



WEAKLEY COUNTY CHAMBER NEWS



P.O. Box 67 ~ Dresden, TN ~ 38225 ~ (731) 364-3787 ~ FAX (731) 364-2099 ~ www.weakleycountychamber.com ~ May-June 2009

DRESDEN - GLEASON - GREENFIELD - MARTIN - SHARON

Proudly serving our community since 1959



Chamber Celebrates 50th Anniversary



On April 29, 2009, the Weakley County Chamber of Commerce officially turned 50 years old. A Golden Anniversary Banquet was held at the Boling University Center Ballroom on the University of Tennessee at Martin campus. Nearly 400 members and guest attended the celebration.

The Chamber's journey to this point began on April 29, 1959, when the Presidents of each civic club in Weakley County met to establish the Weakley County Chamber of Commerce. These men also selected the officers of the newly formed Chamber. The purpose of the Chamber was to advance the commercial, industrial, economic, agricultural, and civic interest of Weakley County. Organizing and building a Weakley County Country Club, sponsoring a hospital in Weakley County, founding of a countywide planning commission, and having an active role in urban renewal programs were among their first priorities.

A year after its founding, the first Banquet was held with approximately 300 attending. Tennessee Governor Buford Ellington was present that night. Over the years, Chamber Banquets were also honored with the presence of Tennessee Governor Winfield Dunn and Governor Ned Ray McWherter.

First meetings of the Chamber Board were held at the Weakley County Municipal Electric System office in Dresden. The Chamber office has been at three other locations before establishing a permanent location. In May 1976 the Weakley County Chamber of Commerce moved into it's present location at 114 West Maple Street in Dresden. On May 15, 2006, the office had to temporarily relocate due to smoke damage from a fire next door to the office. On February 2, 2007, after nine months, two moves, and various Board meeting locations, the Chamber moved back into their newly refurbished building.

Over the span of 50 years, the Chamber has been a driving force in the success of this community. Responsibilities and duties have changed and been added, but from the very start the Weakley County Chamber of Commerce goals and focus have not changed. As was true 50 years ago, the Chamber is still concerned with what is best for our county. It continues to play a vital part in the advancement and development of both new and existing businesses, and strives to make Weakley County a place where people feel welcome, residents feel at home, and businesses are successful.



UT Martin's Chancellor Tom Rakes highlighted the evening by presenting a plaque to the Weakley County Chamber of Commerce. The plaque was "in recognition of fifty years of quality service to business community serving Weakley and surrounding counties". Executive Director Barbara Virgin accepted the plaque from Chancellor Rakes on behalf of the Chamber.



Board of Directors

Executive Committee

President - Mike Wilson
Past Pres.- Joe Brasher
President Elect -
Randy Huffstetler, Jr.

Board of Directors

Shelly Bowers
Jerry Brigrance
Jake Bynum
Faron Collins
Traci Crawford
Gary Hall
Martin Hamlin
Todd Hampton
David Lackey
Tracy McGehee
Zack Montgomery
Rob Newbill
Dee Pritchett
Allen Strawbridge
Steve Vantrease
Dannyelle Williams
Delores Wright
Sherri Wright
Phil Young

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Randy Brundige
Jack Dunning
Danny Forrester
Bob Gardner
Eddie Joe McKelvy
Junior Moore
Houston Patrick

Staff

Barbara Virgin
Executive Director

Marguriet Frazier
Administrative Assistant



**2009 W. C. of the Year Ms. Audrey Roberts with
2008 W. C. of the Year Mr. Jerry Brigrance**



**2009 Business of the Year Akin & Porter, Inc.
with 2008 Business of the Year A Country
Pet Resort & Spa**

This years recipient of the Weakley Countian of the Year Award was Ms. Audrey Roberts. Ms. Roberts' has a lengthy volunteer and community service history paving the way for many women to follow in her foot steps. She was the first woman elected to the Weakley County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and first woman admitted to the local Rotary Club. Ms. Roberts is a founding member of the West Tennessee Public Television Council and Martin Business Association still serving on the Boards. With the Rotary Ms. Roberts has served as President and District Governor, and was named Rotarian of the Year in 2008. She volunteers for various activities such as WLJT-TV fund-raising, Martin Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association, Martin Beautiful, and many area activities benefiting the Boy Scouts of America and the University of Tennessee at Martin. She currently serves on the Federal Prison Board and Chairperson of the Volunteer Community Hospital Board of Trustees.

Ms. Roberts is a very involved citizen of Martin and Weakley County. She is an asset to her community and inspires others to give back.

Akin & Porter Produce, Inc. was selected the Weakley County Business of the Year.

In 1937, Thomas Akin started Akin Produce Company on Front Street in Greenfield, Tennessee. In 1960 a merger between Akin Produce and Porter Brothers formed Akin & Porter Produce. Because of continued growth, in 1962 a lot was bought on highway 45E south of Greenfield where a loading dock and office was built. Soon offices were added in Thonassville, Georgia, and Pompano, Florida and Akin & Porter became the sales agent for Milan Growers Association in Milan, Tennessee. During the mid 70's business shifted from alocal sales representative to become more of a distribution point for the other existing offices in the United States. As the bussiness grew and the reputation of the company spread, Akin & Porter became involved in other reas of the United States as well as Mexico. Due to the company's growth, from 1978 to 1997 offices were opened in Bwornsville, Texas; Plant City, Florida; Ponchatoula, Louisiana; and Mogales, Arizona.

Akin & Porter is a proud supporter of local school, sporting events, and local activities in ur country. Each year the company sponsors Little League Teams, T-ball, and Jr. Babe Ruth. Akin & Porter has also helped sponsor the Fiddle Stick Festival that is held each year in Greenfield. The company is a member of the Greenfield Booster Club and supports the youth league basketball teams. Sororities and Fraternities at our local college have received sponsorship on their fund raisers. Akin & Porter helps sponsor Special Olympics and Healthy Woman, a program at the local hospital.

Today Akin & Porter Produce, Inc. is owned by Joe Porter, Jeff Perkin, Tammy Perkins, Jamie Prince, and Brock Porter. The company has extended its shipping points to include all major shipping points in the United States. With the company's involvement and success all over the country, Akin & Porter Produce, Inc. has become a leader in the produce industry.



Ribbon Cuttings



The Reserve at Martin

On April 14, 2009, a Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting was held at The Reserve at Martin. The Reserve is a student housing development located at 237 West Peach Street, Martin, TN. Present for the event were: Front row (left to right): Weakley County Mayor Houston Patrick; Kim Parker, Community Manager; Matt Fulton, Regional Manager; Martin Mayor Randy Brundige; Barbara Virgin, Chamber Executive Director; and Lisa Chandler, Regions Bank. Back row (left to right): Courtney Burton, The Reserve; Denissia Gordon, The Reserve; Melissa Sellers, The Reserve; Lynette Wagster, WENK of Union City; Lee Pritchett, First State Bank; Sarah Mobbs, Weakley County Press; Janessa Hubbard, The Reserve; Melissa Wilson, First State Bank; Kimberly Craddock, Martin Community Development; Carol Guest, Rountree Business Equipment; and Paul Tinkel, Thunderbolt Broadcasting.

For more information about The Reserve at Martin visit their website at www.myownapartment.com or call (731)587-5608.



A Ribbon Cutting was held on May 5, 2009, at Family Eye Care in Martin, TN. Attending this event were: Front row (left to right): Cole Pinner, Thunderbolt Broadcasting, Sarah Mobbs, Weakley County Press, Amanda Jarrett, Reelfoot Bank, Cindy Copeland, Family Eye Care Optician; Dr. Dennis Woolverton, O.D., Family Eye Care; Jennie Townsend, Vision Center Manager; Martin Mayor Randy Brundige; Scotty Simmons, Wal Mart Manager, Deloris Wright, Greenfield Banking Company; and Barbara Virgin, Chamber Executive Director. Back row (left to right): Kimberly Craddock, Martin Community Development; Paul Tinkle, Thunderbolt Broadcasting; Blake White, Reelfoot Bank; Dr. Phil Young, UTM; Randy Huffstetler, Jr., Greenfield Banking; Phil Puckett, Wal Mart Management. Also on staff but not pictured: Christina Jones, Optometric Assistant.

For more information concerning your eye care needs, call (731) 588-2010 or visit the Family Eye Care location at 134 Courtright Rd., Martin, TN, inside Wal Mart. Dr. Woolverton's hours are Tuesday: 9-5, Wednesday: 9-5, Friday: 9-5, and Saturday: 9-3. Vision Center hours are Monday through Saturday 9-6.



Extendicare Home Health Western Tennessee

The Weakley County Chamber of Commerce joined with Extendicare Home Health to celebrate their Grand Opening with a Ribbon Cutting on April 23, 2009. Present were (in random order): Tracey Batey, Michelle Boone, Kim Bradberry, Carol Brown, Tracy Childress, Cindy Cooper, Sarah Eason, Cindy Ferguson, Teresa Keating, Denise Long, Kelly Morphis, Greg Swims, and Beth Weldon with Extendicare Home Health; Debra Ams, Ashley Arnold, Martin Mayor Randy Brundige, Gary Capers, Roger Donaldson, Carol Guest, Todd Hampton, Terry Lamb, Teresa Mitchell, Sarah Mobbs, Linda Parrish, Weakley County Mayor Houston Patrick, Audrey Roberts, Man Rountree, Laura Shelton, David Spencer, and Chamber Executive Director Barbara Virgin. Present but not pictured were Lisa Hardey, Denise Hazlewood, Misty Menesse, and Dee Pritchett.

For more information about Extendicare Home Health visit their office at 215 Hawks Road, Suite 5, Martin, TN, check out their website at www.lhcgroup.com, or call (731) 587-8195.

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**Proudly sponsors this page and welcomes all new businesses and individuals to
Weakley County!**



Ground Breaking



Neighborhood Family Market

On Tuesday, May 12, local elected officials, members of the Weakley County Chamber of Commerce, and well-wishers joined with staff members of E.W. James & Sons Supermarkets for a groundbreaking ceremony. This marked the beginning of construction on the Neighborhood Family Market, which will be a new, expanded convenience food store in Gleason, TN. The store will be located at East Union Street next to the Dollar General Store. The store is expected to open the fall of this year.

Dignitaries for the groundbreaking pictured left to right with shovels are: David James, Chairman; Gleason Mayor Jack Dunning; Lee Ann James, CEO; Ken Pink, President and COO; Jerry Jones, Store Supervisor; James Whaley, Store Manager; Ed Perkins, The Perkins Corporation. Also pictured are Weakley County Mayor Houston Patrick; and Chamber of Commerce Director Barbara Virgin.



During the month of June, E.W. James & Sons Supermarkets will also be celebrating 75-years of customer satisfaction.

Chamber Golden Anniversary Banquet

Table Decoration Winners:

1st Place: Reelfoot Bank

2nd Place: Weakley County Economic Development Board

3rd Place: First State

Trivia Winner:

Mr.. Junior Moore

The Weakley County Chamber, celebrating 50 years of service to the community, wishes to thank everyone who made this event and the past fifty years a success. We look forward to your continued support in the future.

THANKS TO:

Door Prize Donations:

Dr. Michael Calfee
Greenfield Banking Company
Martin Business Association
MTD Products, Inc.
Weakley County Municipal Electric System
WLJT TV

Events Decorations:

Biggs Nursery
Sandra & Company
St. Charles Flowers & Gifts
Vicki's Designer Touch

2009 Leadership Activities



Ag / Tourism Day



Education Day



Ag Day



Local Government / Tourism Day
Host: Governor Ned R. McWherter



Project Day



Pictured right:
LWC Check Presentation to
Carl Perkins Center and
We Care Ministries



32nd Annual Stephen Wright Memorial Industrial Appreciation Golf Tournament and Dinner

Tournament Winners:



First Place:

Randy Barnes
Dr. Bob Page
Matt Russell
Tim Shanks
Chad Snider
Larry Snider

Second Place:

Brian Black
Gary Capers
Glenn King
Brian Smith
Van Swaim
Tommy Wilson

Third Place:

Woody Booth
David Miesner
Matthew Miesner
Lance Wheelles
Blake White
Pete Whitten



Tenth Place:

John Pitcher
David Roberts
James Gary Roberts
David Sims
Donna Sims
Joe Taylor



Eleventh Place:

Ronnie Cook
Jimmy Dudley
Scotty Leverette
Danny Powell
Allen Strawbridge
Tim Vowell



Longest Drive / Closest To The Hole Winners:

David Campbell - Electric Smoker
Ronnie Price - Office Chair
Andy Quillen - WLJT TV Golf Tournament Entry
Steve Vantrease - Golf Bag
Tommy Wilson - Persimmon Hills Gift Certificate



Thanks

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Thanks

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Congratulations!
**Weakley County
Court House
60th Anniversary**





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