

# Bonita Springs Area Chamber Of Commerce ANNUAL REPORT

October 1, 2005 - September 30, 2006



Once again, The Bonita Springs Area Chamber of Commerce has a lot to celebrate as we close this year. Even though there were challenges, our staff, Board of Directors, volunteers, and our members worked hard for what was accomplished.

The renovation of the Visitor's Center was a major highlight for this past year. We now have the News Press Hospitality Center and the Schumann Law Group Business Center, both of which have enhanced the lobby. Our members who advertise in our facility have been pleased with the upgraded ads available for marketing their businesses. Additionally, the Board Room was completed refurbished with new furniture, carpet, and technology. It is now available for rent exclusively to our members for group meetings and seminars.

During this past year we launched several new programs which have been very successful. The Bonita Estero Market Watch and the Power Networking Luncheon were introduced, and both were sold out events. We also entered into an agreement with NationJob, a national recruitment firm, to assist businesses in hiring employees.

The Government Affairs Committee did an enormous amount of work behind the scenes with many other groups, and was successful in encouraging continued dialogue with the developer on the Imperial Landing Project. They also spent a lot of time using their professional expertise to review ordinances that impact business. The Transportation Committee worked hard on the Coconut Road Interchange and the Three Oaks/Imperial Parkway. We are grateful to both of these committees for all they did, and continue to do, for our Chamber.

Finally, Nancy Keefer, Chamber President, earned the designation of Certified Chamber Executive, and was recognized at the American Chamber of Commerce Executives in Cleveland, Ohio in August. Nancy is one of only seven in the state of Florida who has this designation, and we congratulate her on her achievement. Her dedication to her profession is evidenced by her leadership and the successes of our organization.

Our new Chairman of The Board is Doug Congress who has already demonstrated his ability to be a successful leader. We are fortunate to have Doug at the helm next year, and I am confident we will have another banner year under his leadership.

In closing, I would like to thank all of you for making this a wonderful year for me. It was truly an honor to serve as your Chairman, and I look forward to continued involvement with our Chamber.

Diane Lepola  
*Morgan Stanley*

## OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Networking

A total of 2157 people attended Business After Hours Receptions. A joint reception was held with the SW Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce in June attracting approximately 70 people.

A total of 280 people attended Business Before Business Receptions.

The Meet the President's Club Reception resulted in 12 new members to the President's Club. 90 members attended the reception with a recruitment rate of 57% of prospects joining that evening.

Hosted a President's Club Social at JoAnne's House with 87 members attending the event.



Power Networking Luncheons provide "speed networking" for members

Both Power Networking Events were sellout events with 90 members participating in each event.

### Promotional Opportunities/Exposure

The *Beautiful Bonita Magazine* was developed and delivered to the Chamber in February.

The *Bonita Business News* publication has been produced and mailed monthly to 10,000 business owners in the Bonita Springs, North Naples and Estero markets.

The *Chamber Focus* has been produced and mailed monthly to over 1600 members and community leaders.

*Invest for Success* partners totaled \$113,500 for the 2005-06 program year.

Lobby Advertising has generated \$78,000 in revenue for the new Visitors Center Lobby.

The *Market for Success* and *Sponsorship for Success* brochures have been produced and distributed throughout the year to the Membership.

The Website has generated 129,450 unique visitors to the site and had over one million hits, (1,092,288) since October 1.

### Business/Education Partnerships

A Career Fair was held on February 22 with 33 businesses participating in the event.



Students talk to area businesses and organizations at Career Fair.

Three breakfasts have been held with the Principals of our local schools.

Eight applications were received for High School scholarships. \$5,000 was awarded to high school students on May 4 at an Awards Ceremony.

 **Bonita Springs Area  
Chamber Of Commerce**



# OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

An \$800 scholarship was provided to a student at FGCU through the Chamber's Endowment Fund at FGCU.

The Ralph A. Richardson Endowment Fund currently totals \$114,251.

Hosted a New Teacher Reception in August for teachers new to Bonita Springs schools.

Conducted the first Supply Drive to support local schools generating over \$3000 in supplies.

## Community/Public Affairs

Took an active role in the Coconut Road Interchange issue by presenting testimony to the Lee County MPO, meeting with various elected officials and distributing petitions for support of the Study. Continue to monitor MPO meetings on this issue.

Presented Position Papers and/or comments to the City Council on the following; The Noise Ordinance, International Property Maintenance Code, Coconut Road Interchange, Downtown Re-Development and the DRGR Study.

Actively participated in the Re-development of Imperial Landing through notices to members, petitions, presentations of position and meetings with elected officials. The Chamber's participation along with other key groups, helped to change the original vote and assured continued talks with developer on project.

Produced and distributed a questionnaire addressing business issues with all candidates for City Council.

Hosted a Candidate's Forum for City Council elections.

Participated in the Annual Lee County Days in Tallahassee to present information to our State elected officials on issues such as affordable housing, disaster relief, environmental concerns and constitutional amendment reform.



*Chamber leadership visits the Capital in Tallahassee during Lee County Days in Tallahassee*

Monitored all City Council and Lee County Commission meetings to keep aware of any pending issues for the business community.

Presented our *Where We Stand Document* to the newly elected City Council members and introduced them to our Chairman of the Board and Government Affairs Chair.

Coordinated a presentation on the DRGR study with local expert Tom Missimer.

## Tourism/Economic Development

Hosted a tourism networking event and literature exchange for members of the hospitality industry in February. 32 members participated in this event.

Regularly attended the meetings of the Tourist Development Council.

Attended a Student Orientation Program at FGCU in November, distributing over 500 welcome packets to incoming students and parents.

Updated our area demographics flyers for distribution.

Developed the Schumann Law Group Business Center at the Chamber as part of the renovations to the Visitors Center.

Completed the renovations of the new Visitors Center to include new brochure distribution, central visitors station, new photography, technology and promotional opportunities for members.



*New Visitors Center is a highlight of the year*

The Gift Certificate Program has generated nearly \$60,000 in sold certificates since October 1. Currently 124 members participate in accepting the certificates.

Developed a partnership with *NationJob* to produce a national search network for local jobs to be hosted through the Chamber's website.

## Training/Leadership Development

Provided information on community issues through our *Good Morning Bonita Breakfasts* with speakers Dr. James Browder, Lee County School Superintendent, Commissioner Ray Judah, The Lee County Sheriff's office and the South Florida Water Management District. Approximately 250 members attended these events.

Hosted Tom Monaghan, Founder of Domino's Pizza and Founder of Ave Maria University as the featured speaker during Small Business Week. Over 250 people attended the luncheon.

Hosted Issues Roundtable programs on Health Care Options, Working From Home, Workforce Needs and Hurricane Preparation.

Provided a series of workshops during Small Business Week on topics such as *Building a Culture of Customer Service*; *Would You Buy From You?*; *Marketing with the Wizard of Oz*; *Networking Techniques*; *Coaching and Getting To Know You and Others (Disc Exercise)*.

Coordinated the Leadership Bonita Program with 33 class members participating. Participants heard from more than 84 speakers and took 20 tours of local facilities as part of the program. Graduated the sixth class of Leadership Bonita bringing the alumni to more than 180.

Provided the Leadership Bonita Alumni with re-fresher programs on Social Issues and the Environment.

Hosted the Community in a Day Program, a one day program based on Leadership Bonita topics, with 23 community leaders attending.



*Members take part in networking exercise as part of Community in a Day Orientation*

Hosted an Alumni Reception in August at IronStone Bank.

Hosted dialogue sessions through the Technology Task Force on Disaster Planning for Information Technology and Spyware, Spam and Virus issues.

Hosted an Employee Workshop Series on Gain, Train and Retain with an average of 25 participants to the 3 separate workshops.

## Membership Development & Retention

Completed the year with over 1300 members.

Recruited over 81 members during a three-week membership drive and a total of 252 new members to the Chamber this year.

Conducted Four New Member Receptions with over 200 new members attending.

Hosted 70 Ribbon Cutting ceremonies for new businesses to the area.



*Ribbon Cuttings are held weekly for new businesses in the area*

## Special Events

Coordinated the Annual Holiday Boat Parade with 13 of boats participating.

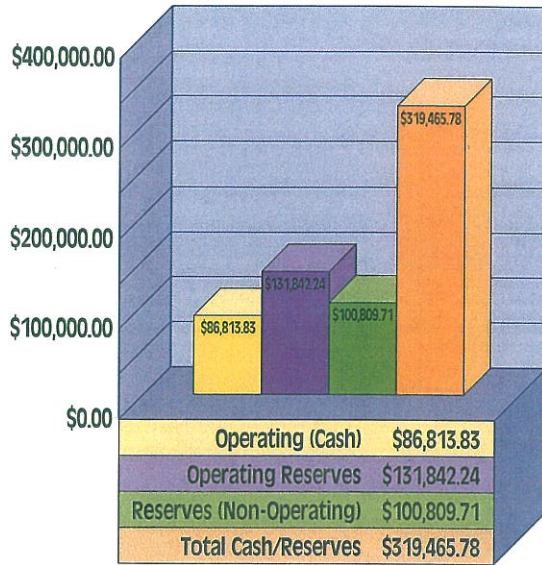
Hosted the Annual Chairman's Gala in October with an attendance of 340. Awards were presented to Business of the Year- Small and Large; Director of the Year and Citizen of the Year.

Coordinated the Holiday Event in December with 300 people attending. 46 businesses sponsored Trees and Wreaths that were auctioned off to the attendees and toys were collected for the Bonita Assistance office.

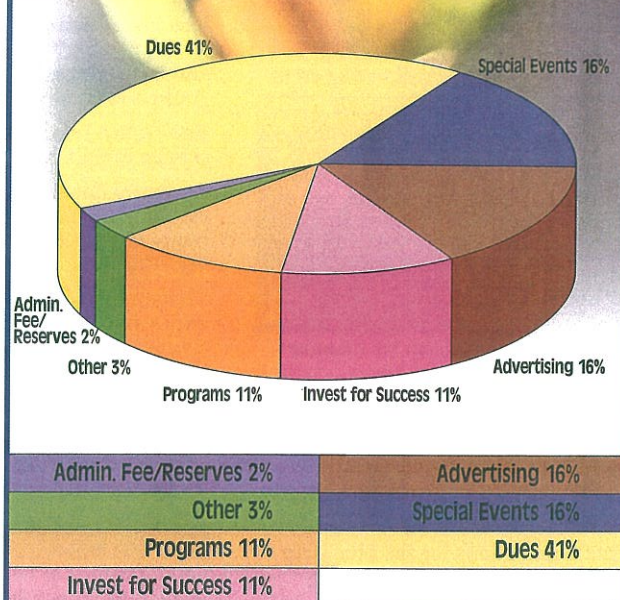


# CHAMBER DEMOGRAPHICS

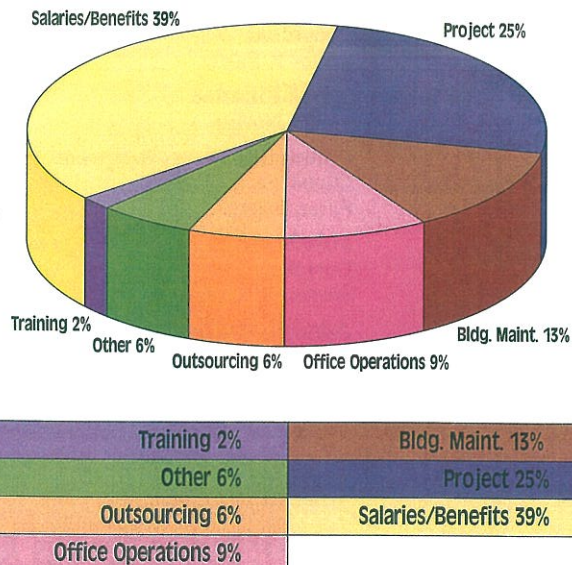
## Cash/Reserve Status of Chamber



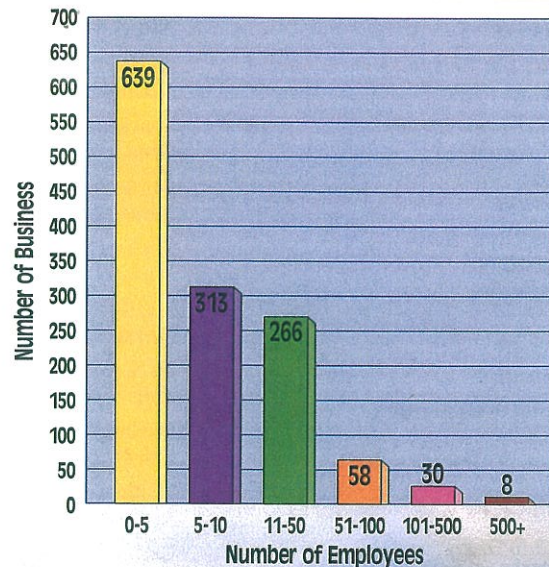
## Budget by Revenues



## Budget by Expenses



## Membership by Size of Business



Projected Year-End Revenues: \$1,004,511; Projected Year-End Expenses: \$995,099  
 Projected Year End Membership: 1300 Members

## The Mission of the Bonita Springs Area Chamber of Commerce is to:

- Serve our members
- Promote an environment where business can grow and prosper
- Enhance the quality of life of the Bonita Springs area



### Accomplishments Continued

Conducted a Prospect's Reception in March to kick-off the Membership Drive. 41 New Members joined the evening of the reception.

Produced the President's Club Annual Auction with a sell-out crowd of 220 attendees. Over \$60,000 was raised during this event.

Worked with the Bonita Estero Association of Realtors on the first Market Watch Event for our area. The event sold out with 223 attendees.

Held a Golf Tournament with over 136 players participating in the golf outing event.



A day on the golf course during the Chamber's annual Golf Tournament

### Awards/Recognition

Recognized *Paws, Claws and Tails* as the Small Business of the Year in May during Small Business Week. Also recognized 6 other nominees and finalists.

Encouraged nominations for the Blue Chip Enterprise Award program sponsored by Oswald, Trippe & Company.

Presented *The News-Press* with the Member of the Year, Large Business; *Russell's Clambakes* with the Member of the Year, Small Business and Dr. Owen Feeney, *Bonita Estero Dental Group* with Director of the Year at the Annual Gala.

Top Recruiter of the Year, Betsy Vincent, *Colonial Bank* and Ambassador of the Year, Janie Shirley, *Costco Wholesale*, were recognized at the Annual Meeting for the 2004-2005 program year.

Recognized Karen Tarpin, *Paychex*, Angelika Langen, *First American Bank*, and Kate Kintz, *Toucan Grille* as Ambassadors of the Quarter.

Recognized Jessica Novins for 10 years of service to the Chamber.

Presented donations to *JoAnne's House*, *Bonita Rotary Club* and Relay for Life in honor of Pat Lord's service to our organization.

Chamber President, Nancy Keefer received national certification as a Certified Chamber Executive (CCE). She is only the seventh CCE in the State of Florida.



Small Business of the Year Award winners and nominees recognized at annual luncheon

The Chamber was recognized as one of the top five in the Nation in a leadership survey conducted by 9 G's Enterprises as part of the American Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE) Conference in August. The Chamber was ranked #1 in Government Advocacy amongst 200 chambers across the United States.

### Organizational

Hired two additional employees to the staff at the Chamber. Positions hired included a Membership Account Representative and an Accounting Assistant.

Reviewed the Chamber's Policy Manual and developed an employee recognition program for the Chamber.

Conducted two membership wide surveys on the business climate and internal operations of the Chamber.

Completed renovations to the staff offices and work areas as part of the relocation of the Visitors Center volunteers to the new lobby reception area.

The Foundation Board, as the landlord to the Chamber, made significant contributions to the Chamber building. The building was re-painted, additional lighting was provided in the front and back of the building and roof repairs were made as a result of the hurricanes. In addition, the Foundation Board supported the Chamber's renovations of the lobby and Board Room and the addition of a new sign for the building.

Rented the Board room to 9 different members for a total of 24 rentals.

## Bonita Springs Area Chamber Of Commerce Board of Directors 2005-06

### Executive Board

#### Chairman of the Board

Diane Lepola  
*Morgan Stanley*

#### First Vice Chairman

Doug Congress  
*Congress Jewelers*

#### Second Vice Chairman

Darren Robertshaw  
*Trianon Bonita Bay*

#### Treasurer

Joel Whittenhall  
*Individual Member*

#### Immediate Past Chairman

Ray Faubion  
*Oswald Trippe & Company, Inc.*

#### Vice Chairmen

Sabra Cecil  
*The Bonita Bay Group*

Brian Farrar  
*The Ronto Group*

Owen Feeney, D.M.D.  
*Bonita Estero Dental Group*

Dr. Ed O'Neill  
*Bonita Chiropractic Center*

Raymond Schumann  
*Schumann Law Group, P.A.*

### Board of Directors

Ed Ballesteros  
*Balsakhan, LLC*

James Dati  
*Bond, Schoeneck & King, P.A.*

Dr. Beth Hagan  
*Associates in Entrepreneurship Education*

Michael Kennedy  
*Michael Kennedy & Associates*

Lee Knapp  
*Knapp Consultants, Inc.*

Dr. Robert Klausner  
*Robert D. Klausner, MD*

Harlan Parrish  
*Colonial Bank*

William Price  
*McGarvey Development Company*

Cathy Reiman  
*Roetzel & Andress, PA*

Marjorie Rubacky  
*Individual Member*

Sheila Seacat  
*Key Private Bank*

William Shikany  
*Shikany's Bonita Funeral Home*

G. Donald Thomson  
*Henderson, Franklin, Starnes & Holt, P.A.*

Joe Vancura  
*J&L Golf*

### Administrative Staff

#### President

Nancy P. Keefer

#### VP of Finance

Jessica Novins

#### Communications & Special Events Director

Karen Brown

#### Membership Account Representatives

Dort Bear  
Stephanie Kissinger

#### Administrative Assistant

Geraldine Pessolano

#### Business Assistant

Carolyn Reinecke



**Bonita Springs Area  
Chamber Of Commerce**

25071 Chamber of Commerce Drive

Bonita Springs, FL 34135

(239) 992-2943 Fax: (239) 992-5011

Toll Free: 800-226-2943

[www.BonitaSpringsChamber.com](http://www.BonitaSpringsChamber.com)

[info@BonitaSpringsChamber.com](mailto:info@BonitaSpringsChamber.com)

