

You Spoke and We Listened

Thank you to all of the members who gave feedback to your Chamber in July! The Membership Satisfaction survey was sent during the months of June and July to over 1,500 Trustees and the General Membership via email seeking input and feedback on key issues.

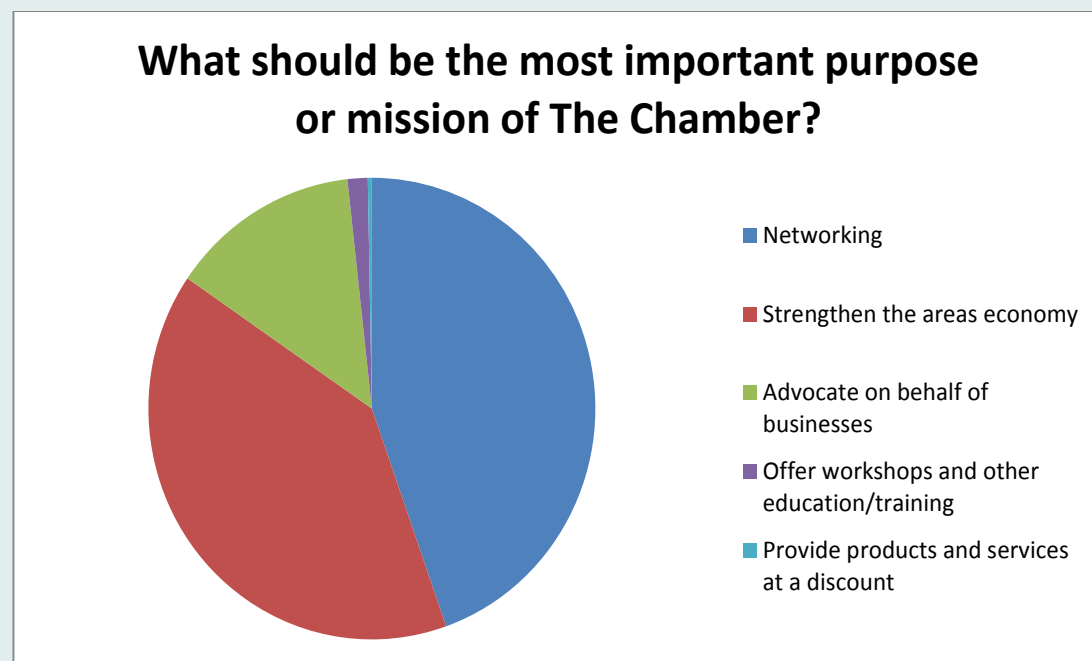
Core issues considered:

- * The mission
- * Reasons to belong
- * The role of The Chamber
- * Key issues facing businesses
- * The value provided
- * How to best serve members

With a 24% response rate (95% confidence level), relevant and real data was captured and analyzed.

Hands down, networking was seen as The Chamber's most important mission. Businesses want to connect with customers, other businesses and the community now more than ever. Events that focus on bringing people together to share what they do and how they can partner will be a key focus for The Membership Experience Team. (Read more about this newly created team on page 8)

Strengthening the area's economy and economic development came in a close second to the networking component of The Chamber's goals. Both small and large companies want a strong voice



Results from membership survey, Suncoast Market Research

for the needs and issues they are facing on a daily basis while trying to run their companies. The Chamber is focused on working with other community organizations like city, county and state government as well as the EDC to make Sarasota a great place to work and do business. The Chamber will also continue to strive to provide opportunities to bring business and non-profit organizations together to work for a strong and vibrant community.

The vehicle of communication you felt was most effective was email. With the E-Point newsletter, events bulletin and the new website, The Chamber will be focusing on communicating messages as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Our membership services team is always available to help each and every member on a one-on-

one level. If you have questions or would like a "membership tune-up", Morgan Gerhart is available to meet with you to discuss.

What's the bottom line? Members are largely satisfied with the job that the GSCC is doing and will be continuing to focus and drill down on the areas that you as a membership feel are important and vital. We want to be your valued partner in your business and this incredible community that we are each lucky to be a part of. Thanks again for your thoughts and feedback.

Save the Date!
Annual Meeting
Thursday, October 13
11:30 am to 1:15 pm
The Ritz-Carlton, Sarasota

Growing Business
in
Greater Sarasota

To Register visit www.sarasotachamber.com/annualmeeting

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Serving our businesses and community...

The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce exists to maximize our members' success, the community's Competitiveness, and the area's economic strength.

Good Life. Good Business.

Chair's Column



Rick Piccolo,
 Chair of the Board,
 The Greater Sarasota
 Chamber of Commerce

A Fast - Very Fast – Year!

Although I am still Chair of The Chamber board while writing this, the extremely well-qualified Shaun Merriman will have taken over as Chair when you read this column.

It would take me much more space than is available to reflect on all the high points and highlights of being Chair of this great membership organization, but let me mention a few...

Pushing the Economy Forward

Your Chamber has worked extra hard on efforts that would strengthen our economy over the last year. Just as I was preparing to become Chair, The Chamber led the charge to pass county and city ordinances that would allow tax exemptions for businesses creating good jobs. We were successful in passing this, and it has led to millions of dollars of investment and the creation of hundreds of jobs.

Hot on the heels of that major pro-business effort at the ballot box, your Chamber was absolutely key in the fight to defeat

the job and business-killing Amendment 4 to the State's constitution. This "vote on everything" related to investment or growth measure was opposed by business groups state-wide, and The Chamber was extremely successful in turning out the votes needed to defeat this onerous measure.

Someone said that "government is largely driven by those who show up" and so it was my pleasure to go to many meetings about our economy, taxes, and public policy. Key among these was The Chamber's "Sarasota Days in Tallahassee" where we carried forward our priorities in one meeting after another with our elected officials. We lobbied to get our fair share of tax dollars back in our community and were fairly successful. This coming year will be pushing even harder for the dollars we didn't get in 2011, so please watch out for emails asking for your support.

In the month of March, we saw the fruits of our labor in the form of over 100,000 fans

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attending games of the Baltimore Orioles. Again, The Chamber was integral in bringing the Orioles here and refurbishing Ed Smith Stadium, which created hundreds of jobs.

Getting into the second quarter of 2011, we had another extremely successful Intercity Best Practice Visit. This year we traveled to Greenville, South Carolina, which has experienced great economic growth through creativity, coordinated effort, diversification, and a community-wide vision. We will be taking lessons from their play book and sharing them with our local community at a forum on September 12th.

Expanding Chamber Connections

Parallel to working to improve the economy through large projects and business climate improvements, The Chamber is all about connecting local businesses and providing them with more opportunities. As Chair, I went to many different events and was able to meet and hear from literally hundreds of members. You all personify the American dream, working to provide quality products and services and grow the economy while giving back to our community.

Continuing Positive Momentum

As immediate Past-Chair, I don't get to fade off into the sunset. Still a member of the board and its executive committee, I will endeavor to contribute in as many ways possible. A passion of mine is growing the economic impact of rowing and related activities at the Suncoast Aquatic and Nature Center. I believe this new asset may be the biggest economic stimulus our community has seen in 10-20 years.

So, I hope that these examples give you a flavor for how engaging and rewarding serving as your Chair of the board has been. As always, I thank you for your support, because it is only by working together that we will be able to maximize our opportunities and make greater Sarasota the best place it can be!

Rick Piccolo, The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce, Chair of the Board



Monday, September 12, 2011

8:00 - 10:00 am

Van Wezel, Grand Foyer

\$10.00 per person

In May community leaders participated in a two-and-a-half day Intercity Visit to Greenville, SC. Following this collaborative exchange, we are hosting a community workshop of the takeaways, economic strategies and community tactics from the visit.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Russell Stall, Executive Director, Greenville Forward, the organization created, and is responsible for making sure that the bold and aggressive dreams of Vision 2025 are accomplished.



in partnership with



Who's News

Sarah W Colandro, Director of Interior Design at FAWLEY|BRYANT, was one of six Florida Interior Designers to attend the American Society of Interior Designers' annual Leadership Conference in Chicago in June.

Acclaimed performance artist Michael Israel is scheduled to appear at the Hyatt Regency Sarasota on Saturday, October 29, 2011, to raise funds for The Payton Wright Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to fighting pediatric brain cancer. Reserve tickets now or get more information by contacting Patrick Wright at Patrick@paytonwright.org or 941-893-7007.

Lori Denny, president and co-owner of LEDS Computer Solutions (www.LEDSCOMPUTERSOLUTIONS.COM) has assumed the position of president of the All Achievers Chapter of the ABWA.

Shannon Robison has been named Consulting Practice Director of Bay Systems, a Sarasota-based software consulting firm.

Green architect Michael Carlson has been elected to the Florida Caribbean Regional Council of the USGBC, and will serve as the organization's Vice-Chairman.

Macy's is once again, announcing new growth and development within their organization and they are "on the grow, again!" according to owner/CEO, Dean Burnside. Ryan Krizen has been with the Sarasota pest control company for nearly 4 years and has recently been promoted to the Supervisor of the Commercial/Termite/Rodent Division of Macy's Termite and Pest Control.

Environmental, Inc. has added Lynn Dewees to assist in business development as it continues to grow and expand its presence in the marketplace.

The law firm of Adams and Reese is pleased to announce the hiring of Laurel Corriveau as Business Development Manager, responsible for the firm's business development and marketing efforts in the Florida offices – Sarasota, St. Petersburg and Tampa. Corriveau

will work in the firm's Tampa office.

Coastal Orthopedics & Sports Medicine | Pain Management is pleased to announce the addition of orthopedic spine surgeon, William L. Tontz, Jr., MD to their medical team.

Critical Care & Veterinary Specialists of Sarasota LLC (CCVSS) has donated 17 emergency field kits, and the training to use them, to Sarasota County's K-9 teams.

The YMCA Foundation of Sarasota recently hosted the Y Achievers Scholarship Breakfast. 73 students were awarded over \$100,000 in scholarships.

Bob Rosinsky, President of Goodwill Manasota, announced today the opening of the newest Goodwill store and Good Neighbor Center in Arcadia.

Cadence Bank has announced that Pierre Thomas has been appointed as the Commercial Deposit Officer for Cadence's three Florida offices.

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For more information on becoming a member, contact Matt Gower at mgower@sarasotachamber.com

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www.bandweintraub.com

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Sarasota Open Foundation
1343 Main Street, Suite 204
Sarasota FL 34236
www.sarasotaopen.org

Shapiro Goldman Babboni & Walsh
308 Coconut Avenue
Sarasota FL 34236
www.GetMeJustice.com

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Partners' Corner

By: Marty Weisberg, Partner

The Chamber Partners are pleased to announce that the "Partner of the Quarter" award goes to the team of John and Roni Antenucci. The Antenuccis became Chamber Partners shortly after joining The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce in 2010. Right from the start, they jumped in with both feet and have been valuable members to the Partners committee.



The Antenuccis have a history of service which not only has been shown by their work with Chamber Partners but in their past work experience. John has served as an ordained Deacon for 5 churches in upstate New York. He also served as an Isaiah Ministry Retreat Preacher conducting missions in several states. Roni has served as a Pastoral Associate in an Assisted Living Facility and in an 800 family Church. In addition, she served as an Isaiah Ministry Retreat Preacher in several states with John.

The Antenuccis moved to Sarasota from New York, less than 2 years ago and established their company, A & B Asset Documentation Services, LLC. The company inventories and documents the belongings of individuals and businesses. They provide a comprehensive, detailed inventory - a list of personal property or business assets complete with digital images to provide your insurance company. Besides the normal type of losses that people sustain such as fire, burglary and other mishaps, those of us living in an area with the volatile weather that Florida offers one never knows when they will have to prove what they own. As the Antenuccis tell us, people often say, "I've got to do that," yet they rarely get around to it. They create your photographic memory. We look forward to having John and Roni working with us for a long time to come.

In August, TPC Prestancia hosted the first of this year's Partners' Play Days, a golf outing for the Chamber Partners and Trustees. The fourteen participants played 9 holes of shotgun and then retreated to the club for a happy hour of appetizers and drinks. As expected, a great time was had by all.



The Chamber and Partners Committee want to thank Ron Smith of JournalistsPR, LLC for sponsoring and providing the breakfast for the Partners committee meetings for the months of August and September. We are looking for a sponsor for the months of October and November. contact Morgan Gerhart at 941-556-4031 or mgerhart@sarasotachamber.com

The Bridge May/June 2011

Insignia



Award

Each month, The Chamber presents the coveted Insignia Award, sponsored by **Insignia Bank**, to a deserving organization for its quality customer service and commitment to the community. **Congratulations!**



July Recipient:

Commercial Management & Leasing Corporation

Presented at July's First Monday, which was hosted by: Eager Beaver Car Wash



August Recipient:

Eager Beaver Car Wash

Presented at August's First Monday, which was hosted by: North Bridge Tavern

Upcoming Events

Green Business Roundtable-Beyond the Line

Thursday, September 11
5:30 p.m.-7:45 p.m. | Gold Coast Eagle Distributing
RSVP Required; \$ 20 members; \$25 Future Members; \$15 Students

Intercity Community Workshop

Monday, September 12
8:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m | Van Wezel
RSVP Requested, \$10 to attend

First Monday

Monday, September 12
5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. | Lube Italian Cabinetry of Sarasota
RSVP Requested; \$5 (Prepaid) \$10 (Day of event or at the door)

Power Hour Live

Wednesday, September 14
11:45 a.m.-1:00 p.m | Claytons Siesta Grill
RSVP Requested; \$15 (Prepaid) Register early this event will sell out!

Chamber 411

Tuesday, September 20
3:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m. | Chamber Boardroom
RSVP Requested

Sarasota Prime Time

Wednesday, September 21
5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m | Mercedes-Benz of Sarasota
No RSVP; \$5 members ; \$15 Future Members

Breakfast with a BANG

Friday, September 23
7:30 a.m.-9:00 p.m. | Wagner Realty
RSVP Requested; \$5 (Prepaid) \$10 (Day of event or at the door)

For updates, details and to register online, visit The Chamber's calendar at www.sarasotachamber.com/events.

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Events Calendar

Assignment Downtown Luncheon

Wednesday, September 28
11:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m | Hyatt Regency Sarasota
RSVP Required; \$25 to attend

Power Hour Live

Wednesday, September 28
11:45 a.m.-1:00 p.m | Fleming's Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar
RSVP Requested; \$15 (Prepaid) Register early this event will sell out!

First Monday

Monday, October 3
5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. | Applebees on Main
RSVP Requested; \$5 (Prepaid) \$10 (Walk-ins and Future Members)

Power Hour Live

Thursday, October 12
11:45 a.m.-1:00 p.m | Sara Bay Country Club
RSVP Requested; \$15 (Prepaid) \$20 (Walk-ins and Future Members)

Annual Meeting

Wednesday, October 13
11:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m | The Ritz-Carlton
RSVP Required; \$60 members; (before Oct 3rd) \$65 Future Members (or after Oct 3)

Chamber 411

Tuesday, October 18
4:00 p.m.- 5:30 p.m. | Chamber Boardroom
RSVP Requested

Breakfast with a BANG

Tuesday, October 25
7:30 a.m.-9:00 p.m. | Comfort Suites University Park
RSVP Requested; \$5 (Prepaid) \$10 (Walk-ins and Future Members)



Assignment Downtown Council Luncheon Series
what's up downtown?

Wednesday, September 28 , 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Hyatt Regency Sarasota (1000 Blvd. of the Arts)



**"Overcoming Obstacles:
Lessons in Economic Development"**

Keynote Speaker: Nancy Whitworth
Director, Economic Development, Greenville, SC

Nancy has served as an expert panelist and lecturer throughout the country, advising communities on downtown revitalization, strategic planning and public/private partnerships. She has authored articles on Greenville's award-winning downtown and meets frequently with other cities to share Greenville's success story.

REGISTRATION: Advance: \$25 After September 21: \$35

Register online at www.sarasotachamber.com/events

Cancellations after March 22 WILL BE INVOICED

Questions? Contact Valorie Hillerich, vhillerich@sarasotachamber.com or 941-556-4046

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Trustee Spotlight

Verizon Florida LLC.



Telephony in Sarasota traces its roots to the Peninsular Telephone Company, formed in 1901. That same year, W. G. Brorein was awarded a 30-year franchise from the Tampa City Council to provide telephone service. These two seemingly disparate acts set the foundation for Verizon being a fixture in this great community.

Brorein's franchise eventually acquired Peninsular and became the General Telephone Company...and in 2000, Bell Atlantic and GTE combined to form Verizon Communications.

Communications is central to progress. And just as Sarasota evolved as a haven for Gulf coastal living and for business, Verizon and its predecessor companies have invested to maintain and improve the best possible networks that nurture both relationships and business.

Today, the multibillion dollar investments Verizon made in its all-fiber FiOS network and in the Verizon Wireless 3G and Long-Term Evolution 4G network have created life without boundaries for Sarasota consumers and businesses.

Customers now have the option of the fastest, most reliable home broadband service for their Internet surfing or communication needs. Business is conducted anywhere – at home, in the coffee shop, while waiting for a plane - think of some of the places you have been while participating in a conference call or working on your latest presentation. Our advanced, high-IQ networks create an economic development advantage for Sarasota and certainly the members of The Sarasota Chamber of Commerce.

We have always been a proud partner with Sarasota, a partnership built on more than leading edge technology. In 2010, nonprofit groups in Florida received \$2,158,109 from the Verizon Foundation; some of whom were in the Sarasota region. The majority of the funds went to organizations that support education, domestic violence prevention and Internet safety.

Verizon will continue to create the communications platforms that define tomorrow while using today to strengthen our partnership with The Chamber and our communities.

Non-Profit Spotlight

Jefferson Center, Inc.

Administrator

Dawn S. Lucido CASPF

Organization's Mission

Jefferson Center's mission is to provide a caring community for low to moderate income seniors, 62 and older, who need affordable housing in Sarasota. Rentals include utilities and basic cable TV starting at \$427 per month. "Equal Housing Opportunity."

Organization's History

Jefferson Center has a wonderful story to tell. As far back as 1958, a group of Unitarians had concerns about the scarcity of retirement housing in the state of Florida. In 1965 Sarasota Unitarian Universalists secured funding from the Federal government to support this low-cost not-for-profit, retirement housing development project. Through donations and government funding Jefferson Center became a reality in Sarasota. In 1968 Jefferson Center was formally dedicated and the first residents moved in.

Over the past 42 years JC has provided a

comfortable, safe home for so many residents who need affordable housing. To apply, applicants must be 62 years of age or older, their income verified to meet HUD-established income limits (in 2009 for one person the income limit is \$34,900 and for two persons it's \$39,900. Credit and criminal background checks are also done.

Types of Programs Offered

Jefferson Center provides 209 efficiency and one bedroom apartments for seniors of all races, religions, national origin and sexual orientation. It was established in 1968 under the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Section 202 guidelines. Over 200 residents enjoy reasonable rentals.

A well stocked library, lounge, recreation room, wide patios and a second-floor screened patio add to the community activities organized by the Residents Council. A laundromat and beauty salon are conveniently located on the premises.



A 20-passenger bus takes residents shopping weekly.

Number of People Served

230 citizens of Sarasota reside at Jefferson Center.

How Can Chamber Members Help

Volunteer opportunities and donations to the Jefferson Center Foundation that benefit our residents are welcome.

For more information, visit www.jeffersoncenter.net.



The WBRC Gulf Coast Team, from left: Courtney Webster, Kevin Meserve, Laura Adcock, Doug Whitney

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CHAMBER SUPPORTS ECONOMIC ENGINES...

This summer The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce strongly supported moving the Sarasota Institute for the Ages business plan forward. The Chamber encouraged the Board of County Commissioners to approve multi-year funding to help start the job-creating "SIA," and the GSCC pledges some of its Sarasota Tomorrow funds to the institute. An economic impact study completed by Dr. Shaun Snaith of UCF projected that the SIA would create 750 to 800 jobs over the next decade and generate over \$100 million of annual economic activity when it comes to scale.

The Chamber also supported the County's approval of tax abatement for several firms that qualified for this business incentive through the creation of new, quality jobs. Together, the firms processed for this benefit over the summer will add several hundreds of good-paying jobs to the local economy, as well as investing in equipment and their facilities here.

The Chamber's Sarasota Tomorrow initiative led the charge to pass last year's ballot initiative that created the new tax exemption for good jobs ordinance, and the fruits of this labor are showing this year with both local firms deciding to expand in our market and firms new to greater Sarasota deciding to invest in this market.

The Membership Experience Team

A Group Dedicated to Maximizing your Chamber Experience

In response to The Chamber wide survey that was completed in July, we have restructured our team to focus on the “membership experience” at The Chamber. This team of professionals was formed to make each and every component of membership as effective and impactful as possible. From the initial sales presentation, to member services, events and all communication, the team will work closely together to make the member’s experience as rewarding as possible.

The person chosen to lead the charge in this dedicated effort is Heather Kasten, who was recently promoted to Vice President of The Membership Experience. She has most recently worked in Membership Development and will continue in that effort as well. Her background includes sales management, events, communications with Eli Lilly and Six Flags Theme Parks.

“We want to be your partner in business,” says Kasten, “By providing services and products that help each member to grow and promote their business. By offering exposure, events and education, The Chamber makes sense for any business owner or non-profit wanting to spread the word about what they do. The chambers exists to be the active voice of business, build a better community, and create opportunities for our members and to work for a strong economy here in Greater Sarasota.”

Leading a team of six professionals, Heather will work to have all parts of the membership experience (membership development, membership services, advertising/promotions, events and communication) work seamlessly together in every aspect that affects you as a member. From how we communicate to you, the events we produce, to the way you receive information, we will be honing in on the things you most value as a member and connecting our members to the community and each other.

The first face you will meet as a Chamber Member is Matt Gower, as Director of Membership Development he works with businesses of all shapes and sizes both here in Sarasota and the surrounding areas. His goal is to share the mission and vision of the chamber. That goal is to maximize our member’s success, the community’s competitiveness and the area’s economic strength. Matt meets with business owners both at The Chamber and at their business locations. So if you know a business that is currently not a member

of The Chamber, give Matt a call so we can continue grow and work hard for Sarasota businesses and non-profits.

Jamie Overmiller is the Membership Coordinator, she handles all of the membership/business profile updates, events registration, user name and password inquires and general membership questions. In addition, she works closely with the Membership Benefits and Events Council (MBEC), Business and Networking Groups (B.A.N.G) committee and The Chamber Partners.



Sally Rose Gruters, Brittany Lamont, Jamie Overmiller, Matthew Gower, Heather Kasten, Shannon O’Brien, and Morgan Gerhart

Morgan Gerhart is the Membership Services Specialist. Morgan’s focus is to help members reach their business goals through Chamber membership. To welcome them, engage them and assist them in fully utilizing all the tools we have to offer. There are so many benefits derived from Chamber membership both for those who are active and those who do not have the time and Morgan is here to help you find them. She is responsible for Membership Care and Volunteer Engagement, so if you want to find out how to maximize your membership contact Morgan at mgerhart@sarasotachamber.com or 941-556-4031.

Sally Rose Gruters is the Promotional Director of Advertising. Her role at The Chamber is to help members receive maximum exposure throughout the business community by using the various marketing avenues The Chamber has to offer. From Ribbon Cuttings to Sponsorships, Print to Web media, Sally will work with you individually to customize a marketing strategy to reach your company goals.

Brittany Lamont is the Communications Manager and handles all of the marketing, public relations, publications and website

for The Chamber. She helps members stay connected to Chamber news and activities through our wide variety of communications, including our events calendar, The Bridge, and Epoint Newsletter, as well as help members reach their maximum benefits through our many different tools such as our community calendar, press release, and member directory.

Shannon O’Brien is the Special Events Manager. Shannon’s primary responsibility is to plan and execute all of the annual, quarterly and Trustee events that The Chamber holds. She manages all details required to ensure a successful event such as site selection, vendor and contract negotiations, event marketing design and promotion, sponsorship solicitation, theme development, staff and volunteer coordination, budget management, registration and all post-event follow-up. In addition to her event planning responsibilities, she maintains the master calendar, develops annual sponsorship packages, maintains overall and liquor liabilities and sits on the Membership Benefits and Events council.

The membership team is here to help, so if you’re looking to gain exposure for your business through advertising or sponsoring an event or if you have questions on benefits, publications or online tools let us know, we would love to hear from you!



Out and About

First Monday August 1



Photos Courtesy of Syd Krawczyk, Concept Digital Media

Mega Mingle August 10



Photos Courtesy of Syd Krawczyk, Concept Digital Media

Board Retreat/Trustee Reception August 19th



Trustee Inductions



John Cranor, AFC Enterprises; David Shapiro, Shapiro Goldman Babboni & Walsh; Paul Smith, Sarasota Family YMCA; Marc Simms, RPM Business Advisors, LLC; Bob Messick, Icard, Merrill, Cullis, Timm, Furen & Ginsburg, P.A.; and Shaun Merriman, Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida

Member Ribbon Cuttings June 1- August 15

Thank you for your commitment to The Greater Sarasota community!



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www.sleepnumber.com



Jet's Pizza
www.jetspizza.com



Frank G. Berlin, Sr. YMCA Branch
 Indoor Cycling
www.sarasota-ymca.org



SkinSmart Dermatology
www.sarasotadermatologist.com



Cohen Florida
www.cohenflorida.com



Coastal Behavioral Healthcare, Inc.
www.coastalbh.org

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