



# 2006 Annual Report

January 11, 2007

Karen Wintrow, President

Adrienne Chesire, Chamber Coordinator

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## **Report from the Board of Directors**

### **Strategic Plan**

In the fall of 2005, Chamber members voted to work with Jane Dockery of the Wright State University Center for Urban and Public Affairs (CUPA) to help us complete a Strategic Plan. The project began with a focus group with representatives of various business and economic interests in the community. Additionally, the Chamber membership was surveyed. A planning committee including the 2006 Board and several past Board presidents worked with Jane through a series of meetings to outline the general scope of the strategic plan and also to develop an Operations Plan for addressing the “business of the Chamber”. The planning committee then worked for months to finalize the plan that was presented to the membership on May 11. The Strategic Plan is an active, working document that will be referenced as we establish goals and updated as the Chamber recognizes the need to consider new directions.

### **Bylaws**

As part of the strategic planning process, it was recognized that the By-laws under which the Chamber was operating was inadequate for an organization of our size and scope. The Strategic Planning Committee worked on new By-laws at the same time as the strategic plan was being written. The process was thorough with several meetings required including a final special meeting for member input. The final By-laws were approved unanimously by the members at the September 14 meeting.

### **Newsletter**

The monthly newsletter is the primary means of communicating with our members. It is mailed at least 1 week before the membership meeting and contains information regarding meeting agenda, Chamber activities and community events.

### **Business After Hours**

The Chamber Golf Outing at Young’s was the kick-off event for Business After Hours. Our October event was hosted by Sherryl Kostic of “would you, could you” In A Frame and the November event was hosted by Gregory Frank of Gregory’s House of Wonder. All three events have been wonderful social occasions to relax with our fellow Chamber and community members. Future Business After Hours, held on the third Thursday of each month, will include educational opportunities for our members.

### **Community Information Project**

In 2004 the Chamber became one of many co-sponsors of the Community Information Project (CIP). In 2005 the CIP conducted an External Perceptions Survey of regional opinions about Yellow Springs as a place to shop, recreate, live or work. The Chamber helped to organize a presentation and discussion of the survey results that drew over 50 participants.

In 2006, working with a consultant, the CIP developed a signature logo, tagline and website, which along with beautiful pole banners throughout town, were rolled out at the fall Street Fair to much fanfare. Since the introduction of the identity, the CIP has worked on a cooperative holiday marketing campaign with the Chamber that modified the logo to identify Yellow Springs as a place to visit for the holidays. The logo was seen in print ads in the Dayton Daily News and Springfield News Sun; the



website was referenced in several spots on WYSO and the logo was also a featured banner on both the WYSO and Dayton Daily News website.

## **Financial Overview**

### **Report from the Chamber Coordinator**

**Membership** – Membership has increased over the past year. In January 2006 the Chamber had 258 members, one year later we have 270. Out of these members 172 are local members and 98 are non-local or associate members.

**Street Fairs** – Both Street Fairs were exceptional successful this year.

The June Street Fair received great press which featured Yellow Springs on both a local Dayton TV station as well as a Columbus TV Station. We also received cover photos 4 local publications. Entertainment Aerial Angels brought publicity from all over Southern Ohio, getting Yellow Springs multiple Newspaper covers and TV coverage in Dayton & Columbus.

October Street Fair was amazing, for the first time since I started here we finally had good weather. Locals claimed it was the biggest street Fair turn out they had seen in years. Greene County Convention and Visitors Bureau commissioned a professional camera man to photograph the event for future event calendars. A DVD of the Belly Dancers was filmed, which will be shown tonight.

**Marketing Seminars** - Last January the Chamber of Commerce along with CIP sponsored 3 marketing seminars. These seminars were well attended and well received. Many business owners and merchants were on hand to cover a multitude of topics, such as Karl Koehler's "Marketing ideas that really work"; "Niche Marketing" with Fred Bartenstein, Dino Pelle, Karen Wintrow, and Adrienne Chesire; and finally "Is anybody listening?" which featured Ellen Hoover, and downtown merchants Roger Hart, Mike Koveleski, Terre Pope, Marsha Walgren, and Mary Alice Wilson.

The three seminars reinforced the idea that you need to find your specific place in the business market, accentuate your positive points, focus on customer service and use gorilla marketing tactics to get your name out there. Many attendees left these seminars feeling educated and recharged for the new year, which was evident by the level of drive and excitement the merchants continued to show throughout the year.

**Advertising Campaigns-** The Chamber of Commerce coordinated 4 advertising campaigns this year. Approximately 40 businesses and organizations participated in these campaigns highlighting Yellow Springs as a destination.

We started with Waterways and Pathways a bike path and tourism magazine that is distributed all along the Little Miami Scenic Trail, 37 merchants participated. The Marketing committee then came up with the inspired slogan "Catch Springs Fever" which led us into our Spring Campaign. We combined forces with YS Pottery and their "Cabin Fever Sale" as well as with the Buy Local Campaign planned an exciting Art Stroll Buy Local weekend. A beautiful logo was designed by John Davis (see attachment) which we continued to use until CIP presented us with their all encompassing logo for Yellow Springs (see attachment), 20 merchants participated in that campaign which included spots on WYSO, and logo placement.

During the summer the Marketing Committee came up with another campaign which combined City Paper with WYSO. In this 26 week \$5000.00 campaign each business got an ad on the back page of City Paper, the village received 5 weeks of event advertising and each merchant again received a spot on WYSO, 21 merchants participated at a cost of only \$100.00

Finally the Marketing Committee wrapped up the year long campaign with a Holiday Advertising package, worth close to \$7000.00. This Ad Campaign ran in Dayton Daily News in print format and on their website, Springfield News & Sun, and WYSO. Our final Campaign for the year helped to publicize Yellow Springs as a place to do your holiday Shopping as well as publicized our new amped



up Holiday in the Village Event, the Explore Yellow Springs website, and the new Yellow Springs Logo, 31 business participated for \$130.00 each.

**Events-** The Chamber of Commerce sponsored many successful events this year which, along with our advertising campaigns, helped to reinforce the idea that Yellow Springs is more than just a village in the Dayton area but rather a destination the whole family can enjoy. The majority of these events were planned and promoted by a very active marketing Committee headed by local business owner Priscilla Moore.

Holiday in the Village was a big success this year with committee members working tirelessly to make the Village festive and fun for the Holidays. We brought in a new Santa Claus (Jimmy Chesire) who sat upon a great throne dedicated by the Odd Fellows in the colorfully decorated Little Art Theater which Jenny Cowperthwaite generously donated for the day. Over 40 children came in to share their wish lists with Santa, which Santa then wrote about in a charming story for the YS News.

Prior to that we had a year packed with events, practically something every weekend. During the summer we sponsored the first annual PT Cruiser car show at Young's which brought car enthusiasts to Yellow Springs for a the weekend and delivered a rather unusual car parade to the streets of downtown. We also helped to support YSKP's first summer play series, which we hope to see continue next year. WYSO's first summer concert series was also held this last summer and brought fun local music to the Antioch Campus.

One of our most surprising events though was tied in with Art Stroll, The Chamber Pot Gallery. The credit for this media explosion should be given to Nancy Mellon and Corrine Bayraktaroglu. Their creative minds came up with a plan to display fine art in the bathrooms and suddenly we made international news with reports spreading as far as China and Italy about Yellow Springs' own public restroom art show. We still receive guests at the Train Station looking to see "that art show in the bathrooms".

All in all this year was packed with exciting and unique events which really put Yellow Springs back on the map as not just a place to go but as something to do. I would like to thank all of the people who helped bring all of these events, and the ones I haven't mentioned, together. Without all of the enthusiasm of local merchants and organizations none of this could have been possible. We really worked hard this year and I believe we did an amazing job. It was really fun to be a local in 2006 and to be a part of such a driven Chamber of Commerce, thank you to everyone who contributed.

**Other Media-** This year the Chamber of Commerce was commissioned to assist in and create two video productions about Yellow Springs. The first was with ONN, the Ohio News Network, in which Yellow Springs was featured in a Travel Show about Ohio. Karen Wintrow and Adrienne Chesire worked with the ONN video production team to create a 5 minute segment about Yellow Springs. Many people participated in this segment including, the new Glen Director, Nick Boutis, and Marketing Committee chair, Priscilla Moore.

We were also asked by the Greene County Convention and Visitors bureau to create a promotional piece for national celebrity chef Rachel Ray. Rachel Ray is planning on a creating a show about art centered and cultural towns in Ohio which she will then visit. Upon contacting her people we were told to create a DVD about the Egyptian Breeze Belly Dancers who perform at the Yellow Springs Street Fair. Adrienne Chesire with the help of Kevin Gevedon a local videographer and his intern Matt Carson, created a fascinating 4 minute piece and sent it off to Rachel Ray. We are still, at this time, awaiting a response from New York. Both of these segment s will be shown tonight.

**Web Site-** (See attached documents.) Daily Hits have increase by over 250%, from 1,428 to 3,662. Thank yous should be given to Michael Cannon, Marketing Committee for their campaigns, the CIP and their Explore Yellow Springs webpage, for increasing our web presence.

**Looking to 2007 (Combined)**



As we begin the new year I see a renewed energy and excitement in Yellow Springs. Our downtown looks bright and beautiful with so many new paint jobs and remodeled building fronts. Merchants and organizations seem eager and willing to participate in group advertising and the effect is palpable. The Chamber of Commerce is planning on continuing their advertising blitz, with quarterly ad campaigns and more events.

We have a lot to look forward to and I, personally, am excited to be a part of it all. Thank you all who have put blood sweat and tears in to Yellow Springs and to all of you who plan on doing it again.