

Madison County News Bulletin

Chamber of Commerce

(828) 689-9351

www.madisoncounty-nc.com

Winter 2009



Leading Notes

Hello, my name is Maxine Brown and I am the new president of the Madison

County Chamber of Commerce. I live in the Grapevine section of Madison County with my daughter who is a senior at Madison High School.

With the nation in its current economic recession, a new survey reveals that it is more important now than ever for small businesses to invest in chamber memberships. The study shows that 59% of consumers think that being active in a local chamber is an effective business strategy. One of the reasons to join the chamber is that our members as a whole can accomplish much more than if we all work independently of each other.

Special events, newsletters, business alerts, e-mails, and being a liaison with local and state government officials are just a few of the efforts that the Chamber offers its members. Being a Chamber member is more effective for communicating that a business is reputable.

I hope that even in these trying times you will be able to continue your membership in the Chamber. I would like to invite you to attend our Chamber Board Meetings on the first Tuesday of each month at 8:00 a.m. We meet at the Mashburn Medical Center in Marshall and we try to keep our meetings to an hour or less.

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From left to right: Larry Peek, Maxine Brown, Dan Gallagher, Mike Thornbill, Karen Stepniak, O'Neal Shelton, Arlene Poff, Robert Pierce, Steven Subera, Betty Hurst, Doug Mackenzie, and Jerry Plenmons. Inset shows Don Miller.

Welcome New Board Members

The Madison County Chamber of Commerce would like to welcome several new board members to our team. Don Miller, (WNC Inspections), Arlene Poff (JobLink Career Center), Karen Stepniak (Moochies Restaurant), Robert Pierce and Steven Subera (105 Main Street Bed & Breakfast), and Rita Ramsey

(Asheville Savings Bank).

We are looking forward to growing businesses, building friendships, and supporting tourism in Madison County.

Monthly board meetings are open to all Chamber members. Contact us with your ideas — help is always needed!



Madison County Business Directories and Visitors Guides are available at the I-26 Welcome Center and at the Visitor's Center in Mars Hill where they are included in mailings to individuals interested in relocating to Madison County.

The directory includes more than 200 small business enterprises, service people, and individuals. Madison County Chamber of Commerce members represent the diversity and strength of our business economy across the county. We encourage everyone to use this directory — you'll not only be supporting local businesses, you'll be joining us as friends and neighbors.

You can help distribute the directory! Call 680-9546 and let us know how many copies you would like delivered to your location. Directories are needed at area shops and offices. The Chamber has also published a Visitors Guide, which contains accommodations, attractions, recreation, shopping, restaurants and camping information for visitors to our area.



Business After Hours in Madison

Attendance at our Business After Hours events has been great, and more people are expected at future gatherings. If you are interested in hosting a Chamber event please contact Claudia Reavis at 689-9351.



O'Neal Shelton and Mary Eagle (Bridgeback Movement Studio) at the After Hours event bosted by the News Record and Sentinel.



Robert Pierce, Steven Subera, and Betty Hurst at the Very Small Business Center.

Upcoming After Hours Events

March 2009

1867 Confederation Log Homes
Bill Sites – Marshall, NC

April 2009

Fiddlestix
Linda Scoggin – Mars Hill, NC

Chamber Board Meetings

Madison County Chamber of Commerce Board Meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month. Meetings begin at 8am at the Mashburn Medical Center in Marshall. All interested parties are encouraged to attend.

Upcoming Meetings:

Tuesday, March 3, 2009
Tuesday, April 7, 2009
Tuesday, May 5, 2009

Chamber Officers 2008-2009

Maxine Brown - President
Don Miller - Vice President
Larry Peek - Treasurer
Simone Bouyer - Secretary

Madison High Students Awarded 1st Place in Forensic Competition

In April, 2008, students from Madison High School HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America) attended the State Convention in Greensboro. Wilma Metcalf and Tiffany Bass placed first in the state in Forensic Medicine, Kayla Norton placed second in Health Care Concepts, Tiffany Proffitt placed second in Human Growth and Development and Heath Treadway placed in the top ten in Sports Medicine.

The national competition takes the top three from each state in each competition, so the work had just begun for these top three winners. The students had eight weeks to raise almost \$8,000, prepare for their competition, and to travel to Dallas, Texas. But, their hard work paid off!

On July 17, 2008, the students, along with their advisor, Kathy Mackey, left for Dallas, Texas to attend the 31st annual National HOSA Leadership Conference. Wilma Metcalf and Tiffany

Bass were awarded first place in the nation in Forensic Medicine.

The first round of their competition included a 50 question test, after which, only 20 teams were selected to move on to the second round. In the second round, however, the teams were given a scenario which included analyzing a body and crime scene, interviewing a witness, reading and analyzing an autopsy and police report in order to collect information about the crime.

The teams were then asked, based on the evidence they had seen and read, to figure out the time, cause, and manner of death of the victim in a written report. Each of these areas had to be heavily and accurately supported with the evidence and knowledge they collected during the investigation.

Metcalf and Bass were the first to bring home a state and national championship to Madison High School HOSA, but will most certainly not be the last.

Literacy Council Program to Begin in Madison County

*from Erin Krauss,
Literacy Council PR Coordinator*

The Literacy Council will be starting a pilot program in Madison Co., in partnership with the public library system and other community members. This program will provide adult literacy tutoring to local residents who need help with reading.

The service will provide free tutoring to adults, twice a week for one hour at a time. A student can be anyone from someone who never completed school, to someone who has a high school degree but still has trouble reading.

We need help to find potential volunteer tutors who would be willing to be trained to teach. We provide a comprehensive training and all materials for tutors. We are currently planning a volunteer-training, in Madison County, on the following dates: February 16, 18 and 21 (all required).

Make Literacy Happen! For more information, please contact Erin Krauss, Volunteer and Public Relations Coordinator, Literacy Council of Buncombe County (828) 254-3442. Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

New Business in Hot Springs

Pete Nagle, owner of the Mountain Magnolia is looking to the future as he prepares to open Iron Horse Station, a coffee shop, art gallery, bar and restaurant, and inn.

Located between the police department and fire station in downtown Hot Springs, one side of the 2-building structure was the old movie theater. Another section was once a hardware store, with a boarding house upstairs.

Nagle hopes to create a casual and animated place for people to eat, drink and have fun. The 14 rooms upstairs have been renovated but still maintain a warm feeling of a small inn, with hardwood floors, a pressed tin ceiling, and skylights.

Nagle and his wife, Karen, are operating the establishment and plan to be open by January 30.

Welcome New Chamber Members

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**Madison County
Chamber of Commerce**

828 689-9351
PO Box 1085, Mars Hill, NC 28754
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Leading Notes continued from page 1

I would also like to invite each of you to join us for Business After Hours at the Asheville Regional Airport on February 26, 2009 from 3 P.M. until 6 P.M. This will be the first four chamber (Madison, Henderson, Haywood and Buncombe) event ever. Asheville Regional Airport wants to show off their \$17 million investment.

Please don't hesitate to contact our office in Mars Hill at 689-9351 with questions, comments or suggestions.

*Maxine Brown, President
Madison County Chamber
of Commerce*

2009 Economic Development Tier Rankings

N.C. Commerce Secretary Jim Fain announced county tier designations for 2009. "The tier designations help ensure that our less prosperous counties have the tools they need to attract businesses to their communities," Fain said. "Our goal is to enhance economic opportunities statewide to enable all of our residents to find sustainable, well-paying jobs."

The Department of Commerce assembles statistics for each of North Carolina's 100 counties and assigns a tier designation ranking, with Tier 1 being the most economically distressed and Tier 3 being the least. Businesses that locate in lower-tiered counties are eligible for larger tax credits.

Tier designations determine the available amount of tax credits for job creation and business property investment.

All eligible companies are required to offer employees health insurance and pay at least 50 percent of the premiums, cannot owe back taxes and cannot have received a significant environmental violation notice. Tier 2 and Tier 3 counties, companies must also meet a wage test.

Madison County has received a Tier 2 designation – \$5,000 tax credit per new job with a requirement to create at least 10 jobs, and a 5 percent tax credit for eligible business property expenditures of more than \$1 million.

Hot Springs Health Program and Mission Health System

from Robert Ford PhD, Executive Director, Hot Springs Health Program

Recently the Hot Springs Health Program and Mission Health signed a formal affiliation agreement. I will expand a little bit on what this might mean for the residents of Madison County.

Our discussions with the leadership at Mission began with our plans to replace the Mars Hill facility. The question that we posed to ourselves was, 'if we are building a facility to serve patients for the next several decades, how does it need to be different than our current facility?'

As we pondered this question, we asked Mission if they might be interested in joining us in that project with the concept that they could bring to the county services which patients currently have to go to Asheville to obtain. These services might include imaging services, rehabilitation services, specialty physician services and so forth.

The affiliation agreement formalizes the process of how we might collaborate to the benefit of both organizations, but more importantly how we might

better serve patients together. Mission and Hot Springs are also likely to discuss ways to bolster primary care in Mission's service area.

Mission has significant concerns about the growing shortage of primary care physicians in the region and has been very complimentary of Hot Springs as a successful model of recruiting and retaining excellent talent, and delivering high quality primary care.

Our organizations view progress on this objective as good for all members of the community, but here's an example of how it might benefit Madison County residents.

Patients who cannot get into a primary care provider typically end up going to the emergency room at some point. Mission's statistics indicate that nearly forty percent of their ER visits could really be addressed in a primary care setting.

As Mission's ER nears saturation, it may mean when you have a true emergency you may be delayed or diverted from the ER if it is beyond capacity. So our common goal is to create opportunities for

patients to obtain care at an appropriate level of care.

Mission's statistics show that Madison County residents have low use rates in the ER for primary care issues, so we plan to see what's working and how to put that in place in higher use regions. Looking longer-term, Mission's leadership has a vision of working collaboratively with many organizations across the region to see where there are deficits in care and to regionalize the delivery system to both decrease cost and improve quality.

Personally, I think their vision is a compelling one but not easily achieved. Health care organizations in many areas where I have worked tend to compete more than collaborate, but I cannot say that this has been in the best interest of patients.

Collaborating has risks, but if we are going to get serious about improving aspects of health care that need to be fixed, we will have to explore some new directions. I view this affiliation agreement as one step in that direction.

Welcome New Chamber Members

Hugo H. Hanson II CPA P.C.

Hugo Hanson
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Town of Marshall Parks and Recreation Plan for Blannerhassett Island

The Town of Marshall is applying to The Parks and Recreation Trust Fund for a 50/50 matching grant. The funding will go toward the creation of a park on Blannerhassett Island. The goal of this project is to create a space that encourages the community to gather on a daily bases. Labor is accepted as an in-kind trade toward the match, but building materials, other grants, and local donations are.

The first phase of the park will be located on the Towns portion of the Island (the downstream half). The ball field will remain a key component of the park, and the dugouts will undergo a facelift.

An amphitheatre will be centered against the sewage treatment plant and landscaped with 12 foot Leland cypress



to help mask said facility. The ball field, when not in use, will serve as the seating area for the performances.

Two covered picnic shelters will be placed close to the Town-County property lines, at the far ends of the ball field's left and right fowl lines. There will be an 18'x18' cantilevered platform on the south riverbank that could be used to fish from. There will be two youth oriented outdoor fitness activity centers placed near the picnic shelters.

There will also be the creation of additional open picnic areas along the trail. The Farmers Market will be supported in their use of the new facilities. The trail will be enhanced

and extended to allow for easy ADA access to the new areas. Educational signage will be placed along the trail.

If you could, would your group support this project monetarily or with in-kind trade of donated materials? If so, please contact Doug Mackenzie, (828)649-9524, dament2@verivon.net



Hannah Roberts

Recipient of the 2008 Chamber of Commerce Scholarship

Hannah Roberts, recipient of the 2008 Chamber of Commerce Scholarship is known for her even-keeled, hard working nature. Hannah, who is now hard at work at UNC Charlotte, was a very highly recommended scholarship recipient. She received accolades from her teachers, neighbors, and counselors for her interest in learning, her strong work ethic, and commitment to her community.

Inspired by the willingness she saw in Madison County neighbors to help one another, Hannah was President of the Madison High Community Service Club, participated in the Operation InAsMuch project, and worked with the Housing Coalition of Madison County to

bring housing to the disabled.

During this time she maintained an outstanding GPA and class ranking, served in FFA (Future Farmers of America) and FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes), and worked part-time. References spoke repeatedly of Hannah's willingness and interest in engaging in the learning process.

Says Hannah "School is going really well. I currently have two majors: Communications and International Studies. I also have a minor in Women's and Gender's Studies. I am in the University Honors Program. I am enjoying school very much and I appreciate being chosen as the recipient of this scholarship. Thank you so much."

A neighbor said that even as a child helping pick up leaves in the tobacco field, Hannah was always "turning over rocks." It is our honor to provide assistance to this outstanding young lady as she continues to learn, feeling assured that she will use her education and experiences to help not only herself but others along the way.

Those interested in supporting Madison High School graduates continuing on to higher education may do so by contributing to the Madison County Chamber of Commerce Scholarship Fund. Please mail checks to the Chamber of Commerce, PO Box 1085, Mars Hill, NC 28754 or call 828-689-9351 for more information.

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Madison County Chamber of Commerce

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Help Sponsor a WWI Veteran to Visit the Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Last November, the Rotary Club of Madison County sponsored eight Madison County World War II Veterans on an Honor Air flight to the WWII Memorial in Washington, D.C. with the help of contributions from various groups in Madison County. We would like to sponsor another 3 veterans for the Spring flight. The cost is \$400 per veteran and any amount toward that total will help sponsor these men on the flight.

Honor Air provides Veterans a one-day visit to Washington, D.C. by chartered aircraft from Asheville Airport to Reagan Washington National Airport. Then, the Veterans board motor coaches

and travel to the Washington Mall to tour the World War II Memorial and enjoy a box lunch. There is also an opportunity to tour the Korean War Veterans, Vietnam Veterans, and Iwo Jima Memorials.

If time permits, a short visit or slow, respectful coach tour of Arlington National Cemetery is included before their return to Reagan Airport.

Sixteen million served in World War II. Now there's probably just a little more than 3 million alive. They're dying at a rate of anywhere from 1,200 to 1,500 a day. The 400,000 who died in World War II will never see the World War II Memorial which didn't open until 2004 – that was 59 years after the war ended.

If you and your business would like to send a donation, please make the check payable to the Rotary Club of Madison County and mail it to PO Box 141, Mars Hill 28754 and note that it is for the Honor Air Fund.

If you have any questions, please call Sandy Stevenson at 689-9997 or O'Neal Shelton at 712-4966.