



Area Chamber of Commerce

From the President



Jerry Miller

2005 Annual Report

A challenging year for the Lake Wales Area Chamber of Commerce, 2005 also offered many opportunities to

celebrate excellence and to build a brighter future for all of us who live and work within the Lake Wales area.

Celebrating Excellence

The 2005 Annual Meeting & Dinner gave us a chance to remember how much can be accomplished by working together—and to celebrate those who demonstrate excellence each day through community service, including Rob Quam, named *2005 Citizen of the Year*, and Clinton Home, *Leadership Award* recipient.

Later in the year, we watched our Lake Wales girls compete with the best to win the Junior Girls Softball League *World Series*. The Chamber organized a homecoming parade to celebrate the victory our junior girls *achieved as a team* and to recognize each player and coach for demonstrating a level of personal excellence—on and off the field—that we will long remember.

Improving Professional Leadership

Following the resignation of our Executive Director in June, the Board took advantage of that opportunity to make fundamental personnel and programming changes that we believe will lay the foundation for a more effective organization—prepared to meet the needs of our members and the greater Lake Wales community for many years to come.

During 2005, the Board determined the personal qualities and level of professional experience the next Executive Director should bring to the position. They charged

Mission: To promote and enhance a strong business climate while supporting a desirable quality of life in the greater Lake Wales, FL area.

2006 - 2010 Strategic Plan

Introduction

Quality growth seldom happens by accident. It requires an effective growth plan, built on shared values and a shared vision. Prepared to meet this challenge for the organization—and to assist in community planning initiatives—the Board of Directors of the Lake Wales Area Chamber of Commerce has developed the following strategic goals and a five-year implementation plan to guide and encourage cooperative and collaborative action to achieve desired results:

- ⇒ **Build a stronger, more effective, innovative, and relevant organization.**
- ⇒ **Promote the growth of quality business operations, improve the climate for business, and support sustainable economic development.**
- ⇒ **Enhance the quality of life afforded to all who live, work, and play within the Lake Wales community.**
- ⇒ **Develop strong public - private partnerships, improve communication, provide increased business advocacy, and recognize excellence in government service.**

While these goals are far-reaching, they are attainable – by involving the entire organization in the planning process and annually focusing on the initiatives that will improve operations, engage members and the community, and build a stronger, more viable economy to benefit Lakes Wales area businesses and residents.
(Continued on Page 4)

their Search Committee with finding the most qualified candidate to help the Board achieve its goals for the Chamber.

While some planned programs and all major fund-raising activities were placed on hold as we focused on the search for a new Executive Director, we are grateful to our members, who continued their support, and to our Executive Assistant, Tonya Royal, who served as interim Director during this period. She successfully managed the day-to-day activities of the Chamber, assisted the Board, worked with committee volunteers, and increased communication with our members.

In August, after an extensive search, the Board voted unanimously to offer the position to Betty Wojcik. A Certified Economic Developer, Betty has an

exceptional record of success and more than 30 years experience as the executive of local and regional chambers of commerce and community development organizations in both Georgia and Illinois.

During September, Betty settled into her new position and, by the end of the month, she and her husband, Bill, had completed their move to Lake Wales. By the end of the year, she had become a very active, involved member of our community. Under her professional leadership, we have made significant progress—improving operations, while developing a strategic plan to guide our efforts over the next five years and a comprehensive program for 2006, to benefit our members and the Lake Wales community in the months and years ahead.

(Continued on page 2)

2005 Board of Directors

President

Jerry Miller
Progress Energy

Immediate Past President

Betty Hill
Florida Skydiving Center

Vice - Presidents Business Development

Roger Ingley
Bunting, Tripp & Ingley

Education

Julie Seay
Coldwell Banker Ridge Properties

Leadership

Pat Brewer
Citizens Bank & Trust

Membership

Clinton Horne
Roosevelt Social & Recreation Club, Inc.

Treasurer

James Armstrong
Kohl & Company

Directors

John Adkinson, Citizens Bank & Trust

Tracy Bryant, Rinker Materials

John Corbett, CenterState Bank

Frank Hunt, III, Hunt Brothers, Inc.

Dan McCullough, Citizens Bank & Trust

Laura Motis, Lake Wales Family YMCA

Robert D. Shields, Florida's Natural Growers

Robert Sullivan, Historic Bok Sanctuary

Wendy Warman-Redmon, SmarTalkers

Staff

Executive Director

Betty Wojcik, CECD

Executive Assistant

Tonya Royal

Administrative Assistant & Welcome Center Hostess

Cindy Nowlin

Lake Wales Area
Chamber of Commerce
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Improving Facilities, Equipment, and Technology

During 2005, the Board of Directors secured a low-interest SBA loan to repair and improve the Chamber's building and grounds and replace damaged equipment. In addition to completing the roof replacement project begun in 2004, we have cleaned and painted the building, improved the landscaping, replaced office furniture, added interior storage space, and replaced and upgraded much of the Chamber's office equipment and software to better serve our members and to present a more attractive and professional "front door" to the Lake Wales community.

Promoting Member Businesses and the Community

The Chamber also improved its ability to promote its members and the community by redesigning and launching a new web site during 2005. The online community events calendar is an excellent resource for all Lake Wales organizations, area residents, and visitors; and the flash technology, extensive community information, and interactive member directory has generated many compliments from the more than 50,000 on-line visitors to the Chamber's web site last year. Broadcast e-mail notices were also used extensively during 2005 to help members distribute information about upcoming events and promotions.

Chamber staff also provided assistance and promoted member firms and organizations to thousands of area visitors and residents through its Welcome Center. Many members benefited from the opportunity to display and distribute promotional brochures using the special racks provided for that purpose in the reception area. In addition, the 2005-2006 Lake Wales Area Chamber of Commerce Member Directory was published early in the year and included in all information packets mailed in response to phone and e-mail requests. Directory inserts were consistently updated to include members who joined the Chamber following the Directory's publication.

Increasing Communication

Increasing communication with our members and the Lake Wales area community was a priority during 2005.

Through online newsletters, broadcast e-mail notices, and surveys, we have kept members apprised of upcoming events and special promotions, reported progress, and gathered information—both quickly and cost-effectively.

During 2005, the Board of Directors also accepted an offer from The Ledger to publish and distribute a new Chamber newsletter monthly to all area residents, beginning in February 2006. The *Lake Wales Belltower*, to be edited and largely written by Chamber staff, will feature a calendar of upcoming events, keep area residents and businesses informed about community programs, and give the Chamber an opportunity to highlight member activities and area developments.

Ten Business-After-Hours receptions and a Breakfast-Before-Business event hosted by member firms, six membership luncheon meetings, the 2005 Golf Classic, and the 2005 Annual Meeting and Dinner, provided many opportunities for Chamber members to build stronger business relationships and for the Chamber to keep its members informed.

In addition, the Chamber's Ambassadors program was reactivated during the last few months of 2005. Ambassadors welcomed new businesses into the community, delivered information and new member packets, attended ribbon-cutting ceremonies, welcomed members at Business-After-Hours receptions, and assisted staff at luncheon meetings. These important Chamber representatives also initiated plans to survey members to gather information the Chamber will use to develop and conduct programs designed to meet the needs of its members throughout 2006.

Building Stronger Partnerships

Representing the Chamber at public meetings, community events, and on regional boards and commissions, members of the Lake Wales Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors kept the organization informed and recognized that building stronger community relationships and regional partnerships should also be a priority for the Chamber's new Executive Director in 2005.

In her first four months on the job, she has made excellent progress—meeting

Chamber members, participating in ribbon-cutting ceremonies and grand-opening receptions, and attending fundraising events for the Arts Center, the Care Center, the Literacy Council, and Historic Bok Sanctuary; attending a Little Theatre production and the Warner College *Sounds of the Season* concert; becoming an active member of the Rotary Club of Lake Wales; serving on the Mainstreet Board of Directors, promoting their activities and those of It's Happening Downtown, and participating in Unity in Community events; attending Literacy Coalition and City and County Commission meetings; serving on the Polk Vision Private Sector Leadership Committee; becoming a member of the East Polk Committee of 100 Board of Directors and attending their annual meeting; attending the Tampa Bay Partnership Annual Meeting as a guest of the Central Florida Development Council; meeting monthly with the Lake Wales City Manager; working cooperatively with the City's Economic Development Manager and the Lake Wales Vision steering committee; and learning more about the Lake Wales Area as a member of Leadership Lake Wales Class X.

We are also most grateful to those membership partners who supported the Chamber's activities and programs financially — over and above their annual membership dues investments — through their sponsorship and their participation.

Supporting Quality Education

Members of the Lake Wales Area Chamber of Commerce understand how important it is to support quality educational programs. During 2005, the Chamber's Education Committee encouraged greater communication and cooperation between members of the business and educational communities; conducted an Education Banquet to recognize and encourage student and teacher excellence; recognized Students of the Month selected by the teachers and administrators at Lake Wales area elementary and high schools; and began a program in cooperation with various business sponsors to provide lunch for the teachers at a different school each month.

Chamber members and staff also spoke to students throughout the year about their educational and professional experiences

and participated in Free Enterprise Day activities sponsored by the Chamber to expose students to various career options.

Seeking opportunities to highlight quality school programs and the accomplishments of area students, the Chamber encouraged the use of school choruses and bands at community events. Members who attended the Chamber's Holiday Luncheon Meeting in December enjoyed a special performance by the Hillcrest Elementary *Pizzazz Chorus* and the Babson Park Chorus entertained during Mainstreet's *Friday Night Live* festivities in December.

In addition, the Education Committee invited high school juniors—selected by area schools based on their leadership potential—to participate in the Chamber's Youth Leadership Ridge program to strengthen their leadership skills and to learn more about the community.

Building an Informed Community Leadership Base

During 2005, members of Leadership Lake Wales Class IX completed program requirements, traveled to Tallahassee for Polk County Days, and participated in graduation exercises in May. As their class project, members outlined plans to develop an alumni committee to encourage Leadership Lake Wales graduates in their leadership efforts. Their mission: *Investing in the leadership of Lake Wales through new opportunities in networking, education, motivation and adventures*. In line with Class IX efforts, the Chamber's program for 2006 includes support and encourages Leadership Lake Wales alumni involvement.

Class X was formed in September, when members completed orientation exercises. In 2005, they also participated in three of the eight local day trips planned for the program, learning more about themselves, fellow participants, the community and its needs.

Board representatives and the Chamber's Executive Director also served on the Polk Vision Private Sector Leadership Committee to develop recommendations for a Polk County Leadership Program. As proposed, the Program would help participants learn

more about the communities throughout Polk County and help build stronger county-wide relationships.

Supporting Quality Growth and Sustainable Economic Development

The Chamber has continued to play an important role in local and regional efforts to promote and encourage quality growth and sustainable economic development initiatives throughout the Lake Wales Area.

Continuing support and participation in the East Polk Committee of 100 and the Central Florida Development Council throughout the year, the Lake Wales Chamber has worked to keep County and State officials focused on the needs of the East Polk area and the City of Lake Wales.

As a Lake Wales Vision partner, the Chamber continued to encourage effective planning and cooperative action by all community stakeholders to achieve the objectives most valued by the community.

The Business Retention and Expansion Survey begun in 2004 was completed during 2005. The results, which were reported at the Chamber's October Luncheon Meeting, will assist the Chamber in planning effective programs to help meet the needs of area businesses.

The Chamber continued to support the City's economic development efforts, promoting the community's assets for new business location. In addition, the Chamber improved its promotion of local events and attractions through the Welcome Center and online, working to increase the positive economic impact the Lake Wales community receives annually from tourism.

In Conclusion

*During 2005, the Lake Wales Area Chamber of Commerce worked to improve operations, expand member programs, build stronger relationships, increase participation, and developed plans for a more effective, proactive organization. We have made tremendous progress. With professional leadership in place, we look forward to an even more productive 2006. **Together, we can achieve the results we envision for our businesses and our community.***

2006 Board of Directors

President

Jerry Miller
Progress Energy

President - Elect

Wendy Warman - Redmon
SmarTalkers

Vice - Presidents

Economic Development

John Corbett
CenterState Bank

Community Development

Julie Seay
Coldwell Banker Ridge Properties

Organization Development

Chevon Baccus
Flamingo Fitness

Government Affairs

Laura Motis
Lake Wales Family YMCA

Treasurer

James Armstrong
Kohl & Company

Directors

Pat Brewer, Patricia Brewer, LLC

Tracy Bryant, Rinker Materials

Lawrence Epps, Epps Mortuary

Frank Hunt, III, Hunt Brothers, Inc.

Roger Ingley, Bunting, Tripp & Ingley

Dan McCullough, Citizens Bank & Trust

Jason Penrod, Weaver & McClendon, PA

Robbie Shields, Florida's Natural Growers

Robert Sullivan, Historic Bok Sanctuary

Michael Yungmann,
Lake Wales Medical Center

Staff

Executive Director

Betty Wojcik, CEcD

Executive Assistant

Tonya Royal

Administrative Assistant

Cindy Nowlin

ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

Build a stronger, more effective, innovative, and relevant organization.

Retain existing members and achieve a 10% growth in membership by year-end 2007, with a corresponding growth rate each year including 2008, 2009, and 2010, through improved communication, increased involvement, and expanded, innovative programming.

Increase the level and quality of the Chamber's communication with its members and within the community.

1. Publish and distribute a monthly newsletter to all Lakes Wales businesses/residents. (2006)
2. Improve and regularly post an online newsletter and distribute it directly to members, elected officials, schools, and other community organizations. (2006)
3. Provide regular website news updates and continue to use broadcast e-mail for the distribution of time-sensitive information/announcements. (2006)
4. Conduct quarterly focus group meetings to gain regular input/feedback from members and involve them in the planning process. (2006)
5. Conduct needs assessment surveys and opinion surveys as needed to better serve members and redefine initiatives as necessary. (2006)
6. Maintain and improve the online community events calendar by enhancing descriptions and providing links to event applications and promotional materials; increase awareness and use of this important resource by other community organizations and the public. (2006)
7. Re-activate, support, and expand the Ambassadors Program, providing improved personal contact with members, new businesses, and prospective members, while encouraging greater participation in Chamber programs and events. (2006)

Promote greater understanding of the Chamber's mission, its role within the

community, and the benefits of membership.

1. Conduct an annual Membership Drive, incorporating a community campaign to promote the Chamber, the organization's long-range plan, current programs, and its contributions within the community. (2006)
2. Develop a new application/membership brochure with updated information regarding the benefits of membership, the Chambers programs and events, and opportunities for involvement. (2006)
3. Host a New Member Reception to introduce board members, describe opportunities for involvement, and provide networking/relationship-building opportunities. (2006)
4. Conduct an annual orientation of new Board members, officers, and committee/taskforce chairs to describe responsibilities, discuss program goals, and establish meeting dates and times. (2006)
5. Publish a list of program committees/taskforces/Councils to be distributed annually at the Chamber's Annual Dinner, which includes a description of responsibilities, goals, and anticipated meeting requirements and encourages members to sign up for committees and programs in their areas of interest. (2006)
6. Increase volunteer recognition and provide opportunities for Chamber volunteers to have fun as they work together to set and achieve special event and program goals. (2006)

Encourage greater innovation, responsive leadership, and proactive program development policies.

1. Conduct an annual Board Retreat to review organization progress, to make adjustments that may be needed to the Chamber's long-range plan, and to develop additional goals as necessary to address newly-identified needs. (2006)

2. Provide sufficient time at the Board's monthly meeting to address community issues, focus group meeting results, and committee recommendations that may require immediate Board action and/or revisions to the long-range plan. (2006)
3. Develop and annually present a "President's Award" to recognize a Board member or Committee Chair whose innovative program ideas and responsive leadership have significantly contributed to the success of a Chamber event or program, or assisted the President in achieving annual objectives. (2006)
4. Improve Board member attendance and provide them with greater visibility at all Chamber functions, encouraging members to share needs, ideas, and concerns. (2006)
5. Encourage and provide opportunities for members to sponsor and participate in monthly membership focus group meetings. (2006)
6. Increase member participation as committee members and chairmen, providing opportunities for innovative program and special event planning. (2006)
7. Develop and implement an ongoing volunteer development program to orient and equip organization officers, directors, committee chairs and committee members for a successful and rewarding experience and to provide for a committed, informed leadership base, prepared to guide, direct and ensure the future viability of the organization. (2006)
8. Invite Leadership Lake Wales Alumni to participate in special events and advanced leadership development activities; reactivate and unite this valuable leadership network and important community resource; provide administrative support for Alumni meetings and initiatives; and encourage Alumni support of the Chamber, the Leadership Lake Wales Program, and/or the Chamber's Foundation. (2006)

Provide additional value to member firms and organizations through an expanded annual program.

1. Encourage member-to-member business opportunities, special promotions, and discounts.
2. Explore member interest in cooperative programs to promote local goods and services to a growing population of new residents. (2006)
3. Provide increased opportunities for online marketing and promotion (2006), as well as cooperative cable advertising and special event and tourism promotions.
4. Maintain the Chamber's interactive, online directory to promote member goods and services. (2006)
5. Annually publish and regularly update a directory of member firms and organizations, and make contact information available in digital format for distribution to members only, to encourage positive networking. (2006)
6. Based on the results of member needs assessments, provide educational programs and seminars to meet identified needs.
7. Continue to provide positive networking opportunities, including: Business-After-Hours Receptions, a regular series of Membership Luncheons, special events and programs, and increased committee involvement. (2006)
8. Explore opportunities for Cooperative Benefit Programs, including access to major medical, supplemental insurance, and retirement plans for small businesses and organizations. (2006)

Achieve financial stability by year-end 2007, generating the financial support necessary to sustain the organization and provide quality membership and community services.

Introduce and maintain sound fiscal management policies and procedures to most effectively utilize organization

resources.

1. Increase operational efficiencies through effective training, program coordination, and the introduction and use of new technology to achieve desired results. (2006)
2. Provide continuous cost/benefit analyses to ensure each program, service, and event is achieving the desired objectives and generating the funding necessary to cover all associated costs, including prorated staffing, facility, and equipment costs. (2006)

Improve existing programs, develop additional fundraising options, and increase non-dues revenue to support the organization and its community and economic development initiatives, and to promote the organization, its members, and the Lake Wales community.

1. Introduce a tiered membership option, defining the benefits of participation at each level, including: advertising and promotional programs, and sponsorship of major annual events. (2006)
2. Explore opportunities for producing, marketing, and merchandising Lake Wales promotional items for sale to the general public to raise additional operating funds and additional funding for promotional activities. (2006)
3. Expand the Annual Awards Dinner program, introducing a series of annual community service awards in addition to the Citizen of the Year Award, i.e. a Community Leadership Award, Public Servant of the Year, and Community Service Organization of the Year. (2006)
4. Increase non-dues revenue by providing an annual menu of direct advertising and program sponsorship opportunities. (2006)
5. Provide opportunities for members, community organizations, and area residents to make charitable contributions to benefit those programs supported by the Chamber's foundation. (2006)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Promote the growth of quality business operations, improve the climate for business, and support sustainable community growth and development.

6. Develop a Signature Event to generate a significant portion of the organization's annual income without competing with other community organizations for additional local support; to bring area residents and visitors into Lake Wales; to help create a stronger, more positive community image; and to help promote community assets.
7. Design and publish a Lake Wales area map, funded by local and regional advertisers, for distribution to visitors and area residents and businesses. (2006)
8. Explore the benefits of publishing a biennial community magazine to promote area assets and attractions, community resources, and business districts, funded by local and regional advertisers.

Provide office and meeting facilities and the technical and staff resources necessary to support the goals of the organization, meet the needs of its members and the community, and represent the community well to visitors and new business prospects.

1. Improve and maintain the Chamber's building and grounds to reflect a professional, business image that is indicative of the services provided by the organization. (2006)
2. Explore opportunities to acquire expanded facilities as required by the needs of a growing organization.
3. Secure and maintain the equipment and staff necessary to support the needs of the organization. (2006)
4. Encourage and provide the funding necessary for staff training and professional growth, supporting new ideas and innovative programs and maintaining experienced, professional leadership to help meet the changing needs of a growing organization, its members, and the community.

Promote quality growth and expansion opportunities for existing businesses, including small business start-ups.

Establish a Small Business Committee to recommend and help develop and carry out programs to assist existing businesses and encourage new business start-ups.

1. *Develop a Business Assistance Program, utilizing regional resources such as those available through the Central Florida Development Council, as well as member firms and retired area executives interested in business mentoring opportunities.*
2. *Develop programs in cooperation with Workforce 2020 to help local firms compete successfully for a limited number of quality employees and to help unskilled workers acquire the training needed to increase employment options.*
3. *In cooperation with the Chamber's Education Committee, support and encourage participation in Free Enterprise Day and other workforce development programs. (2006)*
4. *Create and encourage local businesses to participate in a "Speakers Bureau", to take advantage of opportunities to promote their business, profession, and other topics of interest to students and local groups. (2006)*
5. *In cooperation with listing realtors and property owners, develop, maintain and promote retail, commercial and industrial property listings that are available for lease or purchase.*
6. *Establish the criteria for a new, "Excellence in Business Award" program to select and recognize*

quality business operations within the Lake Wales area community. (2006)

7. *Develop and implement a community awareness program encouraging area residents to "shop at home" to benefit from the additional sales tax dollars generated locally.*
8. *Establish a Tourism Committee to recommend, help develop, and carry out programs designed to promote community resources, attractions, and business districts and draw more area residents and visitors into the Lake Wales area. (2006)*
9. *Improve cooperation with and among promotional groups, business and historic districts, and recreational, educational, and cultural organizations. (2006)*
10. *Actively support the activities and programs of the Polk County Convention and Tourism Bureau and Enterprise Florida.*
11. *Develop and coordinate cooperative advertising and promotional programs to draw more residents and area visitors into the Lake Wales area to generate more business locally, encourage new business locations, and create new jobs for community residents.*

Improve the local climate for business, building a stronger community image and enhancing the community's ability to compete for new business locations.

Reactivate the Chamber's Economic Development Council to recommend and support initiatives to promote the community, support the City's economic development program, and improve its ability to compete for new business locations.

1. Support the Lake Wales Visioning process, helping to develop and implement strategies to achieve the economic development values defined by the community. (2006)
2. Continue to represent Lake Wales and actively support regional economic development partners and initiatives, including Polk Vision, the Tampa Bay Partnership, the Central Florida Development Council and the East Polk Committee of 100. (2006)
3. Increase awareness and recommend cooperative action/advocacy to the Board on issues affecting the Lake Wales business community. (2006)
4. Assist local efforts to encourage quality business development, by determining and targeting those categories best suited to Lake Wales and making personal contacts to encourage consideration of the Lake Wales area for new business locations.
5. Encourage the continued redevelopment – and restoration where appropriate – of downtown properties and streetscapes. (2006)
6. Work with City officials to define and secure the funding for projects that will encourage a stronger residential consumer base downtown to support quality retail business growth within the area.
7. Support the City’s efforts and work with community leaders to encourage neighborhood business and quality residential development along Lincoln Avenue between Martin Luther King Drive and the Scenic Highway. (2006)
8. Encourage and support the use of CRA funding for necessary streetscape improvements and to provide low or no-interest loans and/or matching grants to qualifying redevelopment and façade improvement projects to revitalize the area and

9. Serve as a catalyst for quality development throughout Lake Wales and encourage innovation when addressing community challenges. (2006)
10. Investigate opportunities to secure county, state, and/or federal grants to improve the Lake Weaver area and explore the potential for construction of a lakeside pedestrian promenade and business arcade.
11. Encourage improvements along the SR 60 corridor to enhance the business climate and the image of the City as visitors and area residents travel along this important commercial area.
12. Sponsor a “Lake Wales, It’s a Natural for Business” tour in cooperation with the City and the CFDC to market Lake Wales and specific redevelopment opportunities to targeted business representatives, commercial developers, and statewide economic developers.
13. Encourage the involvement and support of post-secondary educational institutions in

- community economic development programs and activities. (2006)
- Establish a Marketing Committee to recommend, help develop, and carry out programs designed to promote Lake Wales as a great place to live, work, and visit.*
1. Explore the benefits of various publications and programs to promote area assets and opportunities for business.
 2. Complete production of a Lake Wales promotional video. (2006)
 3. Design and produce a marketing “jacket” suitable for distribution of the video on CD to business, tourism, development prospects. (2006)
 4. Work with other Chamber committees to ensure consistent branding in the promotion of organization programs and special events. (2006)
 5. Continue improvements and maintain up-to-date information about the Chamber, its members, and programs on the Chamber’s website. (2006)

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Enhance the quality of life afforded to all who live, work, and play within the Lake Wales community.

Support quality education, recognize student/teacher excellence, and encourage adult literacy.

Encourage greater cooperation between schools and the business community and continue to build support for quality education and youth leadership development through the Chamber’s Education Committee.

1. Develop and/or support local programs to reduce the drop-out rate, encourage students to pursue higher education and/or career training following graduation, and better prepare students to become successful

- citizens and productive employees.
2. Provide and encourage opportunities for students to participate in special events sponsored by the business community. (2006)
 3. Develop and encourage schools to use a Speakers Bureau as a resource for business programs and speakers. (2006)
 4. Continue to recognize and show support for teachers by hosting a business-sponsored breakfast to welcome teachers at the beginning of the school year. (2006)

5. Continue the annual "Free Enterprise Day" program, securing business partners to bring students into the workplace, providing an opportunity to learn more about potential career choices, and recognizing participants at the Chamber's membership luncheon. (2006)
6. Continue the annual Youth Leadership Ridge program, providing the opportunity for selected members of the junior classes at Lake Wales High School, Frostproof High School and the Vanguard School to develop additional leadership skills and learn more about their community. (2006)
7. Support local programs to increase adult literacy, including participation in monthly Literacy Coalition meetings, sharing information about Chamber programs supporting education and promoting the activities sponsored by coalition members, i.e. the annual "Spelling Circus." (2006)

Encourage and support the development of a network of informed, engaged community leaders.

Provide opportunities for leadership skills development and increased community education and involvement through the Chamber's Leadership Lake Wales program.

1. Continue the Leadership Lake Wales Program, conducted annually by the Chamber's Leadership Council, to develop participant leadership skills and make them more aware of community resources and issues. (2006)
2. Provide the members of each Leadership class with access to a support network that includes fellow participants and leadership program alumni. (2006)
3. Encourage leadership alumni to become active in the Chamber, providing opportunities for

- increased involvement as committee members and chairmen and through election to the Chamber's Board of Directors. (2006)
4. Continue Chamber representation and support of Unity in Community programs. (2006)
 5. Continue support of, and participation in, the Polk Vision Private Sector Leadership program to encourage county-wide collaboration and cooperation, develop networks for improved communication, and to promote greater understanding of regional issues and the potential effect on the Lake Wales area. (2006)

Encourage and support opportunities to promote cooperation and collaborative action on issues affecting all segments of the community.

Provide ongoing support and actively participate in the process to develop and implement Lake Wales Vision initiatives that represent the values defined by the community.

1. Encourage Board and staff participation in the visioning process and committee member participation in foundation areas that relate to the goals of their respective committees. (2006)
2. Assist the Lake Wales Vision Steering Committee by providing an online communication tool to report progress, announce meeting places and dates, and encourage interested groups to participate. (2006)
3. Annually review the Chamber's long-range plans to incorporate initiatives for economic and community development to reinforce the community values defined within the Lake Wales Vision document. (2006)

Develop a program to recognize and encourage quality building improvements, historic preservation projects, and community beautification efforts.

1. Establish a Beautification Committee to develop a program to recognize community beautification efforts and quality building improvements. (2006)
2. Make recommendations to the City regarding needed community improvements. (2006)

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Develop strong public-private partnerships, improve communication, provide increased business advocacy, and recognize excellence in government service.

Build stronger relationships; improve communication with elected officials on issues effecting Lake Wales area businesses and residents; and encourage and recognize excellence in government service.

Establish a Government Affairs Committee to develop programs, recommend action, and increase communication with elected officials.

1. Encourage regular meetings between the Board of Directors and the Lake Wales City Commission and appropriate staff.
2. Continue to host "State of the City" breakfast or luncheon, and a Legislative Reception.
3. Increase awareness of community Issues and progress toward community improvement goals
4. Recommend Board action on issues related to area business and the Lake Wales community
5. Promote excellence in government service through an annual recognition program, i.e. "Public Servant of the Year" Award to recognize employees, or an "Excellence in Government Award" to recognize elected officials. (2006)