Programs	Nicholas Fiorito (Northwestern Mutual)
Nov 12th	Business Insurance	Richard Garrity (Insurance Agent)
Dec 10th	Sales and Use Tax	Speaker TBA

Don't forget your business cards!

GRAVOIS
CONSTRUCTION, LLC.
 General Contractor
 Commercial—Residential

Blaise Gravois
 13395 Redbud St.
 Vacherie, LA 70090

985-668-4280 cell
 225-265-2437 office
 225-265-9500 fax

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 VISIBILITY OF YOUR BUSINESS?**

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Happy Anniversary 1st Quarter Chamber Members: Thank You for Being a Part of Our Family

Since 2004: 4th Year Anniversary!

Sean Doody Insurance Agency, Inc.
Stein's Cleaners
Wink Companies, LLC
Preferred Companies, Inc.
Bunge North America, Inc.
Dow (Union Carbide Corp.)
River Region Home Improvement
South Louisiana Sugars Cooperative
Port of South Louisiana

Since 2005: 3rd Year Anniversary!

Bull's Corner Restaurant
Gary L. Smith, Jr.
AT&T
Bob Folse Economic & Business Research Service
News Examiner
Century 21 (Jerry McLeod)
L'Observateur
Saints Board of Realtors
Arceneaux Realty, Inc.
Gen-Con, Inc.
St. James Parish Hospital
River Parishes Workforce Investment Act Program
Destrehan Discount Pharmacy
Tatje Insurance & Financial Products, Inc.
Mochaccino's Ormond
Ormond Country Club

Since 2006: 2nd Year Anniversary!

Junior Achievement of Greater New Orleans
Promotions Etc.
The Arc of St. Charles
San Francisco Plantation
I C Railmarine Terminal Company
Career Builders
Bayou Steel Corporation
Dependable Storage
Wal-Mart Super Center (LaPlace)
Mochaccino's

Since 2007: 1st Year Anniversary!

Donnel Fauchoux, Latter & Blum Realtors
Bot's Place
BNI
La Carreta of LaPlace
Clarence Matthews, Century 21
Café Perique
Coldwell Banker TEC Realtors
Cat-Spec., Ltd
DK's Graphic Solutions
O-Reilly Auto Parts
Firemen's Federal Credit Union
Linden Bulk Transportation SW LLC



AMPM
SERVICES

Chesley Cashio
Sales Manager

P.O. Box 186 · Luling, LA 70070
13505 River Road · Luling, LA 70070
(985) 785-6857, Ext. 20
Fax: (985) 785-6462
Email: Chesley@ampmstaffing.com
www.ampmstaffing.com

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VISIBILITY OF YOUR BUSINESS?**

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CARD!

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advertising opportunities!

2008 CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

*“Don’t wait. The time will never be just right.”
—Napoleon Hill*

January	10	Thursday	After Hours Networking Event	5:30pm - 7:00pm	St. James Parish TBA
	25	Friday	Annual Banquet	7:00pm - 10:00pm	Dougie V's Restaurant
February	13	Wednesday	Lunch & Learn	11:30am - 12:30pm	Chamber Office
	28	Thursday	Before Hours Networking Event	7:45am - 9:00am	St. John Parish TBA
March	7	Friday	New Member Orientation	8:30am - 10:00am	Chamber Office
	12	Wednesday	Lunch & Learn	11:30am - 12:30pm	Chamber Office
	18	Tuesday	Customer Service Seminar	12:00pm - 1:00pm	St. James Parish TBA
April	20	Thursday	General Membership Meeting	12:00pm - 1:30pm	TBD
	27	Thursday	After Hours Networking Event	5:30pm - 7:00pm	Quality Janitorial - St. Charles
	9	Wednesday	Lunch & Learn	11:30am - 12:30pm	Chamber Office
	17	Thursday	Parish Presidents' Forum	12:00pm - 1:30pm	Public Relations Bldg - Lutchter
	21	Monday	Golf Tournament	TBD	TBD
May	24	Thursday	Before Hours Networking Event	7:45am - 9:00am	St. James Parish Hospital
	9	Friday	Crawfish Boil & Super Raffle	5:30pm - 9:30pm	TBD
	14	Wednesday	Lunch & Learn	11:30am - 12:30pm	Chamber Office
	15	Thursday	U.S. Congressional Forum	12:00pm - 1:30pm	TBD
June	22	Thursday	After Hours Networking Event	5:30pm - 7:00pm	St. John Parish TBA
	6	Friday	New Member Orientation	8:30am - 10:00am	Chamber Office
	11	Wednesday	Lunch & Learn	11:30am - 12:30pm	Chamber Office
July	26	Thursday	Before Hours Networking Event	7:45am - 9:00am	Quality Janitorial - St. Charles
	8	Tuesday	Women In the Workplace Seminar	12:00pm - 1:00pm	LaMaison Magnolia—St. Charles
	9	Wednesday	Lunch & Learn	11:30am - 12:30pm	Chamber Office
	17	Thursday	State Legislative Forum	12:00pm - 1:30pm	TBD
August	24	Thursday	After Hours Networking Event	5:30pm - 7:00pm	St. James Parish TBA
	13	Wednesday	Lunch & Learn	11:30am - 12:30pm	Chamber Office
	28	Thursday	Before Hours Networking Event	7:45am - 9:00am	St. John Parish TBA
September	5	Friday	New Member Orientation	8:30am - 10:00am	Chamber Office
	10	Wednesday	Lunch & Learn	11:30am - 12:30pm	Chamber Office
	16	Tuesday	Education Summit	12:00pm—2:00pm	TBD
	25	Thursday	After Hours Networking Event	5:30pm - 7:00pm	St. Charles Parish TBD
October	8	Wednesday	Lunch & Learn	11:30am - 12:30pm	Chamber Office
	23	Thursday	Before Hours Networking Event	7:45am - 9:00am	St. James Parish TBA
	24 & 25	Fri. - Sat.	Business Expo	TBD	TBD
November	12	Wednesday	Lunch & Learn	11:30am - 12:30pm	Chamber Office
	13	Thursday	After Hours Networking Event	5:30pm - 7:00pm	St. John Parish TBD
	20	Thursday	Annual U.S. Chamber Update	12:00pm - 1:30pm	TBD
December	5	Friday	New Member Orientation	8:30am - 10:00am	Chamber Office
	10	Wednesday	Lunch & Learn	11:30am - 12:30pm	Chamber Office
	11	Thursday	Christmas Social	5:30pm - 7:30pm	St. Charles Parish TBD

Please visit our website, www.riverregionchamber.org, or call the office, 985-359-9777 to verify dates and times of events. Some events need to be RSVP'd to the Chamber office. In the event that you do reserve a space, cancellation must be made 72 hours prior to event for no billing.

*Thanks for your
contribution*



Valero St. Charles Refinery



301 W. Airline HWY
Suite 201
LaPlace, LA 70068

Phone: 985-359-9777
Fax: 985-359-9778

E-mail: info@riverregionchamber.org



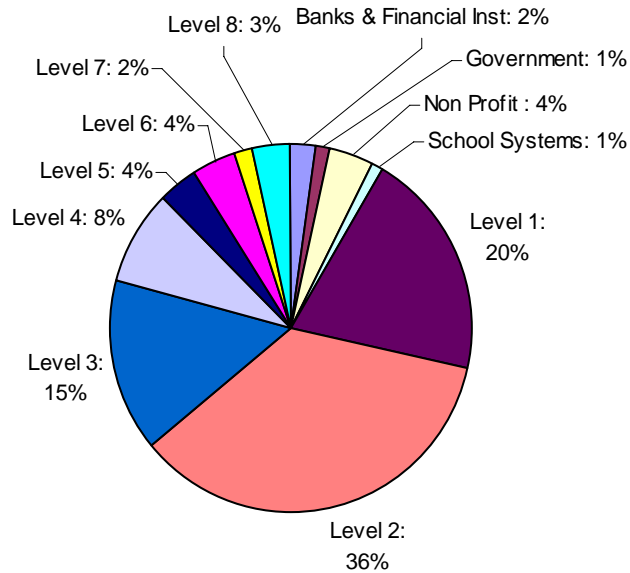
Our Mission -

The River Region Chamber of Commerce is the unified voice of business. Our commitment to our membership is to advocate a positive business climate to retain business, to enhance business success, growth, and future development.

We are THE "Voice"
of the River Region!
Come Grow with Us!



**2007 MEMBERS PER INVESTMENT LEVEL
277 TOTAL MEMBERS**



■ Banks & Financial Institutions	■ Government	□ Non Profit : \$200.00
□ Public School Systems	■ Level 1: \$175.00 (1 employee)	■ Level 2: \$200.00 (2 - 5 employees)
■ Level 3: \$300.00 (6 - 20 employees)	□ Level 4: \$400.00 (21 - 50 employees)	■ Level 5: \$600.00 (51 - 100 employees)
■ Level 6: \$900.00 (101 - 250 employees)	■ Level 7: \$1200.00 (251 - 500 employees)	■ Level 8: \$1200.00 (501 + employees)