



January 2011

Dear ICCE Members:

Happy New Year! I hope 2011 will be a prosperous one for you, your chamber, and the community you serve. Remember, ICCE is here to help in your success!

In times of tight budgets, every expense must be examined and justified. Thankfully, it is **easy** to justify our ICCE membership. Here's a few quick bullet points to remind your board the value ICCE membership brings to your chamber:

- Professional Development through conferences, training, and networking
- Scholarships
- Legislative Information and Education
- Listserve—our web-based information exchange
- Assistance with recruitment of chamber professionals
- Liaisons with state agencies and business organizations

In addition to renewing your ICCE membership, I hope one of your 2011 resolutions will be to invest in your own career development. Enrolling in credential programs such as the Institute for Organizational Management (IOM) or Certified Chamber Executive (CCE) brings credibility to your chamber and to our profession. Attending professional conferences (ICCE, MACE, ACCE) helps you build valuable relationships and creates a network of idea sharing.

Chambers that invest in the professional development of their staff operate more efficiently, experience lower turnover, and provide more effective leadership for their members and communities.

Attending our ICCE Winter Conference and Annual Meeting next month in West Des Moines is a great place to start. I'll look forward to seeing many of you there.

Cheers!

Robin Anderson
Mason City Area Chamber of Commerce - President
ICCE President

SAVE THE DATES 2011

February 17-18

ICCE Conference &
Annual Meeting -
West Des Moines
Marriott

April - TBA

ICCE Staff and
Volunteer Leadership
Conference
Featuring Institute
Instructor
Sam Erkonen
Des Moines/Ames
area

May 11-13

MACE

Okoboji

www.maceconference.com

ICCE February 2011 Conference and Annual Meeting

The ICCE Board has put together another topic filled conference for you February 17 and 18 at the West Des Moines Marriott. Listed below is a tentative agenda. We've reviewed your input and designed this conference to meet your needs..

We have confirmed that Governor elect Branstad and Lt Governor elect Reynolds will be joining us the afternoon of the 17th for a presentation and Q and A session. We will also have updates from the US Chamber, the Chamber Alliance and legislators.

While the conference is business casual, we request business attire for the Annual Meeting. During the Annual Meeting we will review ICCE activities, announce ICCE scholarships awards, recognize those that have completed their Institute experience, and of course present the Executive of the Year Award.

One membership benefit that we want to point out to everyone is the opportunity for peer counseling. ICCE Board members and those that have been in the business for an extended career are available for confidential counseling/mentoring for those questions that you need answered but do not want to explore in a group setting. If you are interested in a one on one session during the conference please contact Sara Mentzer at smentzer@cedarrapids.org to coordinate with a Board member or exec who would best be able to help you. Again, these are confidential.

Register now! And don't forget your Exec of the Year and Scholarship application!

Thursday – February 17, 2011

9:00 am registration begins

10:00 am –Debi Durham, Iowa Department of Economic Development

11:00 am – Legislative and Congressional Update – Doug Loon, Jay Byers and John Stineman

Noon – Michael Gould – Running Effective Meetings and Organizational Best Practices (no cost)

2:00 pm –Governor Branstad and Lt Governor Reynolds

3:00 pm – break

3:15 pm - What the watershed discussion means to economic development, local communities and regulations -

4:15 pm - Roundtables

6:00 pm Annual Reception and Dinner

Friday – February 18, 2011

8:00 – Breakfast open

8:30 am- legislative panel – Representative Scott Raecker, others TBA

10:00 am - Dues Schedule Presentation and Discussion on Current Trends



Iowa Chamber of Commerce Executives

**Winter Conference and
Annual Meeting 2011
February 17 & 18, 2011
West Des Moines Marriott**

Registration Information - \$189 per person for ICCE Members (does not include hotel)

Name _____ Title _____
Organization _____
Email _____

Additional Names, Titles and Emails

Name _____ Title _____
Email _____

Name _____ Title _____
Email _____

Check { } Credit Card VISA MC AmEx

Name on Card _____

Organization Address _____

Card Number _____ Exp _____ security code _____

Email registration to smentzer@cedarrapids.org or mail with check to: 424 1st Ave NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52401

Hotel Reservations can be made at West Des Moines Marriott by calling 1-800-228-9290.

The ICCE room rate is \$104.00 per night and the block will expire on January 29, 2011.

THE OTHER CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

by Chris Mead

The recent political conflict between the Obama Administration and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has thrown a new spotlight on an old communication problem. Local chambers of commerce, although they predate the U.S. Chamber by nearly a century and a half, often are assumed to be part of the U.S. Chamber, or otherwise under its direction. They aren't. They are independent.

During the pre-election controversy this year, it was clear that many people, including many chamber members, did not know this fact. They believe that U.S. Chamber President Tom Donohue and his colleagues on H Street directly or indirectly control all that local chambers do. But Donohue and his staff don't exercise such control, nor do they want to.

Few people think about what chambers do locally. For example, who knows that Elliot Tiber, president of the Bethel, N.Y., Chamber of Commerce, secured the permit for Woodstock?

It was also a local chamber – the Business Men's League of Atlantic City – that came up in 1920 with the idea of a festival to keep tourists in town after Labor Day. Pretty women in beachwear would turn out to be the centerpiece of the annual event. We have that business group (now called the Greater Atlantic City Chamber) to thank for the Miss America Contest.

Was Charles Lindbergh's plane called *The Spirit of Enterprise* (the U.S. Chamber's tag line)? No, the flying bucket of bolts was, of course, *The Spirit of St. Louis*. The president of the St. Louis Chamber came up with the name in order to promote the great river city. And why should Lindbergh object? The chamber president also raised most of the money for the aircraft.

And who sent out the promotional brochure that enticed the first movie producer to southern California in 1907? It was the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce. In nearby Hollywood a chamber was later active as well, helping re-fashion the famous Hollywood sign out of a decaying advertisement for a real estate development called "Hollywoodland."

Moreover, there's a guy in a suit present next to the glamorous celebrities who get their photos taken when their stars are set in the Hollywood sidewalk. Who is that business man? It's Leron Gubler, president of the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, which invented and maintains the Walk of Fame.

Most of the thousands of things that local chambers have done and do are far removed from the big national issues that embroil the U.S. Chamber. Sure, most of the chambers in the country agree with and support the lion's share of the U.S. Chamber's positions. Although the goals are often the same, the priorities, issues, methods, leadership and, importantly, ownership are not.

Local chambers have shown themselves perfectly able to get into fights of their own, without orders from a non-existent chamber of commerce command center.

Was it the national chamber's president who financed *the Florida and Alabama*, the ships that terrorized Union merchants during the Civil War? No, it was George Trenholm, one of the most active members of the Charleston (SC) Chamber of Commerce. As president of the chamber, Trenholm had asked for a thorough federal charting of the waterways around the Charleston harbor. The survey provided valuable navigation information that became critical when Trenholm emerged a decade later not only as privateer king of the

Confederacy but also as chief sponsor of blockade runners. (Some believe he was a model for Rhett Butler in *Gone with the Wind*.)

But it wasn't as if all chambers were Confederates. It was the New York Chamber of Commerce that furnished a cash reward of \$25,000 to the captain and crew of the Kearsarge, which finally *sank the Alabama*.

There have been other times when local chambers have performed roles worthy of national headlines. During Prohibition, a liquor wholesaler named Al Capone was seen as bad for business by the president of the Chicago Association of Commerce, Colonel Robert Isham Randolph. In an act of some courage, Randolph personally warned Capone and created a chamber subcommittee, popularly called the "Secret Six," that engineered Capone's downfall. The Six hired a consultant named Alexander Jamie to gather information, especially financial information, on Capone. Jamie brought in his brother-in-law, Eliot Ness, to help. Capone later credited the Secret Six with taking him down.

Of course the local chambers have made their share of mistakes over the years. The St. Louis Chamber of Commerce once tried to stop the first railroad bridge across the Mississippi, but was stymied in court by the common sense and careful research of a folksy lawyer named Abraham Lincoln. And the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce successfully pushed for easing the quarantine regulations on ships in its harbor, after which a yellow fever-laden ship travelled up the Mississippi and nearly wiped out Memphis in 1878.

But if you take some water and add a chamber, the result can be a megalopolis. Starting in 1840, the Houston Chamber with single-minded determination pushed for the removal of snags and mud from the Buffalo Bayou, which trickled on a circuitous 50-mile path to the sea. In the late 1800s, rain melted the salt on a barge on the bayou, and the Galveston News cackled that Houston finally had a salt-water port. But the laughing stopped on September 8, 1900, when a hurricane flattened Galveston.

Houston overnight became a critical port for Texas, just in time for the Spindletop oil bonanza of January 10, 1901. The chamber would continue to push for improvements on what became the Houston Ship Channel, guaranteeing decades of future growth. Today, the chamber, now called the Greater Houston Partnership, is anticipating the shipping/economic impact of the opening of the second Panama Canal.

Some national change in the country's economic model has sprung directly from the actions of chambers. The Chicago Board of Trade, a chamber founded in 1848, revolutionized how its members bought and sold farm commodities, becoming so successful that by 1859 it essentially left the traditional chamber business. Instead, the Board of Trade continued to plow the virgin soil of this new financial field, inventing futures contracts and modern commodities trading.

And so it goes. The Birmingham (AL) Chamber of Commerce belatedly, but successfully, broke the power of segregationist Bull Connor and promoted integration of the downtown, while the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce president negotiated the accord that, in a celebrated speech, Martin Luther King defended by saying, "If anyone breaks this contract, let it be the white man." Segregation, especially racial conflict and the resulting negative publicity, was bad for business, and chambers took the side of peaceful integration in many (although not all) cities throughout the South.

So much of what we think of as America was facilitated or aided by those often forgotten, always resourceful groups known as local chambers of commerce. Whether it's the Golden Gate Bridge, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, the statue of Vulcan over Birmingham, commission and city manager forms of government, United Way-style giving, Baltimore's Inner Harbor, and so much more – it was local chambers that led the way.

The U.S. Chamber was fighting for business and free enterprise principles in Washington, but it was local chambers working “on the ground” that helped plant so many of these seeds across the nation.

Each of the local chambers is vastly smaller than the U.S. Chamber, but collectively they have had a large impact. As in so many things, it has been the local organizations, not merely the national ones, that have shaped this country’s enterprise culture.

Chris Mead is senior vice president of the American Chamber of Commerce Executives. He is working on a history of local chambers of commerce in the United States.

<http://www.newgeography.com/content/001881-the-other-chambers-commerce>

Mid America Chamber Executives

MACE, Mid America Chamber Executives, is your organization serving chamber professionals in Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota and Nebraska.

Is your chamber a member of MACE? YES! Your chamber is a member of MACE through your membership dues to ICCE. It’s one of the benefits of your membership.

MACE provides continuing education through an annual conference, the MACE Newslines and in 2011, a webinar series.

The MACE conference is set for May 11 – 13 in Okoboji, Iowa at the Arrowwood Resort. The schedule will include Chamber industry leaders, political information and the ever popular roundtables. The details are still being ironed out, so watch your state website, newsletter and the MACE Newslines for new information.

The MACE Newslines are new in 2010. The weekly email is full of news articles, chamber programs and job openings from our five state region. The Newslines are brought to you by the efforts of our sponsors, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Constant Contact and Chamber Master. Be sure to click through to learn more information about how they can help your chamber. If your chamber has a great program or top news, send in your article or the link to your newspaper to chad@dowellstute.com.

Coming soon to MACE is a new webinar series that will feature best practices, industry leaders and hot topics. The webinars will be offered to MACE members and is another benefit of your membership. Watch the Newslines for dates and speaker information.

Information is also available at www.maceconference.com

Developing a Board Policy on Transparency

By Bob Harris, CAE

Introduction

The concept for transparency and openness is popular in government and appointed boards to promote awareness. In private associations, chambers and other nonprofits, many boards of directors have followed the example.

Transparency should remove perceptions of secrecy and closed door sessions. To communicate the guiding principle of transparency, many organizations have adopted it as a value for the board and staff. Yet is it important not to confuse transparency with the disclosure of confidential information. The intent is to be responsive (or pro-active) when information is requested in the appropriate settings and when it is relevant. It should not be interpreted as a standard for disclosing every document or holding open door meetings. In addition to adopting a value or guiding principle expressing transparency, some organizations have developed a policy statement.

Policy Sample

The Board of Directors desires to conduct business in an atmosphere that is open and transparent with the goal of promoting trust and understanding. Unless there are compelling reasons to the contrary¹, the organization is responsive to members and the public who request relevant information affecting them and actions of the Board in a timely fashion.

The organization realizes that it requires resources (staff time, copies, summaries, for example) to assure that this policy is achieved. Recognizing that transparency requires ongoing efforts, the organization will work to identify new means to communicate effectively with the membership (i.e. executive summaries, access through technology.)

To promote transparency, the organization will:

1. Share on a timely basis with the membership and appropriate persons:

Discussion and decisions made in board meetings that are not executive sessions, as recorded in meeting minutes.

Public records as set by law.

The financial position of the organization as reported and/or certified by an independent auditor.

Board approved policies and positions.

Information on organizational structure.

Other information as may be determined to be of importance to members and stakeholders.

2. Encourage participation of members in leadership activities and solicit their input to benefit the board's decision-making process.

3. Balance the intent for openness --- with sensitivity to privacy, confidentiality, and the need for free and frank discussion at the board table.

Note: Be sure to rely on legal and accounting counsel for guidance on transparency.

Credit: The sample policy on transparency and openness was provided by the CFA Institute. Adapted with permission.

http://www.cfainstitute.org/about/governance/Documents/board_openness_and_transparency_policy.pdf
Policy on Transparency Sample 12-10.doc bob@rchcae.com www.nonprofitcenter.com