Names Named; Secrets Revealed

What Happened. How I saw it.
Denton Chamber of Commerce
1976-77 * 1982-2018

Everyone is entitled to their own individual opinion regarding events, places and personalities. I've assembled an informal collection of my thoughts about people and occurrences encountered during two different stints with the Denton Chamber.
Space and fading memory naturally attribute to the absence of many notable individuals and exploits.

C.W. Carpenter

LOT OF MOVING PARTS

At one time, the Denton Chamber of Commerce had a lot of moving parts.

To my knowledge, no other chamber in the Dallas-Fort Worth area housed an economic development department, convention & visitor bureau, small business development center and leadership program all under one roof, with one central board of directors.

Including our downtown welcome center, DentonRadio.Com and a visible presence during state legislative sessions, I'm amazed we were able to synchronize our standing membership events with limited staff and financial resources.

I consider it a point of personal pride that all this was still intact when I retired.

If asked, however, I wouldn't recommend this model for everyone. I believe the colloquial expression is: *Not your daddy's chamber of commerce anymore.*

FIVE GLORIOUS YEARS

"I'm waiting for you to say yes."

The date was August 30, 1982. Less than a week earlier, I had interviewed with the executive committee of the Denton Chamber of Commerce. Dave Krause was in the middle of his term as the chief voluntary officer; he owned the local Toyota dealership.

Hmm… Go back to Denton?

Leave the most thriving corner of Dallas County… a secure position with a respected, well-funded organization… wife had a promising career with American Airlines, ten minutes from our house… let's see… how bad do I want to serve as executive vice president of the Denton Chamber?

After graduating from Baylor University, I was hired in February 1976 to establish a new convention & visitor division for the Denton Chamber. Other than two years as a student intern with the Waco Chamber, I didn't have much experience nor a job description. But I was grateful to be employed.

NOVEMBER, 1977

Convention/Visitors Hard at work

Jo Storer and Helen Lyons of the Denton Beta Sigma Phi discuss their presentation with C/V Director Churck Carpenter prior to their bid for the organization's 1978 area convention in Mount Pleasant, Texas. Denton won the bid. (STORY ON FRONT PAGE)

I was one for one, bidding and winning the annual meeting of the Beta Sigma Phi in Mount Pleasant in 1977.

At the start of my second year, the chamber exec was fired, the organization was broke and the volunteer leadership was restless. I was miserable.

Las Colinas and Texas Stadium were altering the face and dynamics of Irving, Texas. Few realized that one-third of the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport was within the city limits. In December 1977, Bill Stevens was a salvation.

Bill turned over everything related to programs, events and services to me. He dreamed up all kinds of fascinating initiatives and secured the money; I implemented them. I was young, creative and energetic. I loved it.

In turn, he looked after Kathy and me as if we were his own kids. We were both compensated generously, complemented bountifully and spent five glorious years in Irving.

When Bill announced his retirement in March 1982, the ideal candidate would need to be a slick golf enthusiast who could relate to the increasing number of *suits* occupying the high-rise office buildings around Las Colinas.

The board saw me as the kid who did all the grunt work. I probably could've maintained my support role for a little while, but Dave Krause called.

I couldn’t imagine staying long but accepted the offer. As a caveat, I mentioned that we would probably rent out our house in Irving, anticipating that we would return if things got out of hand.

Dave insisted that Denton was a free-standing community. Representing the local chamber required a personal and visible commitment to keep it that way. Today I understand and appreciate his stance.

CHARLES CARPENTER

CC names new executive officer

By STEVE HUENNEKE
Business Editor

Charles W. "Chuck" Carpenter — no stranger to the city — was named this morning as new Chamber of Commerce executive vice president. He will be ready to work full time on Sept. 20.

Carpenter, 29, was a staff executive with the Denton Chamber between Feb. 1976 and Dec. 1977. At that time, he broke ground as the first local Convention and Visitors Bureau director after the Denton City Council established a 3 percent occupancy tax in Dec. 1975. The Henderson native is presently assistant manager of the Irving Chamber of Commerce.

While earning a communications degree at Baylor University, Carpenter worked as administrative assistant for the Waco Chamber of Commerce from August 1973 to November 1975.

Carpenter said he considered his new job move a homecoming.

"It's sort of a sentimental thing to come back to the chamber where I really got started," said Carpenter. "I was very flattered the board of directors let me return after five years."

Since former director Frank Atkins resigned in late July, the chamber's board of directors received 29 resumes from all over the country, said Chamber President Dave Krause. Krause said five applicants were given serious consideration.

"We feel his (Carpenter's) background and enthusiasm are what we need," said Krause. Krause said the fact Carpenter already had experience with the Denton chamber was an additional plus for hiring him.

Carpenter said his major goal will be to "re-establish the program that's already here." He said he would advocate more membership involvement in the chamber program.

The new director said he will form a small volunteer sales team to recruit more members and he will be calling on members to donate more of their time and resources to the organization.

Carpenter's wife, Katherine Ann, is a reservation agent for American Airlines. The Carpenters have no children.

He is a graduate of the Institute of Organization Management, a program jointly sponsored by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and SMU.

FIRST DAY

My first day back in Denton was September 20, 1982, and the monthly board of directors meeting. The chamber’s financial status hadn’t improved; I inherited a declining membership and an unpaid note on the building.

My predecessor was mainly interested in working big industry prospects; he recruited the Peterbilt assembly plant and Tetra Pak. Apparently salvaging delinquent memberships wasn’t a priority. He probably thought coordinating events was an unnecessary waste of time.

An effective organization requires a strong board of directors. The chamber exec must interact with personalities that make gazillion dollar decisions by the minute, with limited resources to back the persona. Clashes are frequent, authority is often undermined.

GLAD YOU’RE HERE, SEE YOU LATER

While reviewing the membership report prior to the meeting, I noticed practically every account on the subject to drop list had been sold through an outside contract the previous year. The monthly financials reflected the negative cash flow.

The executive committee emphasized the need for more general membership activities. The chamber sponsored an annual agri-business tour, a Christmas Decorations contest and a Pops Concert by the University of North Texas Music Department, benefiting the local arts council.

Good stuff, but honestly our rank-and-file members weren't interested. I could plainly see the chamber was doing all the heavy lifting without any net financial gain. I understood why my predecessor lost interest.

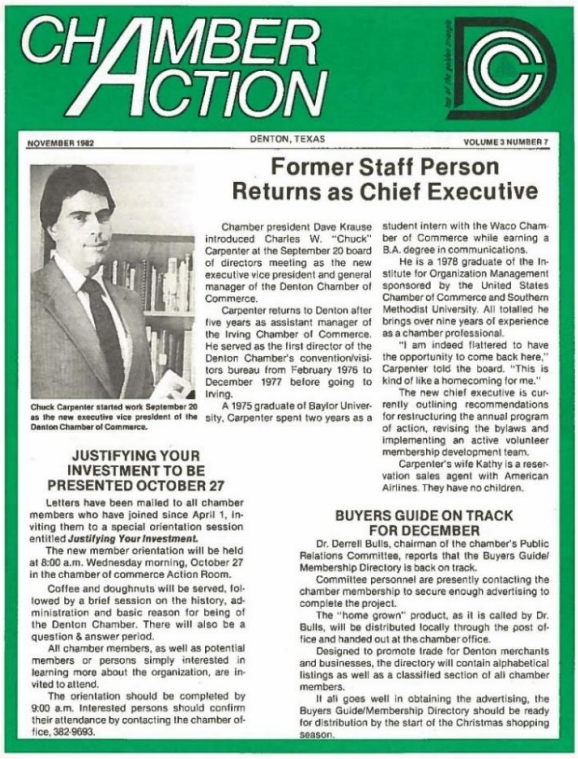
The board met in a separate dining area at the local Wyatt's Cafeteria; I already knew many of them from my previous stint in 1976-77. I was 29 years old, surrounded by white men, most of whom were my dad's age. A few could have been my grandfather.

Conversely, the top leadership appeared to be recycled. No fresh blood, limited talent pool, clique mentality.

I stumbled through the membership report and financials and then gave a clever speech full of amusing clichés.

After the meeting, Dave propped his hand on my shoulder and assured me that he was proud of their decision to bring us back to Denton. Once the glad-handing concluded, Dave and the board vacated the property.

"What in *THE* world have I gotten myself into!"



CHAMBER ACTION

NOVEMBER 1982 | DENTON, TEXAS | VOLUME 3 NUMBER 7

Former Staff Person Returns as Chief Executive

Chuck Carpenter started work September 20 as the new executive vice president of the Denton Chamber of Commerce.

Chamber president Dave Krause introduced Charles W. "Chuck" Carpenter at the September 20 board of directors meeting as the new executive vice president and general manager of the Denton Chamber of Commerce.

Carpenter returns to Denton after five years as assistant manager of the Irving Chamber of Commerce. He served as the first director of the Denton Chamber's convention/visitors bureau from February 1976 to December 1977 before going to Irving.

A 1975 graduate of Baylor University, Carpenter spent two years as a student intern with the Waco Chamber of Commerce while earning a B.A. degree in communications.

He is a 1978 graduate of the Institute for Organization Management sponsored by the United States Chamber of Commerce and Southern Methodist University. All totalled he brings over nine years of experience as a chamber professional.

"I am indeed flattered to have the opportunity to come back here," Carpenter told the board. "This is kind of like a homecoming for me."

The new chief executive is currently outlining recommendations for restructuring the annual program of action, revising the bylaws and implementing an active volunteer membership development team.

Carpenter's wife Kathy is a reservation sales agent with American Airlines. They have no children.

JUSTIFYING YOUR INVESTMENT TO BE PRESENTED OCTOBER 27

Letters have been mailed to all chamber members who have joined since April 1, inviting them to a special orientation session entitled ***Justifying Your Investment.***

The new member orientation will be held at 8:00 a.m. Wednesday morning, October 27 in the chamber of commerce Action Room.

Coffee and doughnuts will be served, followed by a brief session on the history, administration and basic reason for being of the Denton Chamber. There will also be a question & answer period.

All chamber members, as well as potential members or persons simply interested in learning more about the organization, are invited to attend.

The orientation should be completed by 9:00 a.m. Interested persons should confirm their attendance by contacting the chamber office, 382-9693.

BUYERS GUIDE ON TRACK FOR DECEMBER

Dr. Derrell Bulls, chairman of the chamber's Public Relations Committee, reports that the Buyers Guide/Membership Directory is back on track.

Committee personnel are presently contacting the chamber membership to secure enough advertising to complete the project.

The "home grown" product, as it is called by Dr. Bulls, will be distributed locally through the post office and handed out at the chamber office.

Designed to promote trade for Denton merchants and businesses, the directory will contain alphabetical listings as well as a classified section of all chamber members.

If all goes well in obtaining the advertising, the Buyers Guide/Membership Directory should be ready for distribution by the start of the Christmas shopping season.

DEALING WITH DAVE

I was blessed with a reasonably high tolerance level and can usually get along with just about anyone.

Dave Krause didn't run a successful new car dealership, with two vacation homes in Hawaii, by being a congenial guy. He asked hard questions. Dave wasn't interested in diplomatic responses; he expected factual answers. He was dictatorial, blunt and expressed his opinion with no filter.

At the dealership, his office opened directly onto the showroom floor. No one screened his calls. He was short with thick curly hair; to me, he resembled Harpo Marx. His delivery was more like Donald Trump. He savored confrontation.

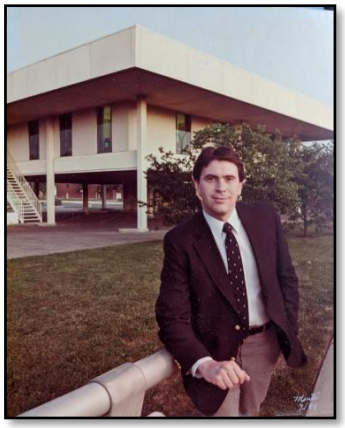
I couldn't find any record of Dave's offer being approved by the full board. Supposedly a group of past leadership met separately with Dave to reprimand him for making a unilateral decision. In true Dave fashion, he told them to *stick it.*

Knowing I only had to deal with him for six months, we managed to share and play reasonably well together. Dave knew I was facing a less-than-ideal situation and didn't want the ship to sink during his term.

A couple of years later Dave arranged for Kathy and me to stay in their condominium on the island of Maui.

When Kathy and I arrived, a special welcome note and a straw hat filled with cans of macadamia nuts, a fresh pineapple and Mai Tai mix were on the dining table. As only Dave could describe it, the note expounded on the ideal manner in which to enjoy a day at the beach.

We were also his guests for a Dallas Cowboys football game, which included an elaborate tailgate party in the Texas Stadium parking lot. Dave emphasized his verbal observations by prefacing with: "I would tell you… " To this day, Kathy and I recite his pragmatic instructions for how to prepare a Styrofoam cooler with wine and cheese.



FRONT DOOR TO THE COMMUNITY

In most communities, the local chamber office and *Front Door to the Community* are synonymous. Visitors and potential new residents form their first impression based on how and what they receive when they enter our building.

In 1982, Denton's *Front Door* still had a lot of outstanding construction debt. Multi-year financial pledges from 1975 hadn't been honored.

Business directories, relocation guides and street maps are the most requested items. When structured correctly, they provide a nice profit from advertising. Someone came up with the brilliant idea to cut out the middleman. A group of volunteers was supposed to sell the advertising and coordinate production of these publications.

I spent the first couple of weeks not only hounding membership renewals but also trying to fill advertising space. The few advertisers that had already paid expected delivery and distribution several months earlier. Many of the accounts listed in the buyer's guide had already dropped their membership.

We had committed to a local printer; after hours of editing and proofing, we managed to turn out a black & white, pocket-size buyer's guide. I promptly handed off the map to Milton Roth with Western Publications.

Our convention & visitor bureau director was supposed to handle a similar publication, which added to the confusion. Funded by our Hotel Occupancy Tax contract with the City of Denton (HOT Fund), he outsourced the visitor guide to a professional advertising agency in Fort Worth. My chamber member printers were riled up and voiced their concerns accordingly.

Following a crude bidding process, I lateralled to Keith Appleton. Keith was on our board, a former *Denton Record-Chronicle* employee and owner of Group Graphics. His father, Roy Appleton, Jr., was a Past Board Chair and headed our volunteer economic development team for many years.

Keith and I drove to Fort Worth to retrieve the plates.

The visitor guide was backed by solid money from the HOT Fund; we stopped at Joe T. Garcia's to celebrate. Perhaps it was the relief of finally overcoming at least one of my early challenges, or the nuclear waste that was mixed in with the margaritas. By the third round we were both hunting ducks with a rake.

The chamber owned this *P.O.S.* 1978 Buick Le Sabre. I don't think I ever got above 40 MPH on the drive back to Denton. I saw visions on the front page of the *DR-C*: "*New Chamber executive arrested for DWI on I-35 West!"*

Chamber office, 414 Parkway, no lower floor
Sign with Top of the Golden Triangle logo

THE THUNDERBIRD

Keith was one of the few individuals my age in the chamber leadership circle. He chaired our Sports & Recreation Committee and like any good local chamber, he thought we should sponsor a golf tournament

No respectable golf tournament is complete without a hole-in-one contest. Keith persuaded his long-time buddy, Bill Utter, Jr., to provide a new limited-edition Thunderbird.

Fortunately, nobody won but we thought a cruise around town was in order before we returned the Thunderbird to Bill Utter Ford. Keith indulged my curiosity by procuring a six-pack of the internationally acclaimed Anchor Steam beer.

I was already plastered when we stopped at the Green Derby, a popular watering hole near the University of North Texas.

Ben E. Keith Beers was a major sponsor of our golf tournament; Steve Davis, the local warehouse manager, happened to be at the bar. Following standard chamber protocol, we joined Steve for a round.

Well, these beer guys have unlimited expense accounts, and Steve expounded on the pertinent topics of the day while continuing to replenish our tankards with various internationally acclaimed selections.

When I finally got home, Kathy was naturally concerned, but even more amused by my valiant efforts to appear clearheaded.

Keith left the Thunderbird in front of his house - in the *middle* of the street.

THE TROPHY WIFE

One rarely witnessed the fledgling Dallas Mavericks win many games in 1983, but Keith and I liked the idea of shining the spotlight on Denton at Reunion Arena. In theory, the chamber earned net revenue from group ticket sales.

I don't recall the total number of participants, but our delegation and sponsors were recognized on the scoreboard. Most of them just wanted to party on the bus, courtesy of Steve Davis and Ben E. Keith Beers.

When the bus returned to the chamber office, I was obliged to let some of the participants make a restroom stop before going home. One of the first to seek relief was a young trophy wife; her husband was a local physician and served on the chamber board.

I waited patiently, on the hood of the *P.O.S.* Buick Le Sabre, while two of her girlfriends pilfered through the contents in the ice chest. They were among Denton's elite socialites.

After 15 minutes, or more, we were the only ones left and the trophy wife hadn't come back from the restroom stop.

The girlfriends were oblivious to anything other than the trophy wife's BMW convertible and a parking lot fest. Sleeping beauty and a plastic cup of beer had passed out in the conference room. Coaxing her off the table was an ordeal, but the trophy wife wanted to explore the reception area and individual offices. This section was enclosed with glass panels.

She shoved on the door, but it was locked, splattering beer across the glass and all over the carpet. Navigating the stairs was another travesty. The giggling girlfriends helped me stuff her into the backseat of the convertible; I believe they left with the ice chest.

We sponsored the first and last Denton Night at the Dallas Mavericks. I rented a carpet cleaning machine and sponged off the *Front Door to the Community.*

TAKE HIM OUT!

One of the key issues Dave brought up during my interview was to terminate the chamber's CVB Director. Dave alleged misuse of illegal substances and wanted to fire the guy before I came on board.

The CVB was my baby, having organized it from scratch five years earlier. Plus, I didn't want to set a precedence for volunteer leadership to get involved with staff issues.

We were under contract with the city council; optics could be bad. The incumbent director was the third individual to have the position since I left.

Several trade associations and professional meeting planners are based in Austin, which is a popular target for the hospitality industry. My understanding was that our CVB director arranged an overnight familiarization tour to promote our meeting facilities. The confab was topped off with an evening reception.

Our delegation blanketed Austin while the CVB director stayed in his hotel room the entire time. According to Dave, the return bus trip was an escalating orgy and frat party on wheels. His description was a bit more evocative; but I digress.

I convinced Dave to let me handle it and set some general, time-sensitive goals for the CVB director. He, of course, sensed that I was trying to set him up and threatened to tell the city manager's wife that I was violating the terms of the Hotel Occupancy Tax agreement.

I'm not sure what was going on with the city manager's wife.

At this point, we were still residing in Irving, and I was commuting every day. Combined with the overall condition of the chamber, I was losing patience. Confrontation is not one of my strong points.

As part of the trial stage, I asked our CVB director to provide collateral for his *Jazz Capitol of Texas* theme. Other than the UNT Lab Bands, I couldn't find any local jazz clubs. The last straw was drawn during an advisory board meeting on a Friday afternoon in mid-October; he botched what should have been a simple presentation.

I hadn't fired anyone before and pontificated over the weekend. Monday morning, I drove to Denton wielding an attitude and a sharp axe.

KEN BRADLEY

Not everything sucked our first year back in Denton.

Phase I of Tetra began construction on their 210,000 square foot building. We sold our house in Irving and moved to Denton in November. In January we conducted our first off-site program planning retreat at the Grapevine Concourse and hired Nancy Krause, an experienced professional, to head the chamber's convention & visitor division.

We petitioned the Texas Railroad Commission to allow competitive shipping rates between Denton and Dallas-Fort Worth in March 1983, which set off a multi-year process and one of our most significant achievements.

I was still trying to figure out which key went with what door when I noticed a gregarious fella, with thick horn rim glasses, holding a Styrofoam cup in the reception area.

Ken Bradley stood and presented his business card; he was affiliated with the Ramey King insurance agency. One of its principals, Marvin Ramey, was a past Board Chair.

I was anxious to make a good impression and returned his firm handshake. Ken didn't just exchange pleasantries. He usually researched his target and then casually eliminated any apprehension by maneuvering the conversation such that the other guy did all the talking.

Ken Bradley put on a clinic that afternoon, with me as the ideal model.

He was a close friend of my predecessor and already a familiar face around the chamber office. No doubt, he was curious to meet someone hired by Dave Krause. He later confided that his main purpose was to phase out any further involvement with us.

Turned out, Ken had previously owned the funeral home in a community near Corsicana, which prompted a recollection of mutual acquaintances. A 15-minute courtesy call ended up lasting the rest of the afternoon.

I credit Ken Bradley for helping us cope with the obstacles encountered during our initial 18 months back in Denton. He and his bride, Melissa, became trusted and unconditional friends.

Stand by for many more KB escapades.

DEVOURING THE PACHYDERM

Bill Brady and Bob Crouch followed Dave Krause as our Board Chairs. Both were on the executive committee that hired me. Fortunately, they were open to program and structure adjustments.

1983-84 Program Year
President: Bill Brady
Occupation: President, Denton Savings Association

1984-85 Program Year
President: Bob Crouch
Occupation: Owner, Crouch Realty

We implemented the weekly ***Chamber Action*** column through the *Denton Record-Chronicle.* This was a significant upgrade from depending on a monthly newsletter and the US Mail to promote events.

Another advantage was telling our side of the story on board endorsements and position statements. Plus, we highlighted our economic development and CVB activities.

For a while, we even expanded to a weekly broadcast at KDNT, the local AM radio station.

We partnered with the **U.S. Small Business Administration** and Service Corps of Retired Executives (***SCORE***) on September 19, 1983, to provide space for free counselling. These guys were all former corporate CEOs; their guidance was based on proven success. They had the credentials and offered a brick & mortar benefit. I was more than happy to let them *boss me around*.

On May 31,1984, the board approved an agreement with Jeanne Ford and Community Living Publications to produce ***Denton Today,*** a relocation/community resource guide in a four-color magazine format. It also included feature articles, calendar of events and chamber information.

Voting for or against an individual is democratic but doesn't ensure the most qualified directors are elected to the board. The chamber is a general interest organization and should reflect the diversity of the membership.

We were using a 16-person, two slate ballot. In addition to welcoming eight new directors every year, I had the privilege of explaining why eight nominees lost. The board amended the bylaws on January 21, 1985, changing to a **Single Slate Ballot** but allowed write-in votes.
I welcomed this adjustment.

BREAKFASTS

Eating the elephant necessitated a bit of innovation. Ken Bradley was appointed chair of our restructured, all-purpose Public Relations Committee for the program year beginning on April 1, 1983. Ken was instrumental in two major initiatives that gave the rank & file chamber members an opportunity to be more involved.

Although Dave Krause was convinced it would never work, we held our first quarterly membership breakfast on June 24, 1983. With over 300 in attendance, the Silver Eagle Suite at UNT was nearly packed. The *Denton Record-Chronicle* was the sponsor.

Following a game show format, Ken served as master of ceremonies. I was often fodder for his impromptu witticisms, along with various politicians and special guests.

In the organizational process, we took bids and made tentative arrangements for a date at the local Ramada Inn. Ken and I were engaged in one of our regular caffeine & conversation meetings when the sales director called to ask why nobody showed up for the chamber breakfast.

Without confirming a count, the kitchen staff prepared meals for 150 people. Ken and I started calling PR Committee members; we spent the rest of the morning at the Ramada Inn shoveling down substantial portions of scrambled eggs and biscuits.

MIXERS

I was skeptical that our members didn't need another reception to attend. At Ken's urging, we embarked on our first quarterly *Business After Hours* on November 22, 1983, hosted by our Board Chair Bill Brady and Denton Savings Association.

The intent was to provide an informal setting where our members could discuss pertinent topics. They were encouraged to bring and exchange promotional materials. Depending on the service or product, they had access to hundreds of potential clients, in less than two hours, all in one location. We awarded prizes for the individual who could collect the most business cards.

These popular gatherings went through various names, and a year-round waiting list of potential sponsors.

Ken Bradley, Membership Breakfast, December 1984

THE WINNER LEFT TOWN!

Practically all local chambers have a regular membership meeting. With Ken Bradley, we had a secret weapon.

Ken remained the face and spirit of our quarterly membership breakfasts for several years. Fueled by caffeine and a core group of PR Committee volunteers, these gatherings served as a recognizable entertainment value, as well as providing relevant information not available at the weekly service club meetings.

Early in the series, we orchestrated a video, featuring over 25 local personalities, all willfully making fun of themselves and various components of the chamber itself. Politicians accepted bribes from actual bank presidents. The fire department allowed us to tape a scene downtown with their aerial snorkel.

Some of our featured speakers included Spanky McFarland from *Our Gang*, Dallas Cowboy legends Walt Garrison and Preston Pearson and Suzie Humphreys from the KVIL radio Morning Show. Ross Perot, Jr. landed his helicopter on the Fouts Field parking lot.

Former President and Texas Governor George W. Bush described the incident where his father threw up on a Japanese diplomat. He was Managing Partner of the Texas Rangers Baseball Club at the time. After switching from Democrat to Republican, U.S. Senator Phil Gramm made one of his first public appearances at our membership breakfast.

Despite heavy snow, we had a big crowd during a December breakfast meeting with select members of the audience giving a systematic rendition of *The 12 Days of Christmas*.
We often used audience participation to punch holes in the establishment.

Having our breakfasts in February was always risky due to unpredictable weather. Over the course of 30-plus years, we had to postpone three different times at the last minute.

Carolyn Bray, the head of the UNT Union facilities, called in the middle of the night to politely explain that we were welcome to have our meeting, but she had no one there to cook breakfast. My first call was to our Board Chair, Harry Hall, who despised early morning as much as me.

Between Harry, me and the corporate sponsor, we made enough calls, in a relatively short period of time, to limit most of the confusion. The conditions outside were atrocious.

There are, of course, always a few exceptions. A mousey, young reporter with the *Denton Record-Chronicle* covered chamber events. She liked to wear wool skirts and knee-high socks; we called her *Heidi*. Sure enough, she actually made it to UNT that morning. She delighted in giving me grief about the decision to postpone.

As our audience got younger, we shifted to a luncheon format. Not long before I retired, the chamber staff called while I was in Austin; there was meteorological catastrophe anticipated for our membership luncheon, less than 48 hours away. With email, phone texts and access to our web site, we were able to reschedule everything within 15 minutes.

Denton Municipal Airport cited several hazardous ozone readings during hot summer months, supposedly caused by exhaust fumes from heavy daytime traffic. We shifted a few of these meetings to the evening; they were billed as *Breakfast at Night*. We even held one of our nightly gatherings under a tent next to the stadium prior to a UNT football game.

Besides door prizes, we concluded with a cash drawing. As part of their fee, the sponsor would put down a $100 deposit for the drawing. The names of designated representatives from all our members were placed in a clear plexiglass tumbler. The actual representative had to be present to win. If the name drawn was not in attendance, the card was returned to the tumbler, and the total grew exponentially by $100.

We went through 15 consecutive membership breakfasts without a winner. With the total at $1,600, the senior pastor at Saint Andrew Presbyterian Church was in attendance and accepted the money.

I found it interesting that he left town not long after that.

ALMA ANN

Ken also persuaded a local travel agency to sponsor a day at the horse races at Louisiana Downs. A small mark-up on the package was passed on to the chamber.

The owners of the travel agency were new in the business and anxious to get publicity.

We embarked eastward with a busload of Dentonites ready to supplement the coffers of the Louisiana public schools.

One of our travelers was a flighty, but well-meaning lady named Alma Ann. Middle-aged, but attractive, she had an affinity for wild hats, silver and turquoise jewelry, and tended to overdo her cosmetics. I never knew much about her background. I got the impression some guy must have broken Alma Ann's heart during her prime.

Once we got to the track, Alma Ann latched onto the owner of the travel agency. She seemed to know the ponies and kept this poor guy scurrying between races to place bets and retrieve her winnings. She must have ordered a frozen daiquiri before each race, as her flirtatious antics became increasingly animated.

Our host politely accommodated Alma Ann the entire afternoon. He was also a happily married man, however, and was anxious to seek safe refuge that evening.

After a day at the track, Ken and I were cooling our heels in our hotel room. We had the door cracked open, and in bounced Alma Ann, barefoot and wearing a very short skirt. She hopped on to the bed next to Ken and inquired: "What do we do now?"

Ken's dazed expression was priceless. He peered over the top of his glasses and blurted out: "Well, Chuck, I think I'm ready to go have dinner! How 'bout you?"

Several of us gathered for a seafood feast at a local fine dining establishment. The server reluctantly prepared separate checks. With drinks and the gratuity included, the individual totals ended up being rather substantial.

Alma Ann was still cozied up to Ken. Astonished by the total of her particular tab, she leaned over and asked how we should all split the bill?

I'm not sure what was more amusing, Ken attempting to explain that *she* was responsible for her own check, or the confused look on Alma Ann's face?

Ken Bradley, February 2018

STILL THE RIGHT THING TO DO

Denton County was justifiably considered “rural” in 1984.

Most communities south of Lake Lewisville viewed themselves as a suburb of Dallas. North of U.S. 380, however, there was more livestock than humans. Membership in the local Future Farmers of America chapters outnumbered the players on the high school football teams.

With Denton being the county seat, administrative offices and all judicial courts were in a six-story building at the corner of Carroll Boulevard and Hickory Street.

We benefitted by having a large concentration of law offices and title companies, along with corresponding banks, insurance agencies, restaurants and office supply stores within convenient walking distance.

Our board endorsed Option Two of the Denton County Future Expansion & Facility Management Study in November 1984. If approved, it proposed the construction of a twin tower to house most of the county services adjacent to the existing Carroll Courts Building.

There was growing interest, especially by lawyers to the south, to centralize all county facilities on a separate campus outside of the Denton Central Business District.

Subsequently, we rallied support at a public hearing for Option Two, everything stays in downtown Denton. This was my first experience participating in a contentious setting, advocating an obviously predisposed position.

Armed with statistics outlining square footage occupied by professionals and food and beverage sales, I gave an award-winning theatrical presentation. I was met with a chorus of “boos” from the other half of the room.

I was later confronted in the hallway by fast-talking lawyer types and bond underwriters. Other than Ken Bradley, most of our posse had departed.

In hindsight, I now appreciate the vision of the county leadership at the time. The Campus Theatre, a well-maintained county historical museum in the old courthouse, restaurants, taverns and beer gardens flourish in every direction on and around the downtown square.

All the judicial courts are housed in a complex at the corner of McKinney Street and Woodrow Lane. The booming population resulted in the creation of way more courts than could have occupied the building at Hickory and Carroll. The county detention center is located via an underground tunnel allowing for safe and secure transfer of prisoners for their trial dates.

With the prevailing *What have you done for me lately* attitude, I realize it doesn’t fit neatly into the *Box of Stuff* expectation of the average chamber member. I’m able to laugh about the events of that night, but I consider it “the right thing” to do at the time.

ACCREDITATION

On July 16, 1984, the board authorized a 263-page Ten-Year Reaccreditation report to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The process was headed by past Board Chair Dr. Hal Reed and involved over 50 volunteers.

Dr. Reed was the Denton Chamber's chief voluntary officer when the original application was conducted in 1975.

Accreditation was a discretionary exercise, given credibility by being administered through the U.S. Chamber. Part of the intent was to assure that we met all the basic requirements of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service 501c6 nonprofit code.

To retain certification, a comprehensive internal and external evaluation was compulsory every five years. I was involved in similar applications while with the Waco and Irving Chambers. We went through seven different applications at the Denton Chamber.

For some reason, my predecessor decided not to reapply at the original five-year mark. Consequently, we were required to update and create all new pertinent documents.

We weren't registered with the Secretary of State. The bylaws were outdated and the personnel manual consisted of one sheet of paper. Fortunately, the U.S. Chamber gave us credit, we maintained 40 consecutive years of *Best Practices*.

The first four applications were volunteer-driven; sub-committees rated the chamber's performance at one of five different levels. A negative or superior score had to be justified with corresponding verbiage defending or justifying the consensus of the group.

An independent field examiner reviewed the hard-copy exhibits and conducted an on-site assessment, including roundtables with various individuals other than chamber leadership. The field examiner presented his or her recommendations to a free-standing accreditation board.

The Denton Chamber became one of only 35 local chambers in the state of Texas to be Accredited by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The year-long process was completed in the spring 1985. Shown reviewing the Reaccreditation report are: present chamber board chairman Derrell Bulls, 1985-86 chamber president Milton M. Hill and Bob Crouch who served as chamber president in 1984-85.

Eventually, the U.S. Chamber shifted to a check-list format, supported through specific exhibits attached electronically. Each section mandated one or more editorials written by staff. The application package went from a huge three-ring binder to a single flash drive.

Assuming we possessed all the necessary items and met the criteria, a U.S. Chamber staff specialist, based in Washington, DC, reviewed the exhibits and recommended certification. They also had the discretion to award supplemental rankings. The top designation was five stars.

1985-86 Program Year
President: Milton M. Hill
Occupation: President, Morrison Milling Company

Leadership Denton
MOVERS & SHAKERS of the FUTURE

Leadership development programs sponsored through local chambers are not new or unique.

Ricky Grunden was serving as chair of our Education Committee. Ricky, Russell Bates and I embarked on a road trip to *borrow* best practices from similar arrangements through the Dallas and Garland Chambers of Commerce.

In the first presentation to our board, we neglected to remove *Garland* from the draft rules and procedures.

We accepted applications for the first class of Leadership Denton in June 1985 and then convened on September 19, 1985, with 19 participants. Three members of that class, Carl Anderson, Richard Hayes and Jeff King, went on to become Board Chairs of the Denton Chamber. Another one of our past Board Chairs, Russell Bates served as co-chair of curriculum with Dr. Henry Hays from the UNT School of Business.

Our objective was to make genuinely interested Denton citizens aware of opportunities for community involvement and service, as well as all levels of public office.

From the very beginning, we wanted to make the application process welcoming to anyone regardless of whether they were directly affiliated with the Denton Chamber.

The rationale, according to our research, was that some public officials weren't necessarily in tune with the chamber or the free market concept. There would eventually be a day when we appeared before an elected body to present an issue. The level of empathy might be better received if the panelists were introduced to the system at the chamber office.

The application process went through various revisions but ultimately rested with a blind rating process followed by personal interviews with a committee of LD graduates.

Even members of our own board failed to get this. Every year, when we announced a new class, local bank presidents, hospital CEOs, and plant managers wanted an explanation for why their hand-picked candidates had not been accepted. I did a lot of squirming though the years.

Another recommendation we followed was to cap each class with a total of 20 participants. We had high standards, with strict attendance requirements and dress code. The collective judgement of the selection committee frequently recommended a class of less than 20 members.

The erroneous optic was that the program was not appealing or effective. On the other hand, I preferred a strong group, regardless of size, that understood the commitment and true purpose of Leadership Denton.

During a regional meeting with several other leadership programs, our group was mistaken for a *bunch of lawyers.* They were simply reflecting our *business attire* dress code.

The general chair gave an extensive review of the rules at the kick-off, and then the curriculum co-chairs would log late arrivals and tardy notices in a classroom style attendance book. Over the years, we dismissed a physician, judge, TWU professor and a corporate utilities company exec for failure to comply.

MEET LEADERSHIP DENTON 1985-86

Leadership Denton is an annual series of educational programs designed to identify and motivate local individuals and develop their potential for assuming leadership roles in community service organizations, and in all levels of local government. Emphasis will be placed on exposing these individuals to the realities, opportunities and pertinent issues of the area.

The first class of 19 participants represent the conclusion of two years of hard work lead by a special Denton Chamber of Commerce task force headed by Ricky Grunden.

The first class of Leadership Denton will officially begin its nine month training program on Tuesday Evening, September 10, and we would like for the citizens of Denton to meet them.

We Would Like To Thank The Following Sponsors Who Helped Make This Possible:

- Joe Allred
- Russell Bates
- Horace Brock
- Citizens Nat. Bank
- Bob Crouch
- Denton Record-Chronicle
- North Texas State Univ.
- Denton Area Teachers Credit Union
- Denton Savings Association
- Ford & Son
- Tom Fouts, Realtors, Inc.
- Mary C. Gay, Realtor
- L.A. Nelson Attorney
- Ivan Glasscock
- Gene Gohlke Building Products
- Grunden Insurance & Financial Services
- Eddy Holloway Real Estate
- Hankins, Powers, Karlup & Deaton
- Horizon Seed, Inc.
- Ramey, King & Minns
- Ben E. Keith, Co.
- Gary H. Kischoff, Attorney
- Dave Krause Pontiac-Toyota-Dodge
- Milbrie Denton
- Dr. Robert T. McGee
- Moore Business Forms
- Monte B. Photography
- Morrison Milling Co.
- William R. Phillips, Jr.
- Provident Bank - Denton
- Harold H. Reed, DDS
- Rummel Oil Co.
- Barbara Russell
- PD-NTSU
- Schmitz-Floyd-Hamlett Funeral Home
- Bennie G. Snider
- Gerald Stone
- Utilicorp
- Western Saddle Shop
- Westgate
- Texas Woman's University

CARL RAY ANDERSON

Occupation: General Sales Manager Bill Utter Ford

Education: Graduate Denton High School, B.B.A. NTSU

LINDA DIANE ASHMORE

Occupation: Director of Health Promotion Flow Memorial Hospital

Education: Graduated with Honors Bryan Adams High School Dallas, B.S., Nursing, Baylor University.

PATRICIA PREWITT COBLE

Occupation: Assistant Director North Texas Education & Training Co-op, Inc.

Education: Graduate Griffin Christian Academy - Dallas, B.S. & M.S. in Education - NTSU.

SUSAN FILIPPONE

Occupation: Classified Advertising Manager Denton Record-Chronicle

Education: Graduate from Thomas Jefferson High School - San Antonio. Graduate cum laude, NTSU.

GINA ELIZABETH GOHLKE

Occupation: Bookkeeper Gene Gohlke Building Products

Education: Graduate Denton High School. Attending NTSU.

RICHARD DAVID HAYES

Occupation: Attorney at Law, Denton, Texas

Education: Graduate Denton High School, B.B.A., TCU; M.B.A. Texas A&M; Graduated Law School, Saint Mary's University.

ANN R. HOUSTON

Occupation: Broker Re-Max Denton

Education: Graduated Denton High School, B.S. & M.S. in Education, NTSU.

BETTY MEYERS KERBOW

Occupation: Member & Officer Noon Denton Business & Professional Women's Association

Education: Graduated Pilot Point High School.

JEFFREY P. KING

Occupation: Partner Ramey, King & Minns Insurance

Education: Graduated Denton High School, B.B.A., Texas A&M.

JOHN JOSEPH MATTHEWS

Occupation: Chief Executive Officer Security & Safety Consultants of Texas

Education: Graduated Denton High School, B.B.A. NTSU.

BOBBY HAL RAY

Occupation: Accounting Department North Texas Savings

Education: Graduated Pilot Point High School, B.B.A. NTSU.

ROBERT PAUL RAYNER

Occupation: Real Estate Agent Tom Fouts Realtors

Education: Graduated Captain Shreve High School, Shreveport, La., B.B.A., Baylor University.

STEVEN DON ROBINSON

Occupation: Coldwell Banker Golden Realtors

Education: Graduated Hillcrest High School, Dallas, Tx., B.B.A. NTSU

TERRY HARDING SCHERTZ

Occupation: President Schertz Corporation

Education: Graduated Sanger High School, B.B.A., NTSU.

MICHELLE LAVERNE STORY

Occupation: Escrow Officer Titan Title Company

Education: Graduated Lake Dallas High School, Attended Richland Community College.

LIDA SVOBODA

Occupation: Assistant Director of Sales Fantastic Tours

Education: Graduated Roosevelt High School, St. Louis, Missouri. Attended University of Missouri and Southwest Missouri State.

GARY LYNN TRUITT

Occupation: Community Development Coordinator Denton County Court Appointee

Education: Graduated Texas High School, Texarkana, Texas, B.A. University of Houston, M.A. NTSU.

LLOYD ASHLEY WEBB

Occupation: Executive Director North Texas Education & Training Co-Op

Education: Graduated R.L. Turner High School, Dallas, B.A., TCU; Masters, S.M.U.

JOHN LEN YARBROUGH

Occupation: Vice President Yarbrough Furniture Co., Inc.

Education: Graduated Denton High School, Graduated NTSU.

RICKY GRUNDEN

General Chairman Leadership Denton

MILTON HILL

President Denton Chamber of Commerce

CHANGE TITLES

Adhering to recommendations from the Reaccreditation process, the board amended the bylaws on October 24,1985 changing the chief voluntary officer from President to Chairman of the Board, and the chief administrative officer from Executive Vice President to President.

I didn't receive an increase in salary with the title of President, but it sounded cool.

1986-87 Program Year
Chair of the Board: **Derrell W. Bulls**
Occupation: Chair, Business & Economic Department
Texas Woman's University

Milton was the Denton Chamber's last *President*; Derrell was the first to be *Chair of the Board*.

During Derrel's first board meeting, April 14, 1986, they authorized a formal appeal through the Texas Railroad Commission to expand the boundaries of the **Dallas-Fort Worth Intrastate Commercial Trade Zone** to include the city of Denton.

The **first Leadership Denton Class** graduated 18 participants on May 6, 1986.

We helped coordinate the dedication and closing of the dam for **Lake Ray Roberts** on June 30, 1987. The city of Denton holds 26 percent of the water collection with the city of Dallas owning 74 percent. (Ray Roberts served the 4th U.S. Congressional District, in which Denton was located, for 19 years).

While interviewing for the convention & visitor bureau job in 1976, Dr. Hal Reed came by the office to discuss a hearing he attended in Austin. Dr. Reed represented the Denton Chamber in what was then proposed as the Aubrey Reservoir.

Texas Instruments, Inc. announced construction of a 390,000 square feet building for its Defense Systems & Electronics Group on March 20, 1987.

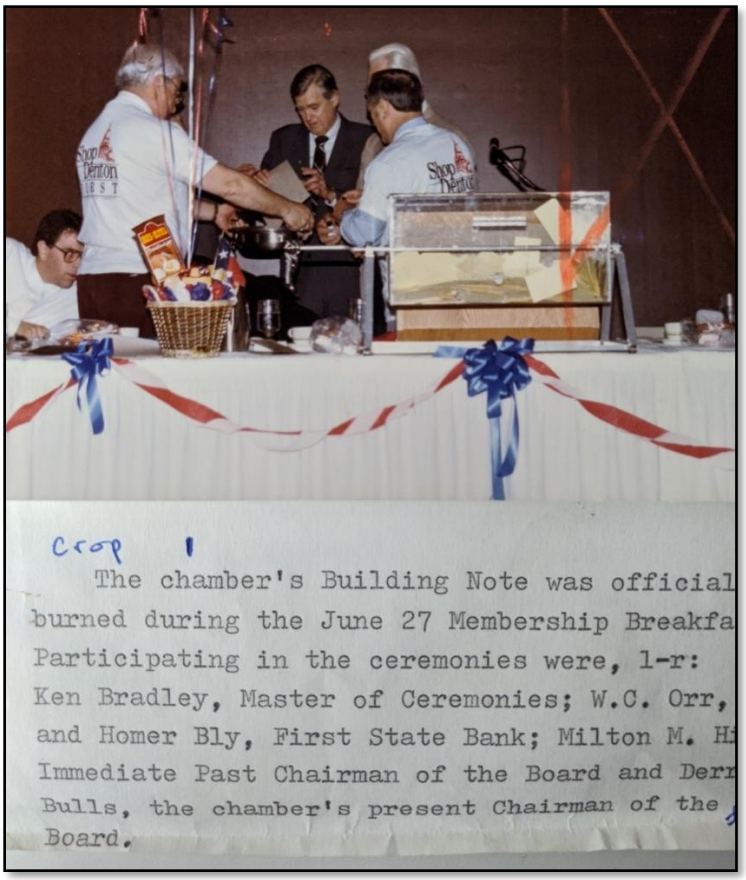
Lease the land from the City of Denton for $1 a year, they said
Build the chamber office on stilts in a flood plain, they said.

GREATER DENTON INDUSTRIES

In the early 1950s, the chamber formed Greater Denton Industries, Inc. as a free-standing subsidiary to purchase and develop property to attract new business. By 1985, land prices were such that we barely had enough cash to purchase a single acre.

With a bit of firm coaxing by W.C. Orr at the former First State Bank, on March 19, 1986, the few remaining shareholders voted to dissolve the corporation and applied $51,000 to help retire the building note.

Mr. Orr and First State Bank had more than accommodated the chamber by holding the note since 1975. I'm not sure how they were able to do that. There were still a few graybeards that weren't happy about relinquishing their shares; but Mr. Orr had a way of explaining the ripple down consequences.



YOU THINK IT'S GONNA' BE SAFE HERE?

In another major shift, the board voted May 19, 1986, to cancel our Administrative Agreement with the Denton Festival Foundation. Originally an initiative of the chamber, the annual ***Spring Fling*** had grown to a point where the tail was wagging the dog. In my opinion, the dog wasn't being fed.

By virtue of my position with the chamber, I was Treasurer of the Denton Festival Foundation. On the last night of the 1986 Spring Fling, I was sequestered in the North Texas Fair office to count and secure cash. All the volunteers were scrambling to go home. One by one, the office crew jumped ship, including Derrell. Chris Hartung, the City Manager and that year's event chair, never showed up at all.

By about 4:30 a.m., all that remained was a guy named Bill Angelo, the City of Denton Public Works Director, and me. I think he may have drawn the short straw and was there to represent the City Manager. Stacks of dollar bills were scattered around the table; the counting process was far from completed.

Bill was a semi-high-ranking city employee and figured it might be safer at the Denton Police station. Bound with duct tape, we shoved a box full of cash into the trunk of my car.

Bill marched up to the officer on duty and proclaimed that we needed to leave the money there. The officer spit his Copenhagen into a Styrofoam cup then responded insipidly: "And you really think it's gonna' be safe here?"

I finally stumbled into the house around 5:30 a.m. and there stood Kathy Carpenter, preparing for her morning commute to the American Airlines headquarters in Fort Worth.

We were expecting a baby in six weeks; her poor stomach was all pooched out. With both fists clenched on her hips she decreed: "You're never gonna' do this again."

And, I didn't!

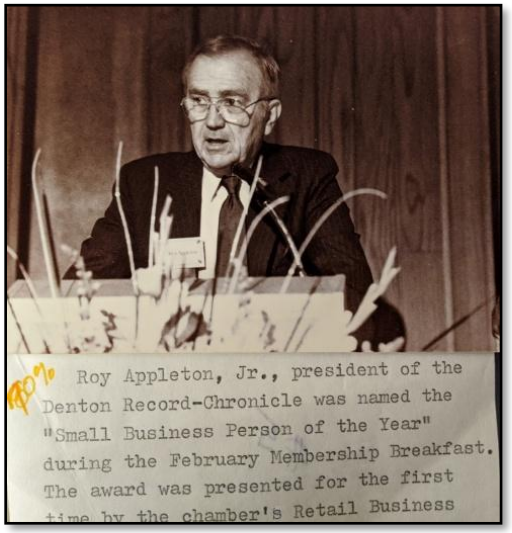
A few hours later I hauled the box full of crumpled currency to a local bank. A teller was kind enough to finish tallying the contents. Seems we had been driving, unescorted through the dark streets of Denton, with $64,000 cash in my trunk!

DEFINING SMALL BUSINESS

The concept of a chamber-sponsored **Small Businessperson of the Year** was approved on September 24, 1986.

I never realized how perplexing it would be to define "Small Business." We awarded the first recipient, Roy Appleton, Jr., general manager of the *Denton Record-Chronicle,* during the membership breakfast on February 13, 1987.

The *DR-C* had 150 full-time employees; the definitive number used by the U.S. Small Business Administration. There were still those, however, who claimed the chamber was only interested in the "big guys."



Roy Appleton, Jr.

SMALL BUSINESS of the YEAR

2017 Frank Dudowicz, Kwik Kare Centers
2016 Cindy Tysinger, Jason Bodor, GSATi
2015 Greg Johnson, VERUS Real Estate Advisors
2014 Monte Jensen, Mellow Mushroom
2013 Lee Ramsey, Justin Beedle & Brandon Martino, Links Construction
2012 Judy Smith, Rose Costume
2011 Tonya & Larry Parker, Denton Depot
2010 Jim Englebrecht, Bob Moses and Ken Willis, Beth Marie's
2009 Lynn and Joni Chatwin, Alphagraphics
2008 Chris Hawley and Marcus Watson, Little Guys Movers
2007 David Jeffries & Sarah Jeffries Sandmann, Jeffries Electric
2006 Monica Broadhurst, Grayson Stone, Inc.
2005 Chuck Fremaux, Metropolitan Catering
2004 Jane Boyle, Candy Haven
2003 Dennis Brooks & Stephen Brooks, Armor Pest Control
2002 Damon Ward, Business Air Center
2001 Jen Hurt-Randolph, I-Tel/Tigerbyte
2000 Walter Eagleton, Eagleton Photography
1999 Chad Nichols, Little Guys Movers
1998 Tim Crouch, The Crouch Group
1997 Roy Metzler, Metzler's
1996 George Goen, Cupboard Natural Foods
1995 Andre J. Rheault, Frenchy's Lawn & Tree Service
1994 Sherrie Day, Denton Depot
1993 Dan Martin, Martin Parking Systems
1992 Lois & Roland Small, The Homestead Restaurant
1991 Bill Utter, Sr., Bill Utter Ford
1990 Weldon Burgoon, Weldon's Saddle Shop
1989 Geneva Berg, Locust Street Grill
1988 Bennie Snider, North Texas Savings
1987 John J. Matthews, Security & Safety Consultants
1986 Roy Appleton, Jr., Denton Record-Chronicle

ED STUDY GROUP

After a year of concentrated research and contemplation, a board appointed study group made the formal recommendation to establish a joint Chamber-City Office of Economic Development on September 24, 1986.

Subsequently, the city council and Denton Municipal Electric contracted with us to provide external marketing services and help fund staff, effective January 1, 1987.

Our proposed private sector budget was $100,000, dedicated solely to external marketing. Virgil Strange, from whom we purchased our first house, made a $20,000 investment, and set out to seek a similar amount from four other major landowners.

Jerry Cott, who headed the economic development study group, did offer to pitch in $50,000 for the first year. Right, or wrong, I declined the proposition, fearing that it would give one individual too much say in what was already a precarious arrangement.

Unfortunately, Virgil was the only one who honored his pledge. The hefty cash shortage incited a wave of skepticism within the city council, which prevailed over the years.

Depending on the results of the May elections, and who got to make the latest new business announcement, we always had varying degrees of apprehension between the chamber leadership and city council.

Denton is blessed in many ways but has an inordinate amount of improved real estate off the tax rolls. Considering all the different programs and events the chamber administered with private backing, over and above standing memberships, we were able to sustain a small but reliable core group of private investors.

THIS ONE IS FOR REAL!

Denton was the apex of the Dallas-Fort Worth area, where both legs of I-35 rejoin on its route north, and poised to grow.

The board appointed me to serve on a City of Denton Land Use task force. We met every Thursday night at the maintenance facility on Mingo Road.

One evening, June 12, to be exact, I was participating in a focus group with some academic facilitator who purported to be an expert on growth and expansion trends. We were asked to fill out a survey regarding various development scenarios.

In my opinion, they were nearly all loaded questions, worded selectively to encourage specific responses. I suspect the incumbent powers-that-be had already determined what they wanted to hear from us?

I became increasingly annoyed, scribbling in rude notes challenging the assumptions. I finally got fed up and stormed out of the building with the meeting still in progress.

I stewed all the way home, prepared to offload my frustrations on Kathy. I found her curled up on the couch, moaning in agony. "I think this is for real."

Suddenly the rigged land use survey was no longer on the front burner.

After 24 hours and three shifts and who knows how many Dr Peppers, I was disappointed for, oh … three or four seconds… we had a baby *girl.* Thank goodness I stormed out of the focus group.

MERGER

Perhaps it's apropos that Dr. Derrell Bulls was chair of the Business and Economics Department at Texas Woman's University while serving as our Board Chair.

Not long after his term began, the Select Committee on Higher Education, appointed by the Texas Legislature, released its findings and recommendations for improving efficiency within the state's many universities and colleges.

The precise wording escapes me, but Dr. Bull's associates interpreted parts of the report to imply that Texas Woman's University should be merged with the University of North Texas.

The rumblings around town increased once the *DR-C* published the story. Whether that was the real intention, the administration at TWU was alarmed. In economic development, one quickly learns that it's easier to keep what's already in place than recruit something new. In Denton, Texas, Higher Education *is* our industry.

Two of our board members, Joe Alford and Bob Crouch, arranged for six busloads of interested individuals to travel to Austin on October 10, 1986 for a public hearing.

While I'm obviously in favor of efficiency, Dr. Bulls schooled us on what made TWU important as an independent institution. He and Dr. Shirley Chater, the TWU President at the time, made some convincing points.

The residing legislator asked Dr. Bulls how and why the report was interpreted to suggest a full merger. I don't remember if Dr. Bulls gave a clear answer, but the 600 students and local citizens in the gallery assured him a combination probably wasn't a good idea.

MYSTERY ADMIRER

Postmarked March 6, 1984, I received an anonymous typed enveloped addressed to "Charles W. Carpenter" through the chamber Post Office Box.

The contents revealed a single sheet of paper. Cartoon characters depicted an elderly woman who had encountered a man with only an overcoat draped on his otherwise naked body. He appeared to be exposing himself.

The lady asked: "Where's the beef?" At the time, this slogan was a popular promotional theme for the *Wendy's* hamburger chain, referring to the superior size of their various protein products compared to other national fast-food competitors.

Not many knew me as "Charles," much less the chamber's Post Office Box and Zip Code. My natural reaction was that Ken Bradley sent it. I laughed it off and shoved it in the desk drawer.

Within a week I received a similar cryptic image, much more graphic in nature. I quizzed Ken about where and how he came up with the idea. To my amazement, he denied any connection to the mysterious mailings.

Ken was hard-wired to play practical jokes, but lying was not an inherent trait. We realized this wasn't exactly *practical* and adjusted our mutual perspective to fascination. Why would someone craft such intricate enigmas?

The clandestine mailings continued for nearly three years. I received commercial greeting cards as well as typed and hand-written notes, all portraying sexual inuendo. There were even Royal Caribbean Cruise Line playing cards with what appeared to be riddles and clues, specifically the 8 of Spades, 8 of Hearts and a Joker.

Many of the exhibits included a script style initial that, to me, resembled a cross between a *T* and a *J.* The address on some of the envelopes were clipped from various Denton Chamber publications. Other than the curious single initial, there was no visible return address.

Ken and I conducted forensics with each arrival; theories varied depending on beer intake.

Then I received a type-written note inviting me to meet the individual at a hotel in Fort Worth. Prefaced with the phrase "No one will know," the room would be registered under the name *Marcia Reeves*.

Ken read every sentence, placing the tip of his index finger on each word as he methodically analyzed the details of the proposal. He insisted that we go; and even offered to enlist a friend who was running for sheriff.

The potential of having my reputation tarnished, or worse yet, a psycho serial killer with some sort of sexual hang up, I really didn't want to play along.

I received another type-written letter; the salutation began with “My Dearest Chuck.”
It referenced the previous mischievous clues, using terms such as “fantasy” and “lusted after you.” The author revealed she (?) was married with “a fine husband and family.”

The “*Where’s the Beef*” illustration, which began the whole series, was mentioned. There was even a description of me passing by her (?) during another trip to Louisiana Downs, claiming she mentioned this phrase directly to me.

I remember the trip and recall seeing a few folks from a local title company. Otherwise, I still have no recollection of anyone making this statement.

We had scheduled a membership mixer on August 8, the same date as the invitation to meet in Fort Worth. The unidentified enthusiast declared “(she) got my answer” and “the fantasy” was over. I never received anything else after that.

All totaled, I received 21 different pieces of mail. I remain puzzled. Curious, of course, but definitely puzzled.

Dearest Chuck:

After long years of soul searching, I have either two choices; I can stop sending you notes and cards, or I can get real brave and plan a meeting with you. I have decided on the latter!

On Tuesday, August 8, 1989, I will check into the Great Western motel in Fort Worth at 3:00 P.M., using the name Marcia Reeves. I will make arrangements to stay there overnight. The Great Western motel is new and is located on Northside Drive in the middle of an industrial area. It is virtually impossible that anyone we know will be there.

If you are interested in meeting me, just show up anyt after 5:00 P.M. I will have food and drinks in the ro so we will not have to leave. There is an area behind motel to park, so your car will not be seen.

I do not know what to expect from you, but if you c will see what develops.

Please do not try to call the room on that night b are the only one that knows I will be there. If yo will take it from there. If you do not come, I wi contact you again and the fantasy will be history do come, no one will EVER know about it from m

I hope you come.

Royal Caribbean

Hi is Up

Royal Caribbean Cruise Line

and

The Denton Chamber of Commer

cordially invite you to attend

The Chamber Connection Membership

Tuesday, August 8, 1989
1200 W. University Drive
Denton, Texas

BRING BUSINESS CARD
RSVP by August 4, 1989
382-9693

1987-88 Program Year
Chair of the Board: Mary Anne McKenzie
Occupation: Manager, Sears Store, Golden Triangle Mall

Mary Anne McKenzie had the distinction of serving as our *first female* Board Chair. I never got the impression that Mary Anne thought much about it. More than once, she introduced herself as Chair***man*** of the Board.

FIRST DENTON COUNTY DAY

Two major universities and the Denton State Supported Living Center, formerly called the Denton State School, provided over 7,000 well-paid jobs and were essentially recession proof. Include Denton ISD, which serves nearly a dozen surrounding communities, and Denton County, state government is a valuable component of the local economy.

Jim Horn, our State Representative at the time, approached me about the chamber coordinating a county-wide event during the next session of the Texas Legislature.

Perhaps "approach" is the wrong term. We were actually at urinals in a restroom at the UNT Coliseum. I know, too much information.

After briefing Mary Anne, she checked off on the idea. I didn't tell her about the setting in which the original plan was discussed.

I followed up with Senator Bob Glasgow and determined that such an event might have a bigger impact if we teamed with the Lewisville Chamber of Commerce. We were the only such organizations in the county with staff and Rep. Horn's primary support base and district office were in Lewisville.

Another one of my early mentors, A.E. Wyatt, was chair of the chamber's State & Federal Relations Committee. We called on Walt Parker at UNT and a former state representative himself.

Receptions sponsored by all types of associations and causes are a dime a dozen during any given legislative session. In addition to the tried-and-true ice sculpture, boiled shrimp and open bar format, Rep. Parker suggested we make pre-assigned calls on all 181 legislative offices.

We agreed to deliver an information sheet highlighting state government installations, notable attractions, and major private employers. Then top it off with a customized memento. We had to come up with something other than a *gimme*' *cap* or discount coupons from Dairy Queen.

All good, except the Texas Ethics Commission prohibited legislators from accepting any gift valued at $50 or more.

A local advertising specialty guy, Bill Bass proposed a leather-enclosed, Rand McNally road atlas. We requisitioned a State of Texas seal for the front, with a clear plastic sheet attached to the inside. We included a red Sharpie to prevent disfiguring the map.

The mementoes were popular. Those that weren't swiped by our participants or given to local elected types, were distributed to all 181 legislative offices.

The first Denton County Day in Austin was held on April 7, 1987, during the 70th Session of the Texas Legislature; Bill Clements was the governor. Our headquarters was the Stephen F. Austin hotel on Congress Street. We converged on the state capitol with nearly 200 people.

Senator Glasgow was in a senior-ranking slot on the legislative totem pole and arranged for a select group to attend a separate private function in Lieutenant Governor Hobby's suite.

Rep. Horn secured the grounds outside of the west entrance to the capitol building for the main reception. We set up an enormous tent, with chairs and tables. Grandy's, which was headquartered in Lewisville at the time, served fried chicken.

Both locations proved exceptionally convenient, since most of the legislators were either schmoozing with the Lieutenant Governor or returning for committee meetings through the less travelled west side of the building.

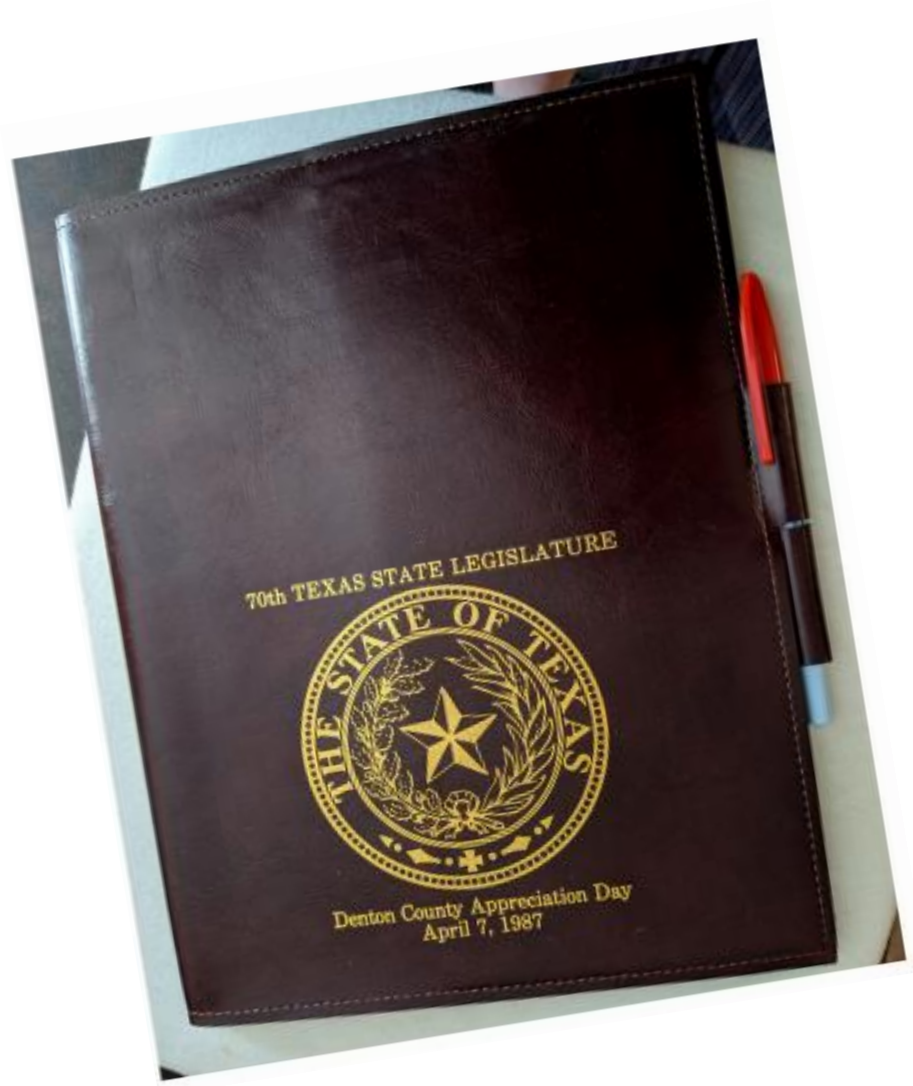
What we did not anticipate, however, was public accessibility at the outside event. Consequently, we ended up feeding a bunch of legislative staff, the capitol maintenance workers, some students from the University of Texas, and a few homeless guys.

Fortunately, Grandy's had a sister store in the area and salvaged the run on chicken wings. Several of us pulled off our ties, rolled up our sleeves and helped transport the second wave of poultry from their van.

Mary Anne, the chamber leadership and local elected types gave the overall event an ***A+.***

I don't think I ever got the smell of fried chicken out of my suit.

Former Denton County Judge Jeff Moseley,
State Representative Jim Horn and State Senator Bob Glasgow.



1988-89 Program Year
Chair of the Board: Jack D. Miller
Occupation: Vice President, Human Resources
Victor Equipment Company

Jack's Annual Banquet theme was *Gateway to the 90s*; including a clever jingle composed by his son Jay.

ONE FINAL TOAST

When I first took the job, we didn't have separate economic development staff. There was very little external marketing; I prepared itineraries and presentations in accordance with the needs of the prospect. Most of the inquiries were from the major utilities, railroad companies and the state economic development agency via the Dallas Chamber.

We assembled a team of volunteers, headed by Roy Appleton, Jr., for site visits. We didn't have much developed property and no spec buildings.

Our primary concern was existing companies. Many were hampered by archaic regulations administered by the Texas Railroad Commission. Businesses in major metropolitan areas were allowed to negotiate more favorable shipping rates within a designated boundary.

Denton was located just outside the **Dallas-Fort Worth Intrastate Commercial Trade Zone.** Central Freight Lines established a profitable monopoly and had the means to protect its turf. For entities such as Peterbilt, this was a costly expense.

We coordinated a meeting with the head of the Peterbilt shipping department and hired an attorney who was a former Texas Railroad Commission employee. Supplemented by the Dallas Cartage & Carriers Association, the Denton Chamber filed a formal application to seek expansion of the D/FW Zone.

This was an expensive, multi-year process. We had to collect detailed information and prove conclusively that Denton was "commercially contiguous" with the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Now, think about I-35 West in 1988, nothing but hay fields and ranches.

We testified before this *Poker-face* hearing examiner at the North Central Texas Council of Governments in Arlington. One of our professional moving companies even spoke about issues transporting horses. The local Central Freight Lines terminal manager was already prepared to discredit practically every point.

The next day, one of our assistant city managers submitted the chamber's economic development video, I assume to accentuate the size of our industrial base. What she hadn't accounted for was a tag line that proudly announced: "Denton is not a suburb of any place!"

On April 12, 1988, we traveled to Austin to appear before the commission members themselves. That same hearing examiner referenced the chamber's video, clarifying that Denton may as well have been in Oklahoma! Central Freight Lines also prepared an elaborate dog & pony show.

Our delegation froze. "We're toast." Then one of the commissioners, The Honorable John Sharp, finally dismissed the examiner's interpretation of our video and moved to expand the boundaries of the DFW zone to include Denton.

Mr. Sharp had previously served as a state senator and went on to be elected the state comptroller and made at least one attempt to run for governor. To my knowledge he had no apparent reason to support or deny our application. Regardless, I was an instant fan.

The other two commissioners agreed with Mr. Sharp's assessment. The vote was unanimous!

Needless to say, there was much jubilation returning to Denton. As with any respectable chamber bus trip, we stocked a couple of ice chests with beer to supplement the revelry.

We left our cars in the old First State Bank (now Wells Fargo) parking lot. The local beer distributorships were typically very generous when supplying product for chamber-sanctioned events, so there were still a few samples left over.

Ken Bradley helped load the ice chests in my car. Not wanting anything to go to waste, we toasted our victorious undertaking one more time. A couple of hours later we were still there in the bank parking lot saluting topics way beyond the original purpose of the trip.

With today's scrutiny of public intoxication, I've often wondered if we could get away with that now.

Jack headed a 50-person delegation to Austin on May 16, 1986, to secure a vote by the Texas Department of Transportation extending **FM 2499** as an alternate north-south route between Denton and the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport (FM 407 to FM 2181).

In cooperation with the U.S. Small Business Administration and North Central Texas College, we designated the chamber office as a satellite **Small Business Development Center** in September 1988 at the chamber office. We also helped fund a professional counselor through our economic development budget.

ADOPT-A-SCHOOL

Ann Houston and Colleen Briscoe organized 30 local businesses at the chamber office in February 1988 to consider informally *adopting* every campus of the Denton Independent School District.

As originally envisioned, the program was more than just tutoring and mentoring. The next gathering included principals from each of the campuses to submit their operational needs. We hoped to pair each school with a business that might provide relevant resources.

I thought it was interesting that everyone preferred the guy from Pizza Hut.

FACE LIFT

Located on a flood plain at the corner of Carroll Boulevard and Parkway, the chamber building was constructed on stilts. The ground floor entrance had a small glassed in area with stairs leading up to the actual offices and meeting room.

Visitors and potential new residents were all crammed together on the second floor with day-to-day chamber operations.

Denton's "Front Door" received a nice face lift in September 1988. Russell Bates and Wayne Allen converted the ground floor to a personally supervised visitor information center. They added shelves and cabinets for promotional materials.

Jo Ann Ballantine, Wayne Allen & Russell Bates

1989-90 Program Year
Chair of the Board: Harry G. Hall
Occupation: President, DATCU Credit Union

DEFENDING UNT

I dropped Harry Hall in the grease soon after the start of his term as our Board Chair.

The 71st Texas Legislature was considering expansion of the **University of Texas at Dallas** from graduate level research to a four-year institution.

Although it appeared harmless at first glance, Walt Parker at the University of North Texas, was concerned that it would have a negative impact on student enrollment and limit the pool of available funding for all state Higher Education institutions. We often boasted that Denton had the most four-year state universities in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

In cooperation with the Arlington and Fort Worth Chambers, Harry, Roy Appleton, Jr. and I made two separate trips to Austin. Rep. Parker provided scripts.

Our testimony was received politely at the senate hearing. The house of representatives panel, however, seemed to already be in favor of the expansion.

By the time I made my presentation, it was late in the day, and the participants were tired and hungry. The committee chair was a fiery, senior state representative from the Rio Grande Valley and anxious to move the proceedings along.

I recited the script as prepared by Rep. Parker. In an indifferent tone of voice, she abruptly interrupted my soliloquy. “Sir, please just state your position, for, or against.”

Always the diplomat, I prefaced my response with “Well, we don’t exactly oppose, but …” to which she immediately cut me off all together.

Damn! *Why the hell didn’t she do that to Harry or Roy?*

Then a legislator from the Dallas area cross-examined me. I didn’t know anything about “instructor-student funding ratios per academic disciplines.”

I squirmed, fidgeted with my tie and started making up stuff. The longer I spoke, the higher my voice went.

I believe it was the following fall semester that the first freshman class enrolled at the University of Texas at Dallas

We backed **Proposition 5**, **exempting property tax** on local business inventories for less than 175 days (**Goods-in-Transit).** The constitutional amendment passed by state-wide mandate on November 7,1989. Denton was one of only a few municipalities in Texas to allow this incentive at all three levels of local government.

We were actively involved in preserving the M-K-T Railroad Right-of-Way from Denton to Carrollton. Today it’s the **A-Train** route for the **Denton County Transportation Authority**, providing a direct link to the DART line.
\

MUTINY

An unexpected menace lurked during the final quarter of Harry's term.

A number of different players were involved. I'm not clear on the initial source or circumstances, but I believe the spider web was first woven in the chamber building itself.

I realize in-house mutinies aren't uncommon. Shame on me for not being more perceptive.

Our staff accountant was a holdover from my predecessor's days. Chamber financials were always muddied by our municipal funded affiliates, along with our Denton County Day and Leadership Denton accounts. This naturally caused friction when trying to cover the basic operations of the central organization.

Our staff accountant was heavy maintenance, requiring me to referee periodic spats. One time I had to deal with one of her skirmishes over the phone while in a hotel room in San Antonio.

Our first economic development vice president, hired in July 1987, was a bust from the start. He was antagonistic and relished conflict. Apparently, he was having an extramarital affair with his assistant. Two other female employees reported unwanted advances.

We eventually reached a publicly accepted separation agreement. He and the assistant went to work for a small corporate headquarters that he supposedly helped relocate to Denton.

Whether the grass was greener there, he remained vindictive toward the chamber, especially me.

INAUGURAL FLIGHT INTO ALLIANCE AIRPORT

Frederick R. Pole was a disciplined and retired U.S. Army officer; he was in the middle of a second career as a vice president at the University of North Texas. He as the Board Chair-Elect, set to follow Harry on April 1, 1990. I thought we had a good relationship.

On December 12, 1989, Harry and I were among 200 guests who were invited on an inaugural flight into the new Fort Worth Alliance Airport. An American Airlines DC-10 carried every public official and influential corporate type in the area. Seating was limited; visibility was priceless.

Fred wasn't on the list and asked if I could arrange for an invitation. I gave him my boarding pass. I published a photo on the front page of the chamber newsletter with Fred, Harry and Denton Mayor Ray Stephen posing on the tarmac.

At some point, I made a facetious remark, probably something about deferential schmoozing. Whatever it was, Fred was not amused.

LUNCH AT THE DENTON COUNTRY CLUB

A couple of weeks later, Fred invited me to lunch at the Denton Country Club.

We had an awkward conversation in which he asked if I "might be happier someplace else?" If I decided to seek employment elsewhere, he would serve as a reference. I asked what he was implying, and should I be looking? He never gave a direct response.

Fred suggested that I "think about it over the weekend."

Well, that weekend Kathy and I were flying to Las Vegas for our wedding anniversary.

PROGRAM CHANGE

In January, the board conducted a planning retreat for Fred's program year. Major issues identified, goals prioritized, I compiled the recommendations and prepared a list of committee descriptions and corresponding budget. They were to be submitted for final approval at the March board meeting.

Following the February membership breakfast in the UNT Silver Eagle Suite, Fred asked the members of his pending executive committee to join him in his office at the administration building. We sat around this big conference table as Fred presented his own version of the program. He used a long wooden pointer, tapping on the table to emphasize key aspects of his personal vision for the Denton Chamber.

General Eisenhower briefing his commanders for the D-Day invasion came to mind.

Okay, this is different. The executive committee was all volunteers; they probably didn't care if it wasn't the typical method of operation. I adjusted accordingly.

Fred was inaugurated and began his term on April 1, 1990.

1990-91 Program Year
Chair of the Board: **Fred Pole**
Occupation: Vice President, Administration
University of North Texas

MEET THE NEW LAND DEVELOPER

I avoided much direct interaction through the first six months of Fred's term. Our ruined Wedding Anniversary in Vegas remained at the back of mind.

The situation was exacerbated by a project with Don Dillard and the Hunt Petroleum Company. They had purchased Rex Cauble's former property in north Denton.

I first met Don in the mid-1970s when he was with the City of Waco planning department, and I was an intern at the Waco Chamber while attending Baylor University.

Don asked me to orchestrate a friendly dinner meeting with Fred and the President of Hunt Petroleum, wives included. I reserved a table at the Locust Street Grill.

After exchanging pleasantries, Fred asked me to assign seats. I'm sure there's an established protocol, but I was caught off guard. I pointed out what I thought were preferred spots around the table. The look on his face indicated I wouldn't make it as a *maitre d'*.

A month or so later, Don Dillard and I made a clandestine field trip with a couple of city staff to scope out the factory stores in Corsicana, Hillsboro, New Braunfels and San Marcos. We even met with the mayor of Hillsboro to discuss the terms of a tax abatement agreement they used to secure their development.

Don's company was considering a similar model on a site at the southeast corner of I-35 and north Loop 288.

As with any economic development project, confidentiality was paramount, especially in the early stages. We were in between economic development staff at the time, so I was the sole point person.

I intentionally scheduled the trip without sharing the itinerary with Fred or the chamber staff.

Seems while on the road, Fred called the chamber office. The aforementioned staff accountant apparently emphasized the mysterious nature of my two-day absence. I'll never know, maybe she initiated the call. Somewhere in all that, I obviously made a tactical error in communications.

ADVANCE PAY

On top of that, I had contracted with Maria Sepulveda, the chamber's part-time SBDC counsellor, to update our demographic files and assist with an economic trends study. Maria was an attractive young Hispanic female and a graduate student at the UNT. She was going on vacation and asked if she could be paid part of her monthly stipend in advance. I authorized the transaction.

In my opinion, the intricate research corresponded with the compensation. One of our economic development accounts was the source of funding. Our staff accountant was envious of the wage.

It's all a bit hazy now, but I believe Maria's vacation must have overlapped with the fact-finding trip. This was in late summer.

MEETING SUBJECT?

Weeks went by and I don't recall any mention of the recon tour, or the agreement with Maria.

Then, the staff accountant informed me that I was to meet Fred Pole and Barbara Russell at his office on Friday afternoon, September 28, 1990. She gave no indication of intent or subject of the appointment.

Barbara was Board Chair-Elect. They were both waiting for me at the same big conference table in Fred's office.

INTERROGATION

Fred opened a manilla folder revealing various hand-scribbled notes and a couple of hourly timecards which were like the ones used for tracking the SBDC counselor's time spent on our data analysis project.

He folded his glasses and used them to guide through his notes. Fred had no eyebrows, which accentuated the crease in his forehead. At first, I was amused since this was a bit distracting.

First, they challenged the amount of Maria's hourly wage and then shifted to the issue of paying for work not completed. Both nodded simultaneously when Fred described my actions as "a serious error in judgement." He concluded each point with: "What were you thinking?"

THE JAPS

Matsushita was considering a major installation in the North Texas area. The prospect originated through the governor's office. We made it to the final stages and hosted several on-site visits with various professional consultants and representatives from the corporate headquarters based in Japan.

Due to the size and scope of the proposed operation, it was a popular topic on the streets. Numerous other communities were vying for this coveted tax base enhancement. Matsushita was a front-page headline all around Dallas and Fort Worth.

While addressing a membership meeting of the Denton Board of Realtors, I was quizzed about the status of our negotiations. Out of nowhere, Fred referenced this meeting.

Apparently, someone was offended when I used the term *"Japs*" in referring to the Matsushita project.

WHAT WAS I THINKING?

Finally, he expressed concern that I didn't inform him about the factory outlet recon mission with Don Dillard and city staff. Don was adamant that we don't alarm existing retailers.

I didn't understand the underlying purpose of the meeting and set the wrong tone early by telling them I felt it was inappropriate to commiserate with staff behind my back. They had no interest in my rationale or explanations.

He reiterated: "What were you thinking?" Fred told me: "(my) time has come … (I) had the opportunity to resign … let (them) know when I was ready to inform the news media." Both insisted they wanted me to be able to "save face."

I didn't consider my actions illegal. The well-trained Army Colonel's interrogation and inhibition tactics, however, convinced me I was guilty.

I GOT FIRED

In those days, Kathy was taking our daughter to and from Fort Worth; there was an on-site childcare facility affiliated with the American Airlines corporate offices.

She was also the proud owner of a new Toyota Camry recently purchased from Dave Krause.

I was in the kitchen when she asked: "How did the meeting go with Fred?" "I got fired," I said.

Kathy promptly ushered our daughter into the living room. I wouldn't say there was mass hysteria, but she clearly demonstrated a sense of urgency.

Two car payments? The mortgage? Groceries? Doctor bills? Day care? We tallied our financial shortfall as I listed the atrocities outlined by Fred.

THAT'S ALL I NEED TO KNOW

Then, Ken Bradley called. "Hey, what's goin' on?"

Well, this was about 6:15 p.m. on Friday evening, not the normal time I would expect to hear from Ken.

"Do you mind if I come by for a beer?"

We didn't have cell phones back then, but Ken was at our front door with a six-pack of Budweiser within minutes of the call.

Kathy and I listened in amazement as he evoked the details of a conversation he had with the chamber's Treasurer, Bob Woodin. In their discussion, Bob evidently listed the same points of contention. Apparently, he was supposed to have been at Fred's office for the confrontation. According to Ken, he refused and told them he didn't want to pursue it.

I don't recall the exact question, but Ken looked me in the eyes and asked: "Did you do anything illegal?" "*No sir*," I replied.

"That's all I need to know." Ken left without finishing his beer.

WEEKEND ENLIGHTENMENT

The following Saturday afternoon, Ken described sitting in his backyard listening to a Texas Tech football game on the radio. Baylor appeared to be the victor; frustration, along with a couple of Budweisers, emboldened him. He called Fred Pole, at home.

Supposedly a spirited debate ensued. Once Fred confessed that he hadn't discussed any of the accusations with our executive committee, much less the full board, Ken was compelled to provide this service himself.

After chatting with a couple of select board members, Ken called to fill me in. I was still in a state of shock and told him he didn't need to do this. "Well, I'm just getting started," Ken replied.

Fred Pole called Sunday afternoon. "Chuck, you obviously have a lot of friends." We reviewed the discourse from the previous Friday, with Fred restating that he did not "fire" me.

Although it wasn't brought up at the Friday meeting, he felt like I was holding a grudge about the chamber's former ED vice president being paid more than me. This was a fact and, based on comparable positions, I approved his salary. Both of our VPs were paid as much or more than me.

I had nothing to lose and then launched into a reprisal about the overall circumstances. "Well," he said, "are you willing to admit all of this to the full board?'"

During the Friday meeting I wasn't aware that Fred was acting independently of our governing body. "Absolutely," I answered confidently.

As I hung up the phone, I had a brief *Oh, sh!t* moment, but I was committed. Later that day, I spoke with Dave Krause, Harry Hall, Carl Anderson and Roy Appleton. Another board member, Rob Rayner, asked to meet secretly at the chamber office to look over my own notes regarding the agreement with Maria Sepulveda.

ORDER IN THE COURT

I instructed the staff accountant to contact the board for a special-called meeting Monday night at the chamber office.

Declaring an official quorum was a challenge at most regular board meetings. That evening, however, we had a room full of directors, as well as a few Past Board Chairs. I didn't realize that Ken, Bob Woodin and Carl Anderson had confronted Fred earlier that day.

I was at city hall most of the afternoon with our Fire Suppression task force. Every spot in the parking lot was full by the time I got to the chamber office. Prior to the meeting, I dismissed a guy with a portable cassette recorder from KDNT, the local radio station.

Fred and I sat at a table in front of the board, a small podium between us. He insisted that the Past Board Chairs excuse themselves. To my surprise, they all refused. Ken wasn't on the board at that time but slipped into the adjacent hallway and watched through a screen-covered opening, previously used for slide presentations.

I served at the pleasure of 24 individuals who either owned or managed a business, which included supervising employees. I rarely had contact with many of them. The full board only met once a month.

Mary Anne McKenzie and Priscilla Sanders had taken off from their evening duties at the local Sears store. Bob Crouch, Dr. Reed and Jack Miller were Past Board Chairs; I honestly didn't know what to expect.

Early in his remarks, Fred brought up the relationship with Maria Sepulveda, hinting an inappropriate rapport and noting that she was Hispanic. The atmosphere shifted dramatically when Fred Hill, a respected and successful African American businessperson, expressed his personal offense to the inference. None of us anticipated Mr. Hill's emotional outburst.

Colonel Pole was rattled but proceeded with his accusations. When I gave up my seat on the Alliance Airport flight, he thought my remarks were: "malicious and destructive." I assume most people understood my irreverent sense of humor.

He then called on Bob Woodin and Jerry Cott to state concerns they had ostensibly shared with him. Both declined.

Fred concluded his findings by denying that he "fired" me.

WHY ARE YOU PICKING ON CHUCK?

Again, feeling like I had nothing to lose, I began my rebuttal by apologizing to those present. Not for my actions, but for the fact that we interrupted their evening after a long day at work.

I corroborated Fred's allegations. The prevailing point of contention, other than Fred's perceived racist inuendo, seemed to be that he hadn't consulted with the full board about any of these matters.

My parting shot was our difference of opinion regarding their actual intent during the Friday afternoon conference. The January lunch meeting and Fred's body language and tone of voice were the primary basis of my defense. He didn't use the term "fired."

Richard Hayes, an attorney, dismissed the *resignation* premise as a ploy. Mary Anne discredited the notion that I would ever consider inappropriate activities with a staff person. She went on to note that we should have been more concerned about the obvious relationship between our former ED vice president and his assistant.

Carl Anderson prefaced his denunciation with: "Why are you picking on Chuck?"

MOTION

Following other similar remarks, Richard moved for the record to show that "the board of directors found no need to take formal action regarding any of the concerns addressed, and that (Chuck) be given an official vote of confidence." The motion passed unanimously.

A savvy trial lawyer, Richard then made a motion to "publicly reprimand Fred Pole."
Roy Appleton was a seasoned newspaper veteran; this was a chamber "personnel matter," and could result in damaging front-page headlines. The motion failed for lack of a second.

SUBSTITUTE MINUTES

I was required to file minutes for any called board meeting. Fred insisted that the reprimand not be included, so I left it out.

At the regular meeting on October 12, our Tasmanian Devil persisted. Why wasn't the motion to *reprimand* in the minutes? In Fred's opinion: "it served no useful purpose." Richard moved to amend the minutes of the special-called meeting; the motion was approved unanimously.

Just like he did after our planning retreat, Fred wrote his own version of the minutes. I filed copies in the board record but kept his original notes.

1988: Jack Miller, Fred Pole, Ken Bradley and Harry Hall

Minutes
MID-YEAR REVIEW
Denton Chamber of Commerce
October 12, 1990

ELECTED DIRECTORS PRESENT (75%):

Fred Pole, Chair
Barbara Russell
Harry G. Hall
Carl Anderson
Roy Appleton, Jr.
Jerome M. Cott
Ann Houston
Priscilla Sanders
Bob Woodin
Roy Appleton, III
Russell Bates
Geneva Berg
David Boston
Colleen Briscoe
Weldon Burgoon
Bob Coplen
Dianne Edmondson
Sherrie Etheredge
Rob Gentry
Richard D. Hayes
Jeff King
Rob Rayner

ELECTED DIRECTORS ABSENT:

John Baines
David Biles
Don Ciulla
Gene Gohlke
Fred Hill
Gene Wilborn
Melvin Willis

OTHERS PRESENT:

Derrell W. Bulls
Bob Crouch
Pete Lane
Jo Ann Ballantine
Charles W. Carpenter
Dan Tonn, CPA

Following the INVOCATION by Boston and brief welcoming remarks from the hosts, Denton Regional Medical Center, Chairman Pole called the meeting to order at 12:55 p.m. Hayes moved that the MINUTES of the Regular September 17 and Special-Called October 1 Board Meetings be approved as mailed in advance, but requested that the records indicate that a motion was made and seconded expressing concern regarding actions of the Chair and Chair-Elect of the board, although it failed to pass, during the Special-Called October 1

There was an internal procedures matter which developed. This matter required the attention of the Board of Directors. ~~To~~ A meeting of the Board took place on Oct 1. ~~Att~~ Matters of concern were addressed ~~and action taken. It would~~ and resolved. It would serve no useful purpose to comment at this time beyond that -

Fred Pole
10/17/90

The minutes of the special called meeting of the Board of Directors on October 1, 1990, we approved with amendment. Said amendment concerned a motion made by Hayes at the October 1, 1990 meeting regarding internal procedures. Said motion failed.

Per Fred Pole
10/17/90

THE TRIBE

I was vindicated. Fred, Barbara and I managed to limp amicably through the next 18 months.

Prior to October 1, 1990, I viewed the position as *just a job*. I discovered that I had some true friends that weekend. Being around passionate individuals made me passionate about the chamber.

Ken Bradley made it all possible.

Roy Appleton, Carl Anderson, Bob Crouch, Harry Hall, Richard Hayes, Hal Reed, Mary Anne McKenzie, Jack Miller and Priscilla Sanders didn't have to be there that night. They all remained loyal and unconditional friends, welcoming me into the tribe.

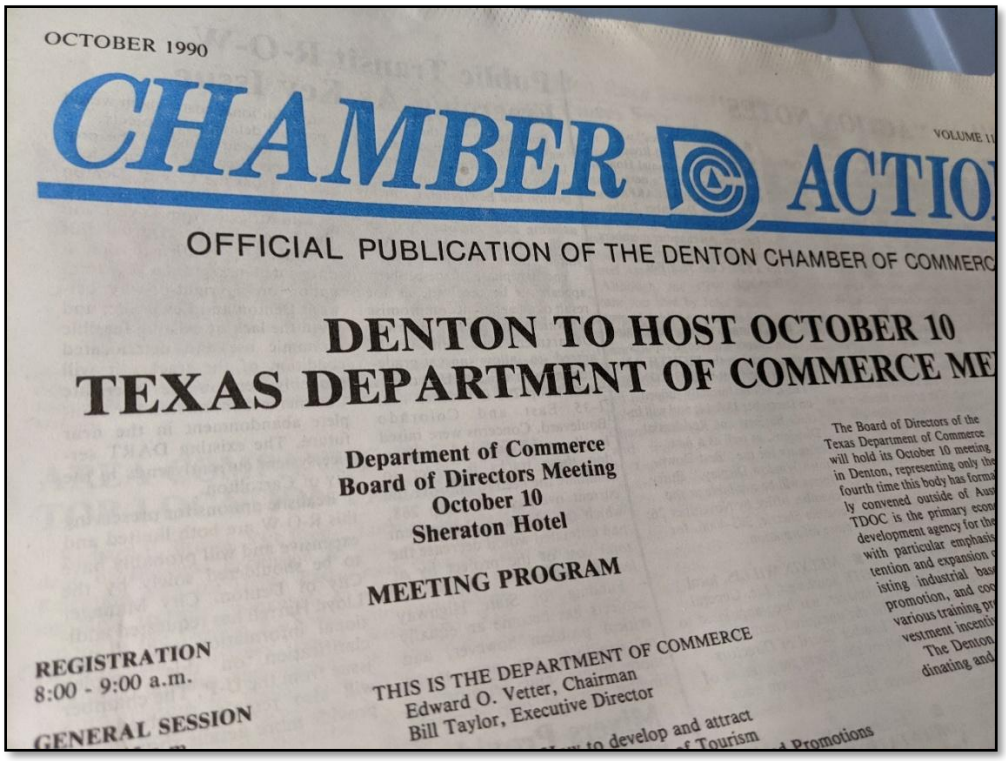
During one of our state chamber professional meetings, I was asked to serve on a panel and give my thoughts on the subject. I made it a point to emphasize that I wasn't boasting or proud of the outcome. I learned a valuable lesson about communication and transparency.

The high-strung staff accountant retired about a year after the *resignation* incident. Maria earned a master's degree in business administration; I think she ended up somewhere in New, Mexico. I'm not sure where our former ED vice president went to spread sunshine.

Colonel Pole, no doubt, preferred a clean-cut Lieutenant, with spit-shined boots. I probably could've played the role for twelve months, but his threat to coerce me out before his term even began ignited my cynical nature.

There were, of course, more awkward moments with volunteer leaders. Such encounters were inevitable over the course of 36 years.

Still, the position seemed to fit my skills and interests.



OCTOBER 1990

CHAMBER ACTIO

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DENTON CHAMBER OF COMMERC

DENTON TO HOST OCTOBER 10
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE ME

Department of Commerce
Board of Directors Meeting
October 10
Sheraton Hotel

MEETING PROGRAM

REGISTRATION
8:00 - 9:00 a.m.

GENERAL SESSION

THIS IS THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Edward O. Vetter, Chairman
Bill Taylor, Executive Director

The Board of Directors of the Texas Department of Commerce will hold its October 10 meeting in Denton, representing only the fourth time this body has formally convened outside of Aus TDOC is the primary econ development agency for the with particular emphasis tention and expansion isting industrial bas promotion, and co various training, pr vestment incenti The Denton dinating and

The Denton Chamber hosted one of four off-site meetings on October 10, 1990, for the Governor's Office of Economic Development & Tourism

Most of our advocacy focused on broad issues that affected a collective interest, but we collected 186 signatures to support a specific **Re-Zoning Case**: *"fully support the principle of the right to conduct business without undue or burdensome government restriction; urge the city council to encourage and approve any legitimate business engaged in a legal business, that desires to come to Denton and utilize a site that could not reasonably be used for any other purpose …. "* On January 8,1991, the city council removed restrictions and authorized necessary zoning, 5-2, for **Pep Boys.**

Between July - December 1990, we were involved in negotiations to amend the **Fire Suppression** and **Sign Ordinances.**

We tackled 20-plus **Sign** enforcements policies, with emphasis on face-change-out, broader definition of "abandoned" signs and modifying the process for measuring monument signs and pole height along I-35.

1991-92 Program Year
Chair of the Board: **Barbara Russell**
Occupation: Realtor

Next, **commercial solid waste** disposal and landfill options**.** We submitted a formal request to the city council on April 1, 1991, to adopt a non-exclusive agreement: *"… support Ta competitive and free-market system, with the understanding that the Board does not endorse the sale of the system nor any particular company's bid for the service."*

Not glamorous stuff but definitely impacted local businesses.

The city staff were protective of municipal assets, but for the most part, they were reasonably cooperative. A few of the city council members, however, thought we should yield to their stewardship. We were major contractors; some thought they were subsidizing chamber operations.

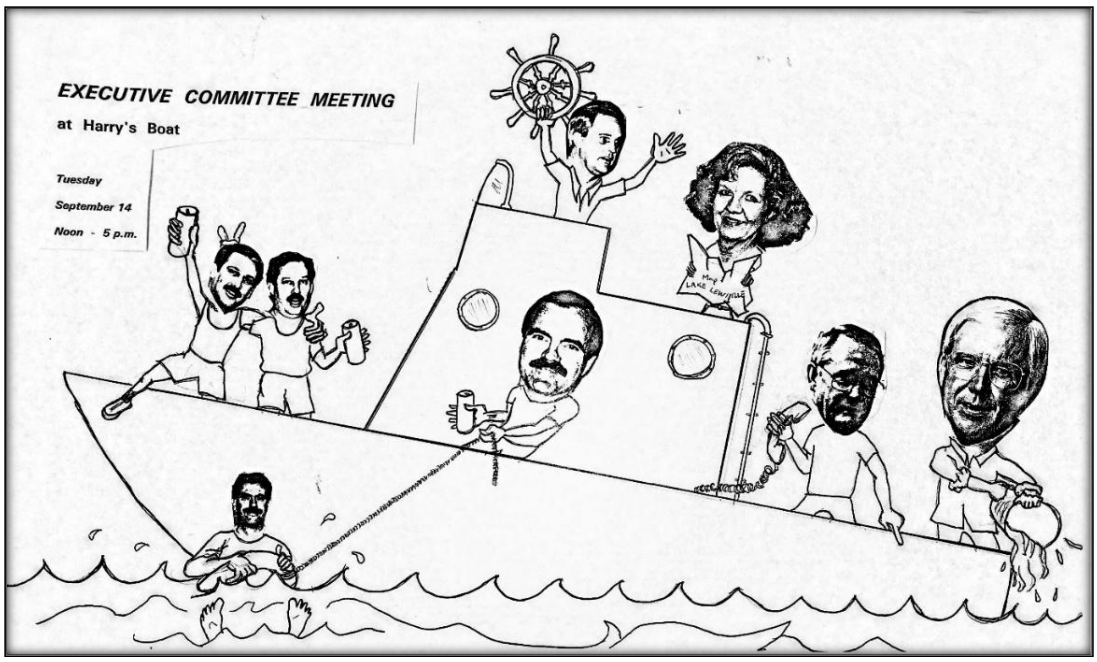
Barbara and I were summoned to a city council work session on May 21, 1991, to explain the chamber's role and rationale for intervening. Barbara was adept at conveying issues, especially in real estate matters. We gave a detailed presentation. Barbara didn't quiver or bat an eye; no apology, this is what we do. She enjoyed the deliberation. I believe we made out point, but probably just irritated a few of them.

Denton was divided among three different Congressional, state Senate and House of Representative districts in the 80s. We challenged the **1991 Redistricting Map** specifically requesting **"*one* voice."** The position called for the governor to veto the plan; our influential Past Board Chairs Council took an identical stance. The official chamber resolution would signify a joint statement, but in a hotly debated move, our board rejected their request to file a lawsuit.

A special chamber team, coordinated by Melvin Willis and GTE, travelled to Washington, DC to encourage U.S. Senator Phil Gramm and Congressman Dick Armey to help designate Denton as the permanent **FEMA National Tele-registration Center.** We presented an extensive inventory of office space capable of handling sophisticated electronic communications. We were in competition with existing sites in Maryland and Virginia but succeeded!

1992-93 Program Year
Chair of the Board: **Carl R. Anderson**
Occupation: General Sales Manager, Bill Utter Ford

Carl labeled his executive committee: ***Knights of the Mystic Sea***. We were facing some crucial issues with our long-range building plans. We needed to evaluate our service agreements with the City of Denton. We conducted several in-depth planning sessions on Harry Hall's boat at Lake Lewisville, including post meeting decompression.



Long-Range Building Improvements
ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

Following a long-range planning analysis headed by Russell Bates, our board adopted a *Statement of Preference* on October 16, 1992: The **chamber building should remain** within the boundaries of the current **Denton Central Business District.**

They also agreed to **purchase property** north of the existing chamber offices, Carroll Boulevard & Congress, for **future expansion**, including $3,340 from the former Greater Denton Industries, Inc.

In 1975, the corner of Parkway and Carroll Boulevard was a geographic midpoint of the city, and roughly equidistant to UNT and TWU. Our beach house was constructed in a flood plain, on city-owned property. Although paid for, Homer Bly and W.C. Orr graciously stashed the note for years.

I don't know if it was intentional, but on the official maps at city hall, we were excluded 50 feet outside the boundary of the actual Denton Central Business District.

Russell revealed his retrofit masterpiece during Carl Anderson's mid-year board retreat. We met at the elder Bill Utter's lake house. The setting was perfect for a work session that addressed such a monumental moment for the chamber's future.

Carl and Russell explained in detail the impressive complex that could be the new *Front Door to the Community*. My job was to place clear plastic sheets on the overhead projector depicting the floor plan and renderings of the exterior.

The reflection from the lake caused a slight glare on a rickety screen propped against the fireplace. They got the picture, however, and excitement mounted.

The original offices, designed for a staff of five, were well beyond practical capacity.

Proposed in four phases, the design called for **off-site parking**, **enclose the ground floor** with a larger meeting area and a dedicated **briefing center** for economic development prospects.

Everyone was *drinkin' the Kool-Aid* and visualized a cutting-edge environment where respectable business leaders could assemble to trailblaze into the 21st Century.
The prevailing euphoria waned, however, when the fourth stage was addressed.

In 1975, handicap access wasn't required uniformly. Everyone, and every action at the chamber office was dependent on being able to climb stairs.

Russell was very thorough, and in his matter-of-fact style, listed off the corresponding construction estimates.

An **elevator** was the *elephant in the room*.

Additional expense to enlarge the footprint of the building, connect a shaft and reposition the main entrance was staggering. To this group, mandates without money were considered government overreach.

Carl prudently announced that we should move to the next order of business. We flipped open the ice chests and proceeded with *Happy Hour*.

Based on recommendations from a task force headed by Priscilla Sanders, the board approved criteria for a **Volunteer of the Year Award** at the same meeting. The award prefix to be named in honor of the late James N. Wood and presented posthumously.

We conducted the **Retail Colloquium** series, featuring Lawrence Marcus, Neiman Marcus, Michael Renzulli, Sally Beauty, Sue Goldstein, The Underground Shopper and Gary Michael, Albertson's.

When I-35 East from Dallas joined I-35 West out of Fort Worth in 1969, the chamber devised a nationwide promotional campaign: ***Top of the Golden Triangle.*** The chamber and City of Denton shared similar logos for two decades. Utilizing the Texas state flag colors, a local designer, Derek Craig, won a contest with his proposed ***Star*** emblem, which the board adopted as our official logo on January 21, 1993.

Although there were several attempts to change the insignia after the turn of the century, I preferred its simplicity and nod to Texas. Those in charge honored my inclination until I retired.

1993-94 Program Year
Chair of the Board: **Russell L. Bates**
Occupation: Architect

The husband of a senior city employee was one of several residents who scuttled our request for a land use amendment on July 14, 1993. **Denco/911** considering a site on I-35 near what is today Rayzor Ranch. Area residents alluded to a lack of definitive intent for their additional acreage. I can't imagine anything worse than the congestion in place today. Ultimately the application was denied; Denco/911 constructed their headquarters in Lewisville.

The chamber's Economic Development Vice President, Ken Burdick worked on a clandestine project to relocate **Telecom Remarketing Corporation of America (TRCA)** from Carrollton. They opened their doors on September 9, 1993.

Increase and *tax* were rarely used in a complete sentence at the chamber office. The board, however, endorsed a **Half-Cent increase** in the Local **Sales Tax Rate** to be applied toward Ad Valorem funded services. A public referendum passed January 15, 1994.

1994-95 Program Year
Chair of the Board: **Richard D. Hayes**
Occupation: Attorney

The City and chamber contracted with **PHH Fantus** on August 2, 1994, to conduct a **Competitive Analysis**. In the final report on February 15, 1995, they recommended a **4A Sales Tax** referendum to help fund Economic Development.

Using earnest money ($17,500), we **purchased the property north of the existing chamber office** on September 15, 1994.

On October 20, 1994, the Denton Traffic Safety Commission approved a variance for a center **curb cut** on **Congress Street**.

Our Economic Development Vice President, Ken Burdick, called on Richard Pierce, Travel Publisher for the Texas Department of Transportation in Austin. He convinced Mr. Pierce to include the city of Denton in its Dallas-Fort Worth inset on the official Texas Map.

Thanks to Ken, a separate and enlarged space now highlights **Denton** on the **state highway map.**

1995-96 Program Year
Chair of the Board: **Priscilla Sanders**
Occupation: Manager, Sears Store, Golden Triangle Mall

PRISCILLA: The Queen Mother

Three of the four phases of the Long-Range Building Improvements Plans adopted in 1992 were completed by the end of the decade. So, how did we pay for the rest of it?

Priscilla Sanders, a successful local retailer and ardent sales expert, became an active volunteer for the Denton Chamber about the same time I was hired. When we first met, she was with Russell's Department Store; she retired from Sears.

Priscilla originally plugged into our Retail Business Committee and orchestrated ***Shop Denton First*** and ***Denton Dollars*** promotions.

Corporate retailers were always a challenge when it came to financial support for the chamber. Most folks drive by Golden Triangle Mall and assume it's an automatic chamber member factory. Other than the management office, and a couple of other small locally owned shops, we had very few members there.

Not just exclusive to stores in Golden Triangle Mall, I found that corporate retailers in general joined the chamber as a way to assure publicity and a big crowd to impress the regional *suits* attending their grand-opening. When it came time for the annual renewal, however, there was typically a new store manager who had no authority for local transactions.

Having said all that allows me to segue into my praise and admiration for Priscilla. She embraced the whole chamber concept from the start. When Sears would no longer pay its membership, Priscilla covered them with her own money.

She organized an all-volunteer, incentive-driven sales team during Carl Anderson's term as Board Chair. Priscilla and her ***Pacers*** raised our total number of **membership accounts** past the **1,000** mark for the first time in 1992.

Individual *Pacers* earned dollar value points in exchange for new member sales. They were a small group, hand-picked and individually mentored and motivated by Priscilla.

Non-profit hacks like me can only dream of chancing upon a precious jewel like Priscilla Sanders.

Priscilla Sanders (left) not only chairs the chamber's "PACERS" Committee, but she also sold the most new accounts during the 1990-91 Program Year. Anne Fay was the top-producing "PACER" during the year-end membership drive.

rns 20-year reaccreditation

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce recently confirmed that the Denton Chamber has earned its 20-Year Reaccreditation; (l-r) Steering Committee Chairman Dr. Hal Reed, Chamber President Chuck Carpenter and Board Chairman Priscilla Sanders presented the official certificate and "1995" plate during the July Board of Directors meeting.

GERTRUDE

One of Priscilla's loyal *Pacers* was a delightful envoi for Texas Woman's University named Gertrude Gibson. She never married, dedicating her entire life to promote and represent TWU. Gertrude was truly one of a kind.

One morning following a chamber membership breakfast, Gertrude told me that she would be receiving a substantial refund from her personal income tax return. Gertrude went on to explain that she wanted to donate it to several different charitable causes.

Gertrude paused, cocked her head and in an astute college lecturer voice asked: "Do you think the chamber could use any money?" Realizing a full toe-touch-split would be both embarrassing and disastrous, I politely responded: *Yes mam, I believe we could probably find a suitable use for your generosity.*

I don't remember how much it was, but it was substantial enough to start a **Building Improvement Fund.** Inspired by Gertrude's kindness, Priscilla was moved to tackle the chamber building facelift.

BARN RAISIN'

Golf tournaments and auctions were usually quick fixes for most non-profits. Priscilla recognized the need to come up with something a bit more substantive, and, well … *entertaining.*

Our first collaboration was billed as an Old-Fashioned *Barn Raisin'* and originally planned outside on a vacant lot east of the chamber building. Besides food, drink, live music, and of course, an auction, she included the North Texas Drum Line. A local playwright penned a clever interpretation of Denton County History which was performed by an Argyle-based theatre group.

She topped it off with a laser light show enhanced by shaking of these long white drapes. That's the best I can explain it, other than the chamber staff, their spouses and other loved ones were called into service for this part of the program.

Threatening meteorological conditions required a last-minute relocation to the Denton Civic Center, which actually turned out better. Regardless, Priscilla's heartfelt belief in the Denton Chamber attracted a broad new audience and $68,000 for the chamber's Building Fund.

A few others were listed under the acknowledgements, but, make no mistake, Priscilla Sanders was the brains and the catalyst of our success.

From that day on I have referred to Priscilla as *The Queen Mother*.

March 21, 1996: Priscilla Sanders, Fred Gossett and Russell Bates.

DAVID LETTERMAN

A cynical, fast-talking, DJ from a Dallas radio station called me early one morning at home. He wanted to know about our billboard on I-35E that referred to late night TV personality David Letterman.

I was barely awake; and didn't realize we were actually on the air. I was thinking obscene thoughts, but, fortunately, didn't say them out loud. I stumbled through the interview. The cunning radio announcer made good use of my confused state to the delight of his audience.

Mr. Letterman made an off-hand comment on November 28, 1995, regarding a large slab of concrete, referred to as our *bandstand,* in what today is Quaker Town Park.

The *bandstand* was highlighted as part of an ingenious 16mm film, used in the late 1960s as part of the ***Dynamic Denton*** campaign. Actual Denton citizens extolled local landmarks. Before her reign as Miss America, a young Phyllis George was featured in a song and dance ensemble.

An accompanying vinyl record with a loud pink cover was part of the collateral distributed during tour stops in Chicago, Detroit, New York and Los Angeles. Somehow, Mr. Letterman acquired one of these albums and referenced it on the air.

Tim Crouch and I initiated a tongue in cheek campaign to persuade him to telecast one or more of his shows in Denton.

I even hosted a Dallas TV crew at the *band stand* itself. All manner of fame-seeking artists offered their assistance based on various ambiguous connections to the show.

We sent a letter with Denton memorabilia and even referenced the cult classic movie: ***The Rocky Horror Show.***

December 14, 1995

Mr. David Letterman
1697 Broadway
New York, New York 10019

Dear Mr. Letterman:

We at the Denton Chamber of Commerce took very seriously your interest in moving your show to our city, as indicated by your comments during your November 28, 1995 broadcast.

On December 4, we personally delivered a formal corporate relocation packet to your office. Now, please find enclosed a photo of a local marquee billboard that confirms our mutual interest in you and your show. We will follow up with additional information, in hopes that you will understand and appreciate the magnitude of our offer to be the home of the Late Show with David Letterman.

You'll be pleased to know that we do, in fact, have a band stand in Denton, and we are even prepared to name it in your honor. Plus, you have your choice of excellent production and broadcast facilities through either Texas Woman's University or the University of North Texas, both located in Denton.

Please let us know what additional information we need to provide in order to help make sure that you know Denton, Texas is here for you.

Cordially,
Charles W. Carpenter
President

I believe we succeeded in churning publicity for Denton within the Dallas-Fort Worth area. To my knowledge, however, David Letterman made no further mention of Denton, or our *band stand*.

Governor **George W. Bush** met personally with the Denton County Commissioners Court on April 3, 1995, during **Denton County Days in Austin**. Our pre-assigned teams called on Lt. Governor Bob Bullock, State Comptroller, John Sharp and Pete Laney, Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives.

I testified before Denton County Commissioners Court on April 11, 1995, supporting $5 million in road improvements for the proposed **Texas Motor Speedway** project on I-35 West near Alliance Airport.

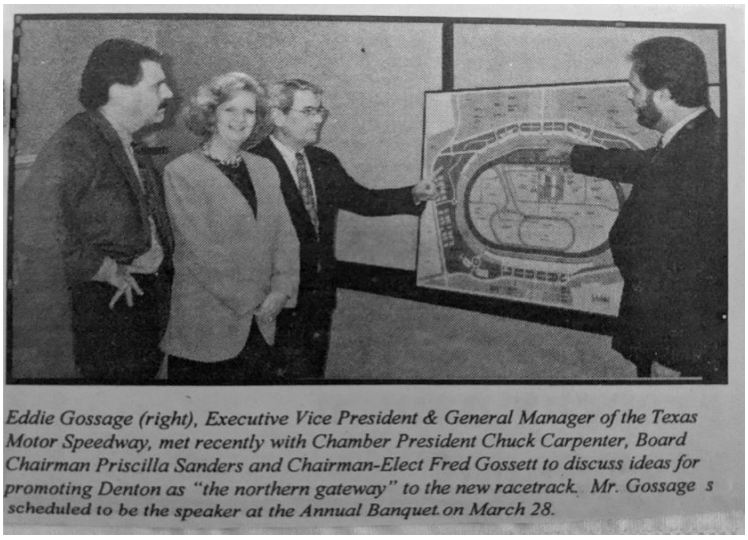
Russell and Mike Bates submitted floor plans to **enclose the lower** level of the existing **chamber building** on April 17, 1995. The board froze the design, minus an elevator.

VOLUNTEER of the YEAR

2017-18	Randi Skinner
2016-17	Carrell Ann Simmons
2015-16	Monica Glenn
2014-15	Carolyn Corporon & Perry McNeill ("*We The People Awards*")
2013-14	Erik Clark
2012-13	Roger Cox
2011-12	Mike Pope
2010-11	Larry Parker
2009-10	Phyllis Pittman
2008-09	David Layton
2007-08	Sheri deWet
2006-07	Hank Dickenson
2005-06	Jayne Howell
2004-05	Brandon McCleskey
2003-04	Michelle Houston
2002-03	Lilia Bynum
2001-02	George Young
2000-01	Marty Rivers & Amy Painter-Todes
1999-2000	Tim Crouch
1998-99	Helga Williamson
1997-98	Russell Bates
1996-97	Andrea Von Hoffmann
1995-96	Todd Price
1994-95	Ellen Painter
1993-94	Fred Gossett
1992-93	Gertrude Gibson
1991-92	James Wood\Lake Dallas Balloons & Flowers

1996-97 Program Year
Chair of the Board: Fred Gossett
Occupation: Gossett Construction

Fred was all things Texas Motor Speedway. His theme for the Annual Membership Banquet: *Denton: Northern Gateway to Texas Motor Speedway;* the featured speaker was Eddie Gossage, general manager. Fred and the staff wore matching shirts.



Eddie Gossage (right), Executive Vice President & General Manager of the Texas Motor Speedway, met recently with Chamber President Chuck Carpenter, Board Chairman Priscilla Sanders and Chairman-Elect Fred Gossett to discuss ideas for promoting Denton as "the northern gateway" to the new racetrack. Mr. Gossage s scheduled to be the speaker at the Annual Banquet on March 28.

Although the subject was controversial, our board endorsed establishment of a **4A Economic Development Corporation.** The city council appointed a governing board on April 9. 1996, with the chamber continuing as the marketing arm.

On June 20, 1996, our board endorsed legislation creating the **North Texas Tollway Authority**. We successfully advocated corresponding bills during the 75th Session of the Texas Legislature.

Tiny Tim, a celebrity from the 60s, performed with Brave Combo during a membership mixer on June 27, 1996, at the Denton Visual Arts Center. His appearance was certainly novel; in my opinion, however, the recital was pathetic and embarrassing.

Mike Berry and Ray Barber from Sir Speedy Printing designed and developed the **chamber's first web site** in September 1996 and launched in December.

On November 1, 1996, Melvin Willis from GTE spearheaded a formal appeal to the Public Utilities Commission to **retain the 817 Area Code for Denton County**. Fred and I testified in **opposition** to a **940** designation which linked Denton with Wichita Falls. I thought we made a good case, but the city was officially converted to the 940 Area Code in May 1997, and with the proliferation of cell service, now has numerous area codes. Right thing to do at the time.

1997-98 Program Year
Chair of the Board: Bill Patterson
Occupation: Publisher, Denton Record-Chronicle

Including two former owners, the Edwards brothers, Bill was one of six chief voluntary officers from the *Denton Record-Chronicle* to serve the Denton Chamber. Bill was preceded by his grandfather Riley Cross, his father Fred Patterson and Roy Appleton, Jr.

Controversial air quality permits and the city's first tax abatement application, including a contentious public hearing, demanded our attention in December 1997. We finally locked down the 420,000 square foot, $37 million **United Copper Industries** North American manufacturing and distribution facility on January 12, 1998. UCI General Manager Dean Brown publicly acknowledged Ken Burdick and his efforts behind the scenes.

PLAY WITH THE BIG BOYS

Our board endorsed a **half-cent increase** in the local **Sales Tax Rate** to help **fund municipal services** in November 1993. The public referendum passed January 15, 1994,

PHH Fantus recommended that the remaining half-cent **Sales Tax** option be **increased** to support a **4A Economic Development Corporation.** Abilene, Amarillo and our rivals McKinney and Sherman were like-sized models.

The city council voted to establish a 4A ED Corporation but didn't call for the Sales Tax referendum. Board members included Past Chamber Chairs Carl Anderson, Harry Hall and Richard Hayes, along with Denton's top benefactor Troy LaGrone.

We engaged the able services of a Fort Worth consulting firm, The Cornerstone Group. Former Mayor Bob Bolin was one of the principal partners. Bill Shelton had retired as president of the Fort Worth Chamber and was their field representative.

Both Mayor Bolin and Bill were experienced in traditional economic development practices. They were adamant; do not pursue a Sales Tax increase without public support from our mayor and city council.

The Denton 4A Board was aggressive and ready to compete with the *Big Boys*! We calculated a $3.5 million budget. Ignoring advice from The Cornerstone Group, we vigorously promoted a public referendum to increase the local sales tax rate by the remaining half-cent.

Perhaps we were being set up to fail. The crusade was met with much skepticism and consternation on the streets. I suspect much of it was instigated by an ever-increasing schism between the 4A Board and a few select council members and staff.

Leadership Denton conducted a community survey as its class project and uncovered general distrust in the proposal. Consequently, the referendum failed miserably on January 18, 1997.

Bill had the pleasure of spending his first six months trying to keep a positive spin on our failed actions. I was even asked to serve on a panel through our state chamber executives association to talk about "*What NOT to do when promoting the Economic Sales Tax."*

I have few regrets, but the Economic Development Sales Tax debacle left a permanent scar.

STAR AWARDS

Proceeding with the lower floor enclosure required additional cash. Partly as an attempt to redirect attention from the failed Sales Tax vote, Tim Crouch teamed with Priscilla and me to take on the first of five ***Stars Awards*.**

With the Campus Theatre as the venue, we produced a Denton centric version of the Academy Awards show on June 12, 1997.

Priscilla secured sponsorships based on individuals that were nominated for various categories. Best Actress, Best Supporting Actor, Superior Development of Cast & Crew, Best Director, etc. corresponded with actual community service and business practices. The chamber membership voted for their favorite nominee.

Participants were clad in their finest formal wear and attended a lavish pre-show reception via chauffeured limousine. Joe Holland conducted on-site interviews; Tim arranged video snippets of the impromptu exchanges which were played during the show.

Each award category was introduced by pre-determined couples from within the list of sponsors. In other words, everyone got to play.

Elegantly attired, my bride Kathy and Tim's wife Camille took on the persona of Vanna White and escorted the winners offstage for photographs.

Tim, and his associate Chris Vachoska, produced commercials highlighting sponsors. They rolled between award presentations.

A pair of local personalities served as co-masters of ceremony. Carl Anderson, Susan McGuire Cooksey and Richard Hayes were among the witty, native Dentonites who served as on-stage hosts. George Dunham, from *The Ticket* sports radio and UNT alum, was one of our most popular celebrities.

My acerbic subject matter was more than matched by the caustic delivery of Dale Hansen, the sports director from WFAA Channel 8.

Dale was merciless when introducing UNT football head coach Darrell Dickey and Vic Trilli from the men's basketball program.

With an hour remaining in the festivities, Dale handed me his script and returned to Dallas for the 10 p.m. news telecast. The sponsor commercials were automated and couldn't be shortened.

Fortunately, Hank Dickenson, from the UNT Athletic Department, was in the audience. Despite Dale drubbing UNT sports, and not having won any awards himself, Hank stepped up to salvage the final hour of the show. He never let me forget that.

My natural irreverent and sarcastic sense of humor was finally put to good use, I wrote the MC scripts, as well as each award introduction. The ED Sales Tax fiasco was a primary target at the first *Star Awards*.

Countless personalities and events of the day were fodder during each show the next three years. Fortunately, most of the audience grasped the notion and embraced the prevailing levity.

From 1997-2000, we raised nearly $200,000 and highlighted over 100 different community service categories.

Long-Range Building Improvements

LOST MY COVERED PARKING SPACE

We acquired the property north of the existing chamber building for additional parking in 1994. Russell persuaded the Denton Traffic Safety Commission to approve a center curb cut onto Congress Street.

At the time, I didn't comprehend the need for a center curb cut. Many years later, after rarely being able to negotiate a left-hand turn onto Congress, I appreciated Russell's foresight.

Russell completed floor plans to enclose the lower level; the design was frozen by the board in August 1995.

Following Priscilla Sander's final meeting as our Board Chair, we broke ground on March 21, 1996. Priscilla, Russell and Fred Gossett and I posed with hard hats and a jack hammer, all provided by Lone Star Gas Company.

Bobby Jones, with J&J Construction, immediately climbed in a front-end loader and peeled back the asphalt under the building. I realized I would no longer have a covered parking space.

Thanks to Priscilla, we formally dedicated the **enclosed lower floor** on March 5, 1998.

The meeting room tripled in size; Joe Mulroy donated a new stove and refrigerator for the kitchen. We added a suite for the CVB staff and valuable storage space. A legitimate reception area welcomed visitors and potential new residents.

Approximately a year after that, we converted the original upstairs meeting room to the **Economic Development Office** and briefing center. We pulled funds from our ED private sector reserves.

1998-99 Program Year
Chair of the Board: George E. Highfill
Occupation: Executive Vice President, Northstar Bank.

Every year during our annual planning retreat, we chalked up the fourth phase of our 1992 Building Improvement Plan as a major goal. On seven different Reaccreditation Reports I had to list "Lack of second floor access" under the category of *Internal Challenges*.

Thanks, in part, to donations raised by Leadership Denton, the off-site **parking lot** was completed in 1999, providing 28 additional spaces. Sponsors are denoted by a headstone near the sidewalk which naturally attracts curious pedestrians

On September 17, 1998, our board endorsed a local referendum to **extend the hours for selling alcoholic beverages** to 2 a.m.

1999-2000 Program Year
Chair of the Board: Tony R. Clark
Occupation: President, Northstar Bank

We formalized a pro-active campaign envisioned the previous year, ***Building A Better Denton***. The objective: Demonstrate the importance of a healthy business community, (1) to help fund municipal services, fire and safety protection and public education; (2) support benevolent and charitable causes. I made 18 personal presentations, including a video and distributed nearly 1,500 printed collateral pieces

On July 15, 1999, our board endorsed **continuation of public incentives** that encourage the expansion and growth of new and existing business.

2000-01 Program Year
Chair of the Board: Connie Pelphrey
Occupation: Community Relations, Boeing, Corinth

We appointed a **Development Code Review Sub-Committee** in cooperation with the City of Denton Planning Department. Marty Rivers, Russell Bates, Wayne Allen, Joe Mulroy and Allen Bussell, as well as land use attorney Dwight Shupe, negotiated critical revisions prior to council consideration.

On February 9, 2001, our board endorsed legislation to create an **Electrical Engineering School** at the **University of North** in the former Texas Instruments building.

2001-02 Program Year
Chair of the Board: Ellen M. Painter
Occupation: Marketing Director, Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital

We expanded the **Elected Officials Reception** on June 13, 2001, to include the **Denton Black** and **Denton Hispanic Chambers**.

The board voted on November 15, 2001, to create the **Greater Denton Sports Commission**, and allow separate membership and other sources of funding.

All our negotiated revisions to the **Development Code** were adopted by the city council.

2002-03 Program Year
Chair of the Board: **Perry R. McNeill**
Occupation: Professor, Electrical Engineering
University of North Texas

Perry's wife, June, worked at the chamber, assisting Ken Burdick in our Office of Economic Development.

TIP Strategies proposed the **Joint Economic Development Partnership** to our Executive Committee on June 18, 2002. In September, we helped fund and participated in an assessment to recommend goals and structure.

The board approved revisions to **Leadership Denton** Policies & Procedures on June 20, 2002, to allow applicants: (1) "Announced candidates and persons holding elective office" and (2) related to a member of the Steering Committee.

On July 18, 2002, the board endorsed and promoted the **Denton County Transportation Authority Service Plan.** Referendum passed November 2, 2002.

As suburbs north of Dallas expanded and became more aggressive in business recruitment, our board adopted an **Economic Development Statement of Philosophy** on December 19, 2002: (We will not) "pursue private companies within the same metropolitan area, while reserving the right to respond when contacted by a company generated through external marketing efforts."

In February 2003, we conducted a **joint positioning process** with the City of Denton.

- ✓ Seek Tier 1 status for the University of North Texas
- ✓ Pursue vibrant central business district
- ✓ Improve and expand surface transportation
- ✓ Expand area medical services
- ✓ Pursue Top Tier for Public Schools, K-12

We agreed to promote Denton as a major, independent but equal player when compared to Dallas and Fort Worth. The chamber board expressed "significant concern," however, in Mayor Euline Brock's suggestion that we use ***Third City*** as a visible brand image.

2003-04 Program Year
Chair of the Board: **Randy L. Robinson**
Occupation: President, Texas Bank

Randy was one of many young, local financiers who got their start at the old green & black First State Bank.

During Randy's In-Coming Board Chair remarks at the annual membership banquet, he received a fictitious call on his cell phone and then exited the podium. He returned in a Super Man costume, alias ***Chamber Man*****,** as well as accompanying video.

Based on the Leadership Denton Class of 2002 graduation project, we initiated ***BeAlert*** as a standing certification process.

Businesses conducted an extensive check list and a friendly inspection by the Denton Fire Department to prepare for emergencies and natural disasters. A bright yellow canvass bag filled with emergency supplies was available for purchase. Participants received their certifications during quarterly membership luncheons. The program was eventually transferred to the Denton Fire Marshall.

We promoted a referendum on September 12, 2003, designating a half-cent increase in the local sales tax rate to help fund the **Denton County Transportation Authority.** Referendum passed.

On October 30, 2003, the Executive Committee authorized Bob Cates to chair a **Natural Gas Well Sub-Committee.** He conducted a site tour and two open houses and then presented findings and recommendations. We began discussions with city staff to determine acceptable options for drilling in environmentally sensitive areas.

The board established a new **Economic Development Partnership** with the City of Denton effective October 1, 2003. Randy and Jerry Mohelnitzky were the chamber's two voting representatives. This marked a significant step, assigning experienced, free market practitioners to a city council-appointed commission.

December 10, 2018: Randy Robison presents his original Chamber Man cape.

2004-05 Program Year
Chair of the Board: Jerry Mohelnitzky
Occupation: Insurance & Investments

The following year, Jerry Mohelnitzky reprised the ***Chamber Man*** motif, including a video.

I had known Jerry Mo since my original stint with the Denton Chamber in the mid-70s. He was, and still is, a shrewd diplomat; I was thrilled to have him back in the posse after he retired from corporate life.

He could defuse the edgiest situations and coax the rattles off a Western Diamondback. Jerry had a natural radar for sensing tsunami conditions; he would stick his head in the door just as I was about to have a serious meltdown. We solved many problems over lunch.

Membership surpassed **1,000** for the first time since 1992. The **Dallas Area Rapid Transit Authority (*DART*)** purchased the MKT right-of-way. We backed an initiative in the **DCTA** service plan that linked downtown Denton with Carrollton.

Jerry is the eternal optimist, which was demonstrated in three different **Reaccreditation** applications. The U.S. Chamber's primary emphasis was political involvement, including partisan support of elected officials.

I would prepare draft editorials, then Jerry and various volunteers would review them, depending on the subject. Regardless of the topic, especially our government relations program, Jerry would insist that the Denton Chamber was in full compliance.

We had a "Non-Partisan" clause in our bylaws, so I was cautious about implying that our activities did not conflict with our governing document. The IRS frowned on this. Service contracts with the City of Denton limited our ability to overtly support or oppose any elected office holders.

I lost count of all the times Jerry Mo would articulate his reasoning, listing off various examples, and then instruct me to revise the draft in such a way that we somehow met the U.S. Chamber's biased standards.

We submitted our 30-year application on November 30, 2004. We were one of only three local chambers in Texas to earn Four-Star Accreditation. At the time, less than 20 chambers in the state were accredited.

2005-06 Program Year
Chair of the Board: Lee Ann Nutt
Occupation: Provost, North Central Texas College, Corinth

By design, there were no requirements for a Leadership Denton applicant to be affiliated with a chamber membership; a few of them were antagonists. I wasn't the only one on the executive committee who was skeptical of the graduation project assigned to the Class of 2007.

Granted, some professional evaluations can be subjective, but a loose knit group of individuals with varying backgrounds and questionable agendas conducting an **external perception analysis** of the chamber, didn't seem objective. Lee Ann was a graduate of the program, however, and in favor of the project.

The results weren't as damaging as expected; we already knew our limitations and weak points. We were accustomed to being lopped in with City of Denton problems. I found it interesting that many of those interviewed were known adversaries. I suppose academicians have thicker skin than me.

We activated the **Denton Live website** on February 17, 2006.

2006-07 Program Year
Chair of the Board: Marty Rivers
Occupation: Denton President, First State Bank

Bank Presidents tend to make great Board Chairs.

Any chamber selection committee with whom I interviewed consisted of bankers and utility company execs. They usually embrace the chamber concept and traditionally the most generous with their financial resources.

I learned to appreciate and respect Marty's style when he facilitated actwo-year review of the City's Land Use Guide. The title sounds boring, and the process was like watching paint dry.

Week after week, a dedicated group of volunteers and city staff conferred at the chamber office to scrutinize every line and graph on a proposed document that Perry McNeill intercepted prior to city council consideration.

Marty had a classic Poker Face, with flawless timing for clever zingers. He frequently left me in distress thinking I had somehow irked him. We'd be well into the next conversation before I realized he was just messing with me.

The city council asked us to commemorate the **Denton Sesquicentennial**. We combined the regular December 2006 and February 2007 membership breakfasts on January 20, 2007, the actual date the original city charter was adopted.

We sponsored a beard-growing contest, ***Brethren of the Bush*** as Marty called it.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POSITIONING STATEMENTS

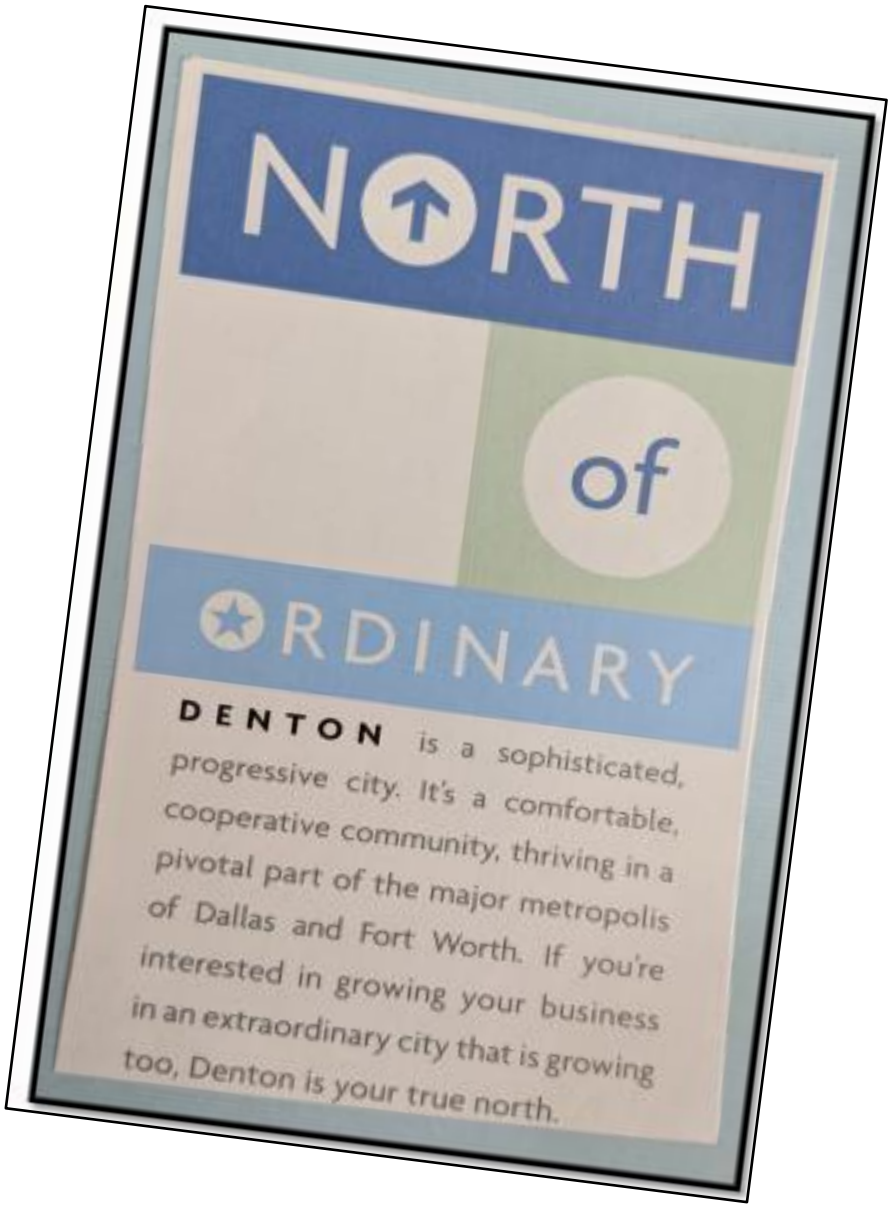
The term "Economic Development" was generously applied to all kinds of different scenarios. We were especially amused by some of the examples that various city council candidates used to describe their respective ideas on the subject.

During the Annual Membership Banquet, March 30, 2006, we unveiled a new campaign and positioning statement: ***North of Ordinary***.

Consternation ensued among some of our neighboring municipalities by the implication that we had deemed ourselves superior to the rest of the region. Personally, I loved it. When challenged, I found it a convenient platform from which to proudly expound on our many unique amenities and assets.

We experimented with a couple of different variations on the *Great Place to Live, Work, Learn and Play* banner used during *Vision for Denton*. The ever popular *Open for Business* seemed to rub some elected types the wrong way.

In each case, of course, certain Denton officials insisted that the chamber's *star logo* not be displayed as the dominant visual on collateral materials.



Marty headed the Denton delegation on one of our most successful **Washington Fly-Ins**.

I defended the **Wright Amendment** for five years with the Irving Chamber. Then I found religion and aggressively pursued the expansion of flights at Dallas Love Field. Our position also included a clause supporting unscheduled, 30-passenger flights at Denton Municipal Airport.

As part of our major long-range initiatives, on January 26. 2007, the board authorized the chamber's Convention & Visitor Bureau staff to conduct research and recommend options for a **convention center**.

Oue CVB kicked off the **Horse Country Tours**.

2007-08 Program Year
Chair of the Board: Phyllis Pittman
Occupation: Owner, Cookies by Design

After 23 years of quarterly membership breakfasts, we moved to a luncheon format on April 27, 2007.

FROG STRANGLER

A torrential *frog strangler* rolled in and flooded the creek behind the chamber office. The water rose swiftly and submerged all the surrounding streets, including our main parking lot. The office had closed for the night, but three of us were still in the building.

I had borrowed a new Ford Escape from Carl Anderson while our daughter's Escort was being serviced at Bill Utter Ford. I watched helplessly as the water reached the hood of the loaner Escape. One of the other staffer's Saturn literally floated across the parking lot.

The rain was so heavy that it collected in the courtyard between the roof and our flood wall, overwhelming the sump pump.

Eventually we were taking on water in the building itself. We began lifting boxes off the floor. As I stepped into the CVB office, I set off an aquatic wave toward an electric strip under one of the desks. "This is it! Sucks to be me." I don't know how I kept from being electrocuted

There was no access to or from the entire central business district for hours. Around 10 p.m. the water subsided enough to reach the borrowed Escape. When I opened the door, it was like a scene from a cartoon; buckets of water gushed out. Smoke blew through the A/C vents when I started it.

Much of the lower floor of the chamber office was unusable for months after that.

Thanks to an incredible friend at Bill Utter Ford, and a cooperative State Farm agent, I was only out the original expense of repairing our daughter's car. The chamber's insurance policy didn't cover flood damage, however, thus another hit to our Building Improvement Fund.

The Texas Chamber Executive's Association rallied a number of my colleagues and donated $1,700, a generous act of empathy.

2008-09 Program Year
Chair of the Board: Michele Barber
Occupation: Vice President Marketing, Northstar Bank

The chamber hosted the first **Denton County Agri-Business Tour** in 1977.

In 1983, we drove through a deep valley where the Lake Ray Roberts dam was under construction. I saw a cork tree in Flower Mound. Horses had finer accommodation than most Denton residents and a mechanical device trained bulls for rodeo competition. At one time, we had three packed buses.

Over the years, urbanization encroached on what was once rural land; we had to cancel the 29th tour due to lack of ticket sales.

On May 15, 2008, the board endorsed an **Aviation Sciences** program at UNT.

We convened the **100th Annual Membership Banquet** on March 14, 2009.

2009-2010 Program Year
Chair of the Board: Stan Morton
Occupation: CEO, Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital

After reviewing the mission and objectives, on February 18, 2009, our board discontinued the agri-business tour and golf tournament.

As referenced in the 35-Year Reaccreditation application, on May 19, 2009, the board discussed an issues-only **Political Action Committee**. They agreed to conduct more research and comparisons.

THE FINAL SEQUEL

On May 12, 2009, we resurrected the *Star Awards* and moved the event to the UNT Gateway Center. The award categories were expanded to 17; local CPA Peter McCleskey secretly tallied the votes, providing an even more tantalizing aspect of the ceremonies.

Seasoned theatrical superstars, Hank Dickenson and David Layton were our co-masters of ceremony. No one was spared from scrutiny.

As always, Frenchy campaigned for his own award nomination. Denton Police Chief Roy Menter claimed someone urged him to *"just shoot Frenchy!"*

Our final *Star Awards* grossed over $100,000.

We probably could've continued a reasonable facsimile but didn't want to overextend the novelty of the original concept. Priscilla had pretty much squeezed all the blood out of every turnip in town. I feel like we went out on top.

As for me, it served as a creative outlet. I subtly vented a few inner frustrations, while getting paid to remain the diplomatic chamber guy.

2010-11 Program Year
Chair of the Board: **Hank Dickenson**
Occupation: Deputy Athletic Director
University of North Texas

Henry "Hank" Dickenson took time from his responsibilities at the UNT Athletics Department, and all of the other many causes in which he's involved, to head the chamber.

He had the contacts and knew the logistics for a successful game day project sponsored by our Convention & Visitor Bureau. Local restaurants, hotels, bars and the DCTA A-Line were packaged as a ***Mean Green Football Experience.***

If we were hosting VIPs, Hank could arrange anything from a tour of DATCU stadium to a secret physics lab. He even tried to get Don Henley to perform at a chamber banquet.

Prefacing many of his judicious observations with, "I'm just the dumb guy from athletics," Hank is another one of those individuals who can get along with just about anybody. He even gave Frenchy his cell phone number.

He and Carl Anderson vied for the most impromptu interpretations of my carefully written scripts.

Hank's year marked the designation of **Women In Commerce** as a standing program initiative. Despite his professional ties to athletics, He signed a memorandum of understanding that divested the **Greater Denton Sports Commission** from the chamber.

We persuaded the **Denton County Transportation Authority** to **retain weekend service**.

BOARD CHAIRS IN NACOGDOCHES

My dad received the **Marvin Hurley Award**, the pinnacle of excellence and career achievement presented by the **Texas Chamber of Commerce Executives Association**.

I was given the Marvin Hurley Award in 2010 during the TCCE Annual Meeting at Nacogdoches.

I can think of many cases where I would've been concerned to be 200 miles from home and spot my incumbent Board Chair and two past chief voluntary officers at the back of the room.

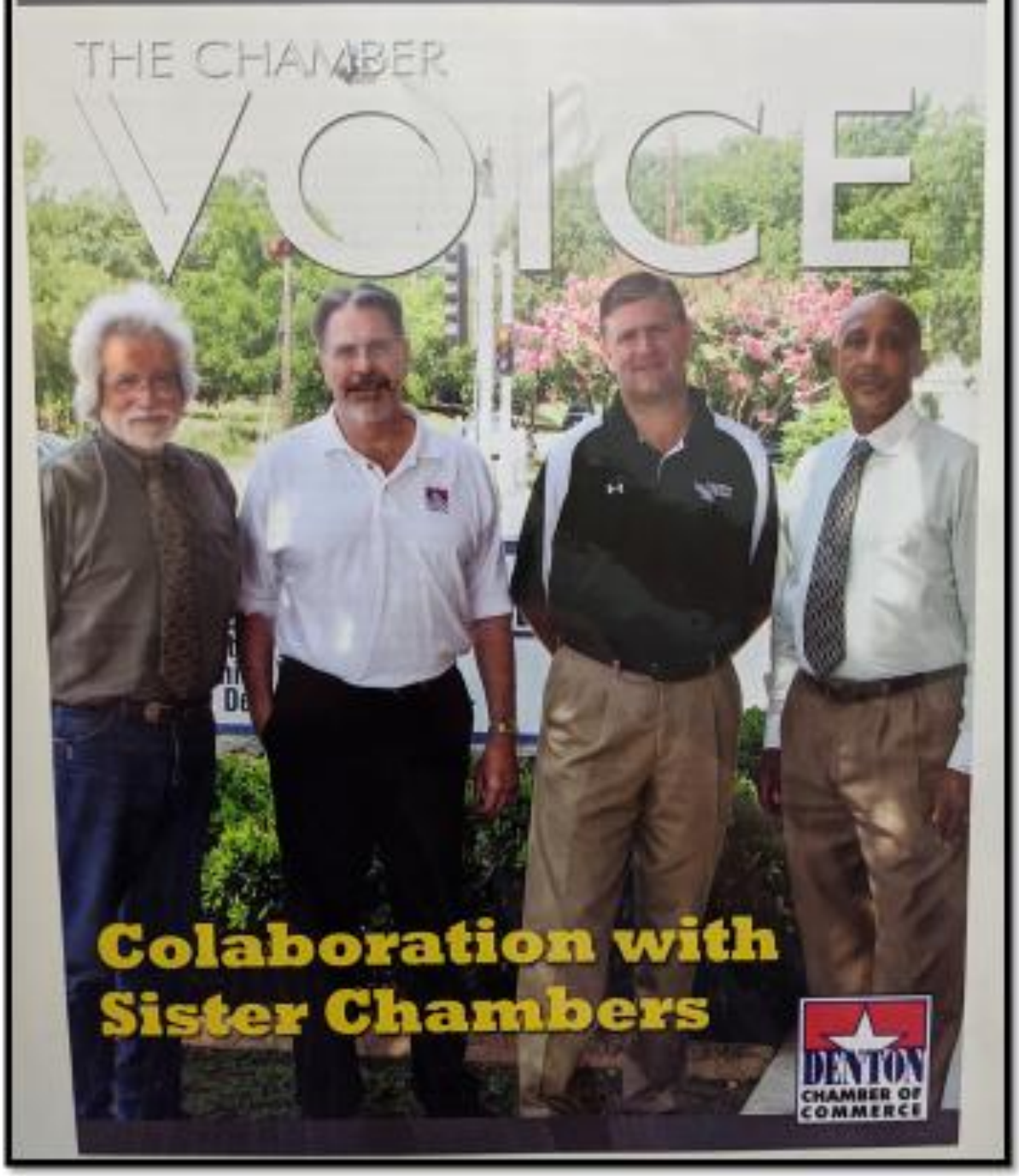
Hank Dickenson, Larry Parker and Priscilla Sanders made that long trip to deep East Texas for the presentation, clearly demonstrating our mutual admiration.

2010: TCCE, Nacogdoches, Larry Parker, Priscilla Sanders and Hank Dickenson

NCTC Announces New Program

Start-Ups Join Discover Park

New Commuter Vanpool Program



Colaboration with Sister Chambers

DENTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

2011-12 Program Year
Chair of the Board: Paul R. Chandler
Occupation: Denton President, Meridian Bank

Local banker Paul R. Chandler and I appreciated all things related to Denton history.

Paul was our Treasurer for three years, and then Board Chair. He came up with a new tale of Denton lore, Bronco football or recollections about the former First State Bank, requiring an hour or more to sign checks.

Neither one of us had any idea what we were getting into when an adjunct professor from UNT offered to facilitate a Positioning Statement for the Denton Chamber. We already had a Mission Statement, and I didn't understand the difference.

We hand-picked a group of community leaders, then filled the conference room at the Courtyard by Marriott for two days. Following multiple board deliberations, we adopted an official positioning statement: "*To businesses that are engaged in the community, the Denton Chamber of Commerce is the heart and soul of business opportunity and advocacy, offering comprehensive resources that promote commerce in Denton.*"

We left out save the whales and world peace.

We teamed with the **Denton Development Alliance** to help document case studies and support their presentations. This saved us from having to employ a full-time staff analyst and appear as if we really understood complicated engineering issues.

For their graduation project, the 2012 Leadership Denton class developed a business plan, and recommendations for a proposed off-site **Denton Store/Visitor Information Center.**

Thanks to a personal cash gift from Paul Chandler, our Greater Denton Industries files and Dynamic Denton campaigns were turned over to the Special Collections Department of the University of North Texas Library. They were converted for long-term preservation and available for public observation.

2012-13 Program Year
Chair of the Board: Chuck Fremaux
Occupation: Owner, Fremaux Metropolitan Catering

Chuck Fremaux is a renaissance man.

He's a gifted chef, sailor, an expert event planner and able to retool or replace anything. To help clarify our joint presence, he reluctantly endured the nickname: *Chunk*.

During an important meeting, this odd character showed up and insisted on seeing me. A creepy in a funky straw hat with a long cardboard tube was waiting in the reception area. He demanded that I sit down and then commenced acryptic story about his brother being murdered on their property west of the Denton Airport.

I was already annoyed by his incoherent diatribe but curious about what might be in the tube. All our employees on the ground floor were female; it was a caustic scene.

After suggesting that he explain the situation to the police, the guy became disruptive and belligerent. I don't handle confrontation well and was about to get *stupid.*

Chunk heard the commotion and escorted my adversary out to his truck. "Don't come back!"

We tracked his license plate and issued a restraining order. Turned out, he was a retired Denton High School teacher.

2013-14 Program Year
Chair of the Board: **Mark A. Burroughs**
Occupation: Attorney

2014: Denton Chamber Board Chairs Mark Burroughs and Larry Parker

Mark served as mayor during his term as Board Chair. On March 12, 2013, our board endorsed and supported a proposed **City of Denton Gas Utility** as a retention and sales tool. The referendum passed on May 11, 2013.

2014-15 Program Year
Chair of the Board: **Larry L. Parker**
Occupation: Co-Owner, Denton Depot Advertising Specialties

Larry Parker was in the Leadership Denton class that conducted a public perception analysis of the chamber.

Before he was Board Chair, Larry served as head of our Membership Development Division. He was a one-man collection agency and usually called every account on the subject to drop list.

Larry had the pleasure of taking on two contentious initiatives.

Although the City of Denton selected the site, our CVB vice president, Kim Phillips, was assigned to orchestrate an agreement with **UNT** to build a **convention center** next to the football stadium.

I propped Larry up at several different public hearings to advocate this proposal. Despite the darts and tomatoes, he did a masterful job. That option finally fell apart.

A glutton for punishment, he then signed off on a board position opposing a ban on **gas well fracturing** within the city Limits. More public hearings. More heckling. We also woke a sleeping giant made up of fringe anarchists.

What got lost in all this was the fact that we backed another public referendum on the same ballot, which passed, allowing the **general sale of all alcoholic beverages.**

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office issued **Registration Certificates**, July 22, 2014, for the chamber's ***Star*** and Convention & Visitor Bureau's ***Original Independent*** **logos.**

Fortunately, the board discontinued Certificates of Origin as of January 1, 2015.

We also earned our **40-Year Reaccreditation**, with Dr. McNeill heading the effort.

2015-16 Program Year
Chair of the Board: Jeff P. King
Occupation: Partner, Ramey King Insurance

Jeff graduated from our first Leadership Class. He and his brother, James, continued a third generation of the family insurance business. James also served on city council.

2015: Changing of the Guard, Larry Parker and Jeff King

FACE OF THE FRACKING BAN

Mark Burroughs worded our official statement; Larry Parker presented it, but Jeff King was in office when our resolution opposing the **Fracking Ban** was snagged by an outside activist group.

Copies of our resolution, including my signature, were distributed throughout the entire city. I received *hate mail* from people I'd never met, including a couple of hostile phone calls. One guy threatened to chain himself to our sign in front of the chamber building.

Our original position, which was intended as informational, morphed into a defensive stance. The camber became the public face of an unpopular subject among a large segment of the general populace.

2016-17 Program Year
Chair of the Board: **Glenn T. Carlton**
Occupation: Executive Director
North Texas Fair & Rodeo Association

The Denton Chamber is not a trade association; our leadership represented all types of professions and personalities.

Glenn Carlton is an authentic cowboy. He wore boots, Wrangler jeans and a steamed Resistol to board meetings. I, of course, maintained my white starched collar, tie and business suit. We were quite a pair.

We officially opened the **Discover Denton Welcome Center** and storefront studios for **DentonRadio.Com** on July 28, 2016.

Discover Denton Welcome Center,111 West Hickory Street

The ultimate flattery,
during one of our membership luncheons.
Glenn presented me with an official North Texas Fair boot jack

2017-18 Program Year
Chair of the Board: Jim Fykes
Occupation: Liaison Officer
Peterbilt Motors Plant

Our Denton Means Business 5k
passed along net revenue to the Mayor's Summer Youth Job program.
Mayor Chris Watts, Chamber Board Chair Jim Fykes,
Gary Henerson, United Way of Denton County.

We launched ***The Coffee Grind*** on April 26, 2017, a non-partisan bi-weekly program on Denton Radio.Com.

Chamber Coffee Grind on DentonRadio.com, interviewing State Representative Dr. Lynn Stucky about the 85th Session of the Texas Legislature.

Sheryl English was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Amanda Crocker on September 21, 2017, the **first female African American** to serve on the Board.

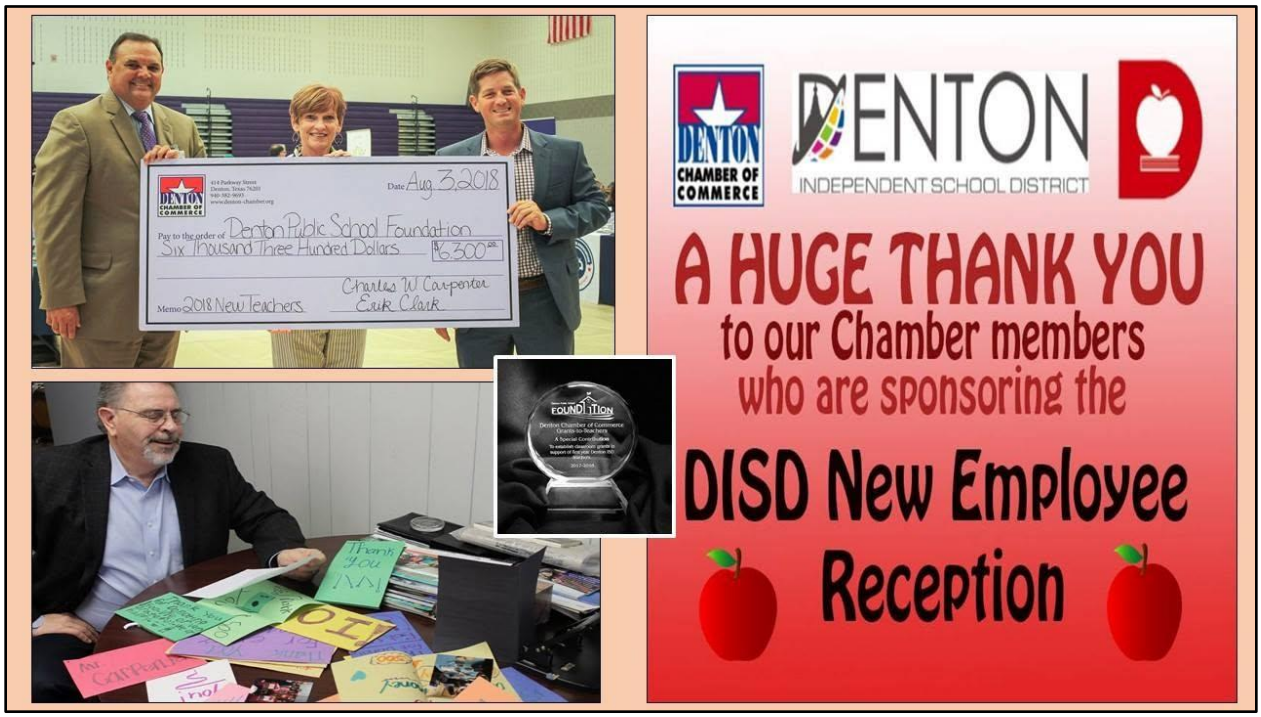
One must be prepared to be a game show host, save souls, or be a snake oil salesman.

Our CVB team fulfilled a standing priority since 2007.
The Embassy Suites
and its
318 rooms and 70,000 square feet of convention space
opened in December 2017.
During construction, General Manager Jeff Pritts
hosted a hard hat tour for the chamber staff.

Our ED Vice President, Adam Gawarecki, received an email from Phil Baker on February 2, 2018, confirming that **U.S. Cold Storage** (USCS) had closed on a 40-acre site on Jim Christal Road east of Western Boulevard.

For the first time ever, on April 1, 2018, our executive committee was made up equally, of male and female officers.

ERIK CLARK, Board Chair
JIM FYKES, Immediate Past Board Chair
RICK WICK, Vice Chair, Membership
GREG JOHNSON, Vice Chair, ED
JILL JESTER, Board Chair Elect
MONICA GLENN, Vice Chair, Government Relations
AMANDA ORINGDERFF, Vice Chair, Special Initiatives
CARRELL ANN SIMMONS, Treasurer



Thanks to the cooperation of the Denton ISD administration, we registered 50-75 chamber members to promote their products and services. Net revenue went to the Denton Public School Foundation. It was always gratifying to receive hand-written thank you cards from students and teachers. We started the event in 1997.

Despite the internet, our award-winning map and relocation guide were the most requested items from all over the world.

Priscilla Sanders, Jo Ann Ballantine and June McNeill

Our CVB team, formerly headed by Kim Phillips, ran the table for award categories during the 2017 Texas Association of Convention & Visitor Bureaus annual meeting in Fort Worth.

*Kim Phillips took the chamber's Convention & Visitor Bureau to multiple new heights. Denton **Radio.Com**, our downtown Discover Denton Welcome Center and helped land the Embassy Suites Convention Center.*

Watching an Independence Day Parade with the chamber staff on the deck of Lone Star Attitude in downtown Denton. There's nothing quite like this experience!

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TARGETS

We went through five different Economic Development Vice presidents and three different structure configurations in 36 years.

One of the first rules in Economic Development is to retain existing business. Similar to **Denco/911**, another misguided citizen spouted erroneous assumptions regarding land use. We surrendered three corporate offices to locations outside our city limits.

A mayoral candidate was the deciding vote when our Planning & Zoning Commission denied a special-use amendment for a new **DATCU Credit Union** headquarters. They moved to Corinth.

They were considering a site one block from our house; I understood the concern about pesky DATCU employees possibly driving through the neighborhood. The adjacent parkland DATCU offered probably would've just attracted homeless people.

CoServ ended up in Corinth. While battling congested traffic at Rayzor Ranch, I envision their professionally attired employees of calmly returning to their cars every weekday at 5 p.m.

We participated in two different trips to the **Peterbilt Division headquarters** in Newark, California in 1992. We assisted with their relocation to the former Moore Business Forms office building on Woodbrook Lane in Denton. After the first trip, the human resources director requested that we not show our economic development video during the employee orientations since it did not portray any Asian Americans.

Telecom Remarketing Corporation of America (TRCA) was in a neighboring city. Ken Burdick had to meet the company representatives secretly at night.

United Copper Industries, Inc., was the first Tax Abatement considered by the City of Denton. Most of our efforts centered around a contentious public hearing at Hodge Elementary School to convince the masses that it would be not a "smelting" plant.

Unfortunately, *peace broke out* a few years after Texas Instruments began operations. Because of its unique structure, it was difficult to submit for traditional manufacturing leads. Today, off the tax rolls, it houses **UNT Legacy Park,** its research and engineering center. We did, however, receive a ***First Place*** commendation from the **Dallas Business Journal** for alternative use of a vacant building.

Most of us couldn't pronounce it correctly, but **Schlumberger** centralized its maintenance facility into existing facilities at Granite Point in 2011, with approximately 100 people at an average wage of over $50,000. Capital investment $14 million.

Our partnership with the City of Denton designated the chamber staff as the primary marketing arm. Subsequently, our team handled most of the building and land inventory and on-site visits.

We targeted suppliers for existing companies. Prospect criteria varied, depending on preference for existing buildings or improved sites, access to skilled workforce, and anticipated utilities usage.

In many cases, this process could go on for months. Naturally, the prospects needed to remain anonymous. Because the chamber was a private corporation, we maintained confidentiality for all the project files.

I hired Adam Gawarecki from the San Antonio Economic Development Foundation in 2013. He was a graduate of the University of North Texas.

Adam gave a brief activity report at our monthly board meetings, referencing his top projects by clever nicknames. For over a year he reported on a major project, code named ***Teacup,*** which turned out to be **Target's** 450,000 square foot, state-of-the-art refrigerated distribution facility.

If a government incentive was needed to close the deal, the identity of the company had to be revealed. The process then became public. Media coverage naturally focused on the City of Denton since only elected types could make those decisions.

The chamber staff was seldom acknowledged or given credit for the lengthy efforts necessary to make a public announcement.

Adam understood this and carried out his responsibilities behind the scenes. He worked prospects, resulting in significant additions to the tax base and great employment opportunities. Adam was also instrumental in the relocation of the **Winco** grocery distribution facility.

One of our prospects didn't require a clever code name. Adam placed a call directly to ***Buc ee's*** owner Arch "Beaver" Aplin, III after his zoning request was denied by the Corinth P&Z Commission.

We scored a legitimate visitor destination, plus completed a crucial service road interchange on I-35E well ahead of schedule.

Leadership Denton

OVER ABUNDANCE OF TYPE-A PERSONALITIES

I lost count of all our attempts to organize a formal Leadership Denton Alumni Association. We encouraged a cohesive but independent extension of the program. Barbara Russell hosted the first gathering at her home

One particular manifestation considered endorsing political candidates. Because Leadership Denton was included in the title, there was an immediate backlash from several city council members.

Two of the proponents in the fledgling alumni group happened to be on the chamber board. They were Type-A personalities, as were many that completed the nine-month curriculum and its stringent regulations.

Deliberation was spirited and emotional. They were eventually persuaded to change the title to *Leaders for Denton.* More adjustments followed, but the group quickly disbanded.

THE PELPHREY RULE

Categories for Leadership Denton application originally stipulated voting age, U.S. Citizenship and a requirement to reside or work within the city limits.

One of our applicants, Connie Pelphrey, was employed by Boeing Aerospace & Electronics which had a facility in nearby Corinth. Her home address was Aubrey. Connie was a loyal and visible representative of Boeing in and around Denton but met neither criterion.

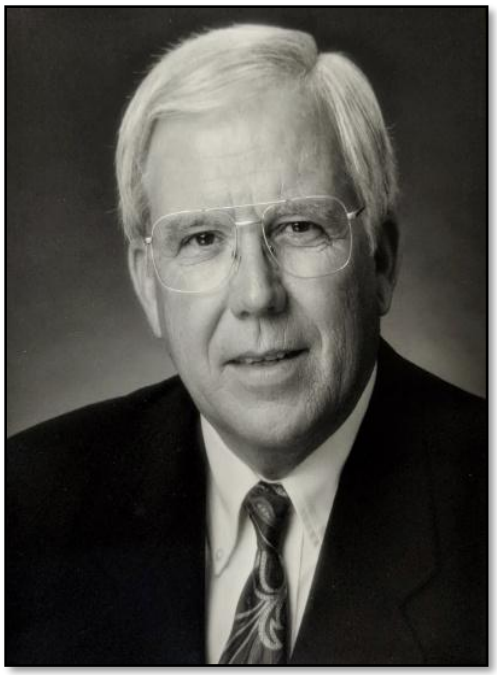
We had an unfortunate quandary, making its way to the full chamber board. As it turned out, one of the contenders from the rogue alumni group was vehement that we amend the eligibility standards.

Russell Bates was one of the original founders of Leadership Denton and our Board Chair-Elect.

Everyone acknowledged the many virtues of Connie Pelphrey. But Russell insisted that the basic premise of Leadership Denton was rooted in a narrower community context. Honestly, I believe he simply didn't like the individual proposing the amendment.

Known as the *Pelphrey Rule*, as of February 18, 1993, applicants may now be considered based on "continuous affiliation and activity through the Denton Chamber of Commerce itself."

Connie was accepted into Leadership Denton. She played a prominent role in our state government initiatives, especially Denton County Days in Austin. She was eventually elected our Board Chair for the 2000-01 Chamber Year.



Connie Pelphrey *Russell Bates*

PREMONITION OF 9/11?

Leadership Denton sessions began in August, including orientation, curriculum review and ice breakers. The program co-chairs usually announced the class project to be completed by or during graduation the following May.

Some of the notable assignments focused on policies for downtown traffic patterns, a promotional strategy for the Denton airport, a catalogue of local public art and the chamber's auxiliary parking lot.

The 2001-02 Class was instructed to prepare local businesses for natural disasters and emergencies.

Captain Brad Lahart with the Denton Fire Department, and an LD graduate, was one of the curriculum co-chairs. I don't know if the emergency preparedness venture was Brad's idea, but the providence and timing was especially germane.

Less than a month after their opening session the surreal events of *September 11, 2001,* stunned the nation.

LEGACY

As of the 33rd class, a total of 579 individuals had completed Leadership Denton.

Richard Hayes, from the first class and 1988 graduate Dr. Lynn Stucky, were elected to the Texas House of Representatives. Denton City Council Members Gerard Hudspeth, Jill Jester, Greg Johnson, Sara Bagheri, Raymond Redmon and John Ryan, along with Dr. Glenna Harris, Mia Price and Rick Woolfolk from the Denton Independent School District Board of Trustees, were LD grads.

Virginia Gallian, with the Denton ISD Board was the first incumbent elected official to go through our program. We also had two Denton County Commissioners, one of whom was also still in office at the time.

In addition to Gerard Hudspeth, Denton Mayors, Mark Burroughs and Dr. Perry McNeill were graduates, as well as having served as Board Chairs of the Denton Chamber. Nearly half of my Chamber Board Chairs went through this program.

We had no acknowledged gender quotas, but when I retired, the ratio was 51 percent male and 49 percent female participants.

JUST BE AT THE BUS ON TIME

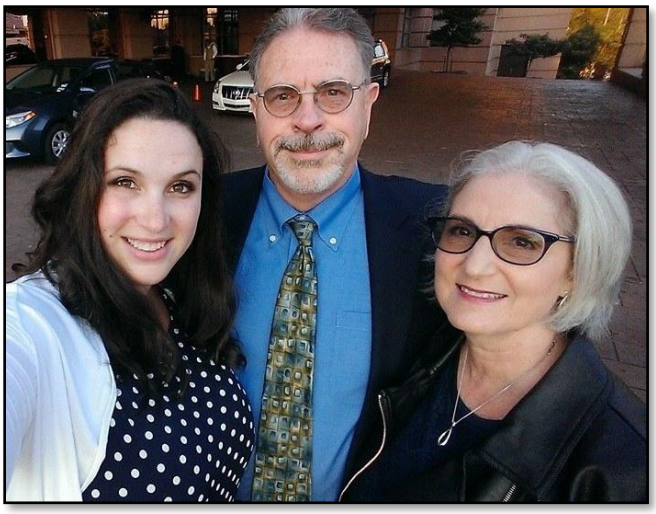
The two-day state government session in Austin was usually very interesting. We would leave early Thursday morning and attend presentations that same afternoon at the state capitol. We hosted a reception Thursday evening for the Austin-based legislative staff, and occasionally the legislators themselves.

Following the reception, class members were released on their own recognizance to *bond* among the local entertainment amenities. All we asked was that they comply with the formal session rules and board the bus at the designated point and time on Friday morning.

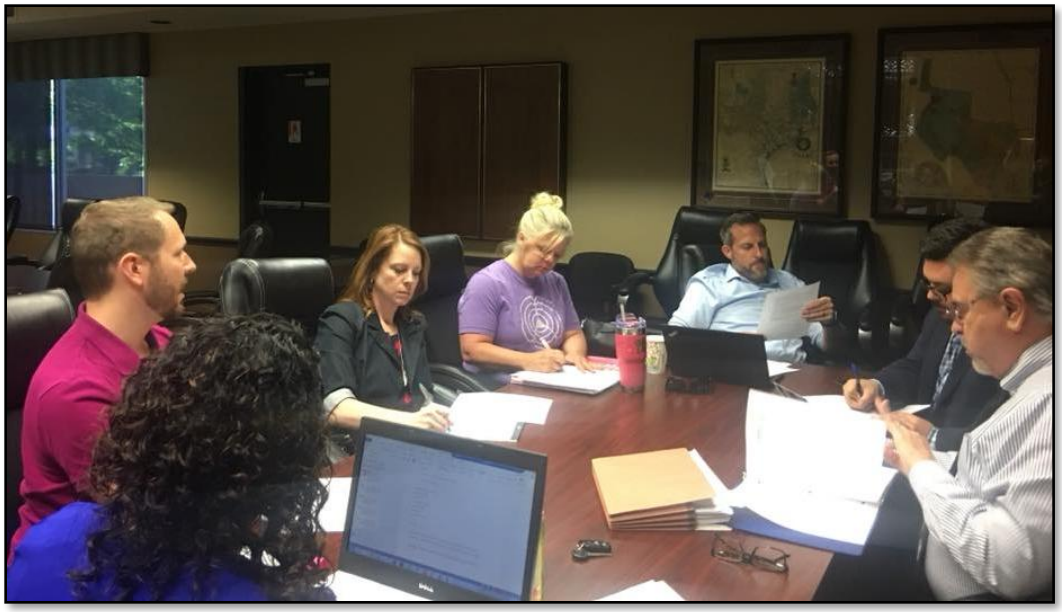
I was bemused when one particular class member stumbled up the street to board the bus. Apparently, he didn't return to the hotel Thursday night but was credited as being on time.

Another participant, who happened to be a local attorney, was involved in a minor altercation. A report was even filed through the Austin Police Department. He kept his sunglasses on and complained about a headache but managed to attend the Friday morning sessions.

Following the Thursday night reception, I was typically the sole bus passenger returning to the hotel.



Our daughter Laura was a resident of Austin
during a few of our Leadership Denton sessions on State Government.
She was there to help make sure everyone boarded the bus on time.



2018: Leadership Denton Steering Committee

2014: Leadership Denton, State Government Session, Austin

SIGNATURE EVENT

There were numerous memorable moments associated with **Denton County Days in Austin**.

Between 1987 and 2019, we took an average of 200 county supporters to Austin to advocate and promote the area during 17 consecutive sessions of the Texas Legislature.

Then Texas Governor George W. Bush met personally with our delegation during one of the receptions. We conducted personal visits with Lt. Governor Bob Bullock, State Comptroller John Sharp and House Speaker Pete Laney.

While waiting to meet with the State Comptroller, the Sweetwater Jaycees came in with boxes of live rattlesnakes.

Governor Rick Perry addressed a joint luncheon with Collin and Grayson Counties. Other speakers included Ag Commissioner Sid Miller, Land Commissioner George P. Bush and State Comptroller Glenn Hegar, Jr.

I believe it was 2003 that we were snowed in and sequestered at the hotel for two extra days. I recall looking out my hotel room window; an endless line of trucks and cars sat idling on I-35. A few brave souls attempted to retreat, one was involved in an accident in Waco. Others only got as far as Jarrell where they bunked in the local high school gymnasium.

Most of our own state legislators acknowledged Denton County Days as crucial for carrying out their responsibilities and enhanced respect from their peers.

I considered it one of the Denton Chamber's *Signature Events*.

2017: Denton County Days in Austin

I had the privilege and honor of working with both the late State Representative Dr. Ronny, and his wife the Honorable Myra Crownover. As I recall, we were battling a major snowstorm on that trip.

Local Higher Ed Chiefs, Dr. Neal Smatresk, President of the University of North Texas, and Dr. Brent Wallace, President of North Central Texas College, describe their respective needs for our joint legislative positions. I obviously don't have a clue what they're talking about.

James Loveday, with the TU Electric office in Lake Dallas,
was instrumental in getting the smaller communities involved in
Denton County Days in Austin.
He was one of my early mentors, and
left us much too early. RIP, my friend.

Denton County Days in Austin

YEAR	HQ HOTEL	MEMENTO (*Delivered to all individual legislators)*
April 7, 1987	Stephen F. Austin	Leather Atlas
February 28, 1989	Radisson Plaza	Silver Thermos
February 19, 1991	Radisson Plaza	Calculator
February 23 & 24, 1993	Driskill	Compact Alarm Clock
April 3 & 4, 1995	Marriott	Texas Travel Bag
April 7 & 8, 1997	Marriott	Texas Garment Bag
February 22 & 23, 1999	Marriott	Texas Lap Top Bag
February 26 &27, 2001	Marriott	Portfolio/Calculator
February 24 & 25, 2003	Marriott	Texas Travel Bag
February 14 & 15, 2005	Doubletree	Texas Rolling Ice Chest
February 26 & 27, 2007	Sheraton	Padfolio/Cutter & Buck – cotton/leather/twill
February 9 & 10, 2009	Sheraton	Denton County Courthouse replica
Lewisville delegation refused to participate in team assignments, stopped pre-assigned calls & mementos		
February 21 & 22, 2011	Sheraton	
February 18 & 19, 2013	Sheraton	
		Added lunch & speaker
February 23 & 24, 2015	Sheraton	Glenn Hegar, Jr., Comptroller
February 28 – March 1, 2017	Sheraton	George P. Bush, Land Commissioner
February 18 & 19, 2019	Sheraton	

WASHINGTON FLY-IN

We shared the 26th Congressional District with Lewisville and Flower Mound. Richard K. Armey and Michael C. Burgess hosted Washington Fly-Ins during their terms.

They arranged briefings with several prominent elected officials: US Senators John Cornyn, Ted Cruz and John McCain, House Speakers John Boerne and Paul Ryan, plus the Transportation and Treasury Secretaries, to name a few.

Our delegation met with the head of FEMA and US Army Corps of Engineers. The Supreme Court was considering the Affordable Care Act during one of our trips; Cong. Burgess provided an in-depth analysis of the program.

We *heard* about interesting issues from influential people. We rarely *said* much as a collective delegation.

If we discussed anything, it was usually dinner reservations or city tours. The Marine Commandant's wife hosted breakfast at their private residence. The Marine mascot, a bulldog pooped on the floor. Watching the young, uniformed aides scramble to wipe it up was probably the highlight of the trip.

Mayors from each of our cities usually participated; I always included our Board Chair. I went on several Washington Fly-Ins, but, in my opinion, it was an expensive venture with little or no true impact.

Lunch at Mount Vernon and the Potomac River cruise are nice for family vacations. I felt like we squandered a great opportunity to advocate joint positions.

My colleagues Ray Hernandez former head of the Lewisville Area Chamber, and Flower Mound Chamber President Lori Walker during the 2014 ***Washington Fly-In****.*

*2012: **Washington Fly**-In with the Lewisville and Flower Mound Chambers*

Joe Holland, Missy Dickenson, Kathy Carpenter,
Hank Dickenson, Pete Kamp, Carl Anderson, Chris Watts, Randy Robinson, Glenn Carlton

When fists and chairs started flying, I always made it a point to be behind one of these guys.
Randy Robinson, Glenn Carlton, Dave Underwood, Greg Johnson and Carl Anderson.

DELORES TO THE RESCUE

In February 2008, our outside auditor, Dan Tonn, discovered that our staff accountant had embezzled $2,451 from one of our affiliate organizations.

I, of course, asked the employee to resign. She agreed to make restitution and paid it off, in cash, within 30 days

Reporting all this to the board was naturally awkward. No one held me personally responsible, but as expected, scrutiny and preventive measures were discussed in detail.

At the time, we kept the books on an obsolete software program, and finding someone with the skills to manage it presented a weighty trial period. We contracted with a third-party, eventually depleting our reserves.

The planets aligned, and all was right with the world when I hired Pam (*Delores)* Thomas Marrufo as our staff accountant.

Delores

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP BANQUETS

3/22/18 UNT Gateway	Chuck Darling auctioneer for funding to replace roof and building improvements $12.909.01 Net		Hank Dickenson
3/23/17 UNT Gateway	Tribute to Peterbilt, role of Dynamic Denton campaign	"Let's Get Rollin'"	Hank Dickenson
3/24/16 UNT Gateway	Sonny Burgess	"Taking Care of Business"	Joey Hawkins & Jill Jester
3/6/15 Robson Ranch	Live music & dance	"What happens in Denton … stays in Denton"	Carl Anderson
3/27/14 UNT Apogee Stadium	Video/Live music & dance	"We the People"	Hank Dickenson
3/28/13 UNT Apogee Stadium	Rep. Burt Solomons (Ret),	"A Winning Hand for Business"	Carl Anderson
3/29/12 UNT Gateway	Sharon Venable: Strategic Plan 2012-17 Mark Burroughs City-Chamber Partnership	"Set Sail on the Waves of Success"	Carl Anderson
3/24/11 Fremaux's	Emphasis on partnerships video	Partnerships: Moving into the Future	Debby Grigsby
3/25/10 Fremaux's	Super Bowl XLV video/state football legends	Chamber 101	David Layton
3/24/09 UNT Silver Eagle	100th Anniversary commemorative video	100 Years of Success	David Layton
3/25/08 UNT Gateway	20 year ED Partnership with City & DME	U in Community	Hank Dickenson
3/29/07 Fremaux's	Rivers West/musical group	"Not Your Daddy's Chamber of Commerce?	Phyllis Pittman
3/30/06 UNT Gateway	Mark Perkins: Launch "North of Ordinary" theme	"North of Ordinary"	Hank Dickenson
3/31/05 UNT Gateway	Honor Tom Harpool	"One Community-One Vision" All for One	David Layton
3/24/04 UNT Gateway	Jeff Moseley, Governor's Office of Economic Development	"One Community-One Vision" Stay the Course	David Layton

3/27/03 UNT Gateway	Lee Jackson, UNT Chancellor	"One Community-One Vision"	Phil Gallivan
3/28/02 UNT Silver Eagle	Bryan Dodge, motivational speaker	Denton Chamber, Government-Higher Education – Business "Guiding Denton Forward"	Mike Conduff
3/29/01 UNT Silver Eagle	Video, volunteer testimonies	"Membership Matters: You Make a Difference"	Tim Charles
3/23/00 UNT Silver Eagle	Jared Hazleton, UNT School of Business	"Working Together to Build A Better Denton"	Chalese Connors
3/25/99 UNT Silver Eagle	Video, Corporate contributions	"Building A Better Denton"	Bill Patterson
3/26/98 UNT Silver Eagle	Cheryl Craigie, KERA, Channel 13	"Broadening Constituencies"	Bob Sherman
3/27/97 UNT Silver Eagle	Former Cong. Pete Geren	"Put the C Back in Chamber"	Tony Clark
3/28/96 UNT Silver Eagle	Eddie Gossage, GM, Tx Motor Speedway	"Denton: Northern Gateway to Texas Motor Speedway"	Carl Anderson
3/30/95 UNT Silver Eagle	Rivers West/musical group	"Denton: A Great Place to Live, Work, Play & Learn"	Mary Anne McKenzie
3/24/94 UNT Silver Eagle	Video of growth	"Denton: Open for Business"	Rob Gentry
3/25/93 UNT Silver Eagle	Video of volunteers	"Faces of the Denton Chamber of Commerce"	Fred Gossett
3/26/92 UNT Silver Eagle	Video history of chamber	"Honoring our Heritage"	Richard Hayes
3/21/91 Hubbard Hall TWU	"His and Hers: A Look at Life & Love" Original musical: Donna Trammell		Mary Anne McKenzie
3/29/90 Hubbard Hall TWU	Original musical: Donna Trammell "Forever Green"	"Partners for Progress"	Roy Appleton, Jr.
3/23/89UNT Silver Eagle	Buddy Langley, President, GTE Southwest	80th Anniversary of the Denton Chamber	Richard Hayes
3/24/88 UNT Silver Eagle	William Banowsky, Superconducting Super Collider Authority	"Denton: Gateway to the 90s"	Roy Appleton, Jr.

3/29/87 UNT Silver Eagle	Terrie & Hattie Fansler, musical duo	"Denton: Into the Future"	Roy Appleton, Jr.
3/13/86 UNT Silver Eagle	John Henry Faulk and Cactus Pryor "Two Lone Stars"	Texas Sesquicentennial	Mary Evelyn Blagg Huey
3/14/85 UNT Silver Eagle	Dick Rush, U.S. Chamber Reaccreditation presentation	"Red, White & You"	Ed W. Morrison, Jr.
3/15/84 UNT Silver Eagle	H.F. Krichdorfer, CEO, what is today Tetra Pak	"75th Anniversary of the chamber"	Mary Claude Gay
3/24/83 UNT Silver Eagle	Tom McCartin, Publisher, Dallas Times Herald	"Deep in the Arts of Texas"	L. A. Nelson

DOUBLE WHAMMY!

During the annual membership banquet in 1994, we unveiled our sleek new VHS economic development presentation funded by GTE.

To put it in perspective, Roy Appleton suggested we show our original 16 mm *Dynamic Denton* film used in the late 1960s, followed by a multi-tray slide show that followed in the early-1970s.

Not only did the fading, brittle 16 mm film break seconds into the viewing, but one of the trays on the slide show never synced with the corresponding audio tape.

This took place before we stopped having a head table. Every eye in the Silver Eagle Suite was aimed at me.

PREPARE THE SCRIPTS WITH DAD

I prepared the itinerary and scripts for the 2011 Annual Members Banquet in my dad's room at Baylor Hospital in Dallas. He passed away the Sunday before the banquet on Thursday.

OLDEST FOUL UP AWARD

The highlight of every annual chamber banquet since 1960 was the coveted Otis L. Fowler Award.

Named in honor of the chamber's first chief paid executive, the criteria recognized local individuals for bringing success and notoriety to the community while carrying out the primary aspects of their profession or calling. There was even a sentence in the original manuscript that recipients should not necessarily be viewed as pleasant or universally well liked.

Per tradition, the incumbent recipient, UNT Chancellor Dr. Alfred F. Hurley introduced the 1987 winner.

Bill Brady, one of my former Board Chairs, advised me that he was going home if we weren't through by 9 p.m. Following a rousing list of achievements, Dr. Hurley proudly announced Bill Brady as the honored recipient.

Silence. Crickets chirped. No Bill Brady anywhere; he was home asleep.

A committee consisting of the four previous award recipients and three chamber officers reviewed the nominations and determined the recipient.

I sat in on the meetings but had no vote. I compiled the data, ordered the plaque and prepared the introduction.

After 30-plus consecutive years of re-explaining the original intent of the criteria and fanning secretive anticipation, the whole procedure had become mundane. I often referred to it as the *Oldest Foul Up Award*.

Thus, I was naturally curious as to why three of the 2015 Selection Committee members, Carl Anderson, Larry Parker and Jeff King, didn't appear interested in the nominees.

The late Dr. Bettye Myers presented the chamber's top award to me during the Annual Membership Banquet on March 6, 2015, at Robson Ranch. I was honored and flattered.

Kristen Watson/For the D

Chuck Carpenter and Dr. Bettye Myers hold hands and laugh as Myers presents Ca penter with the Otis L. Fowler award at the 106th annual Denton Chamber of Con merce banquet and gala on Friday at Robson Ranch in Denton. Dr. Bettye Myers wa last year's recipient of the Otis L. Fowler award, an award that recognizes indiv duals for their contributions to the community. Also honored with various award were Carolyn Corporon, vice president at Sally Beauty Systems and a chamber d rector; Perry McNeill, past chamber board chairman and former Denton mayor; Tin Weicht of Eagle & Wheeler; Matthew Kern of Arthur Surveying Company; and Tany Nguyen of Denton Regional Medical Center.

2014: Previous recipient Carl Anderson
presented the Otis L. Fowler Award to Dr. Bettye Myers

OTIS L. FOWLER AWARD

2018 Phil Baker	1978 Ed W. Morrison, Jr.
2017 Marty Rivers	1977 Mary Claude Gay
2016 Mark Burroughs	1976 Fred Minor
2015 Chuck Carpenter	1975 Homer Bly
2014 Hank Dickenson	1974 Hayden Fry
2013 Bettye Myers	1973 Dr. L. L. Armstrong
2012 Carl R. Anderson	1972 Marvin Ramey
2011 Perry R. McNeill	1971 Roy Appleton, Jr.
2010 Gretchen Bataille	1970 Riley Cross
2009 Mike Trimble	1969 Chester O. Strickland
2008 Ken Burdick	1968 Rowe B. Newman
2007 Carol Short	1967 J. Holford Russell
2006 Pat Gobble	1966 Ben C. Ivey, Sr.
2005 Brave Combo	1965 W. C. Orr, Jr.
2004 Rick Villareal	1964 Dr. Pauline Berry Mack
2003 Euline & Horace Brock	1963 Tom Harpool, Jr.
2002 Priscilla Sanders	1962 J. Newton Rayzor
2001 Fred Pole	1961 John A. Guinn
2000 George Hopkins	1960 Hugh D. Clark
1999 Jack D. Miller	1959 Joe Skiles
1998 Bill Thomas	
1997 Troy H. LaGrone	

1996	B. Lamar Ball, Jr.
1995	Bennie G. Snider
1994	Dr. Shirley S. Chater
1993	Dr. Derrell W. Bulls
1992	H. S. Osborne
1991	Donna Trammell
1990	Maureen & J.B. Floyd
1989	Dr. Imogene Dickey Mohat
1988	Milton M. Hill
1987	Bill Brady
1986	Dr. Alfred F. Hurley
1985	Mabel & Jake Craven
1984	Frank N. Martino
1983	Ben C. Ivey
1982	Fred Patterson
1981	Leon Breeden
1980	Dr. Mary Evelyn Blagg Huey
1979	Bill E. Utter, Sr.

GET IN LINE, PLEASE

The chamber executive committee had no specific ascension of volunteer leadership, which I personally preferred.

Many organizations function with a first, second, even third vice board chair, locking a candidate into a multi-year commitment. In theory, it helps assure full comprehension of all aspects of the entity.

Besides exhausting the volunteer, however, it usually doesn't allow for a diplomatic way to void the process if the individual retires, moves away or goes rogue.

Our senior cabinet consisted of a Board Chair, who in turn appointed equal vice chairs related to program divisions; some were re-appointed from year-to-year. Terms were consistent with the incumbent Board Chair, and consent of the full board of directors.

Other than a Board Chair-Elect, named independently from within the full board for a one-year term, there was no overt preconceived heir apparent.

36 YEARS – 36 BOSSES

The governance and authority of the Denton Chamber was guided by a board of directors elected from within the membership.

As president of the organization, I served at the pleasure of this entire body. The total number of directors varied between 21 and 24, depending on one-year special appointments or officer carryover terms. The full board met once a month.

I never had an employee contract, any true annual performance review or much day-to-day supervision.

We began each program year with a handshake agreement: Conduct myself in a professional manner, make prudent decisions and carry out the stated goals of the board. The position description was equally vague.

I had 36 different bosses over four decades. There was very little consistency. Each Board Chair managed different types of businesses and had varying personalities.

Most of our chief volunteers had significant responsibilities in their own organizations. I viewed my role as making sure that whenever they clocked in for chamber duty, it didn't waste their valuable time.

Best Friend is a term that I'm proud to associate with the majority of these folks.

Every chamber year had its own highlights. No doubt, I haven't done justice in covering near all our achievements. Most of these individuals understood that *all ships rise with the tide*.

BOARD CHAIR MONIKERS

When I first took the Denton Chamber job, I was 29 years old. Meeting with the executive committee was like sitting at a table with my parents. Every person on our staff was older than me.

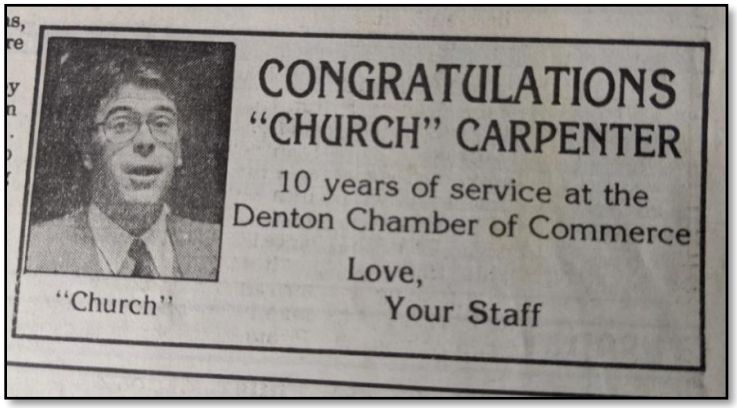
For the first 18 months I played it all formal, insisting that the staff refer to me as *Mr. Carpenter*.

I don't remember the contents of a letter from the President's Office at the University of North Texas; I was focused on the salutation: Dear *Church* …

Aw man!!! Here I am trying to prove I'm a legitimate adult. I'm the face and voice of the business community; I rub elbows with the top corporate opinion leaders in town.Then the President of the fourth largest university in the state doesn't know how to spell my first name?!

Many years later, and significantly unpuckered, I told Hank Dickenson about the UNT letter. He found it quite amusing and has referred to me as *Church* ever since

Hank probably comes the closest to appreciating my offbeat sense of humor. I perpetually christened him as *Honk.*



As I became closer in age to my chief voluntary officers, I chilled out.

Not having on-site supervision, I tried to brief our Board Chairs on a regular basis. I eluded to the redemption chapter in the book of Fred Pole.

Most of the time, we simply reviewed schedules and progress reports. Our chamber did a whole lot more than hand out maps and cut ribbons. Occasionally I hacked off a chamber member, or the news media was stirred up about our latest policy statement.

They seemed less annoyed if I offered my confession in a folksy manner. I had nicknames for several of them.

- Harry G. Hall *Harry Gooey*
- Carl Anderson: *Curly Roy* or *Carl Ray Charles*
- Richard Hayes *Ricardo*
- Priscilla Sanders: *Queen Mother*
- Bill Patterson: *William*
- Marty Rivers: *Mart-Y*
- *Perry McNeill* *DOCTOR McNeill*
- Randy Robinson: *Rand-All*
- Hank Dickenson: *Honk*
- Paul Chandler *Pablo*
- Larry Parker: *Rally*
- Chuck Fremaux: *Chunk*
- Erik Clark: *Earl*

THREE MAYORS

Access and communication with elected leadership and key staff at the municipal level are crucial to any local chamber of commerce.

A good relationship was vital due to our long-standing contracts to manage the largest allotment of the HOT funds. We served as the lead marketing arm for our joint Economic Development Partnership. Each division operated in a different fiscal year and separate bank account.

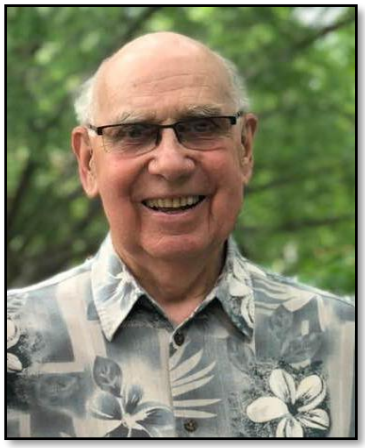
The chamber board adopted the budget, based on an annual allocation from HOT Funds, Denton Municipal Electric and the City General Fund. We were under constant scrutiny by a city auditor and made regular, personal presentations to the city council and public utilities board.

We had two staff vice presidents, one handled economic development, the other managed the CVB. The bank balance of both entities usually far exceeded the chamber's general operations.

Our bylaws designated the sitting mayor as a non-voting, ex-officio director. Those who attended our board meetings gave a brief *Everything's Wonderful in Denton* report.

Our arrangement with the City of Denton necessitated an empathetic and judicious conduit to the bureaucratic superstructure. If the mayor, or a potential mayor, was a voting director, we had a big hammer in our toolbox.

Jack Miller



Dr. Perry McNeill

Mark Burroughs

THREE MAYORS
Jack Miller

He wasn't mayor during his term, but Jack Miller was elected to the city council soon after serving as our Board Chair. Then he was elected mayor for two terms.

During Jack's term as Board Chair, we persuaded the Texas Railroad Commission to include Denton in the DFW shipping zone, lobbied for the extension of FM 2499 to D/FW Airport, and converted the ground floor to a personally supervised visitor information center.

Most important to me, Jack was the human resources executive with Victor Equipment Company. Our first economic development vice president immediately went rogue on us. Jack was instrumental in helping deal with this rebel, even facing direct conflict himself.

Later, when serving as mayor, Jack had to deliver the news that the city council would not be renewing our marketing services contract unless I dismissed the second ED Vice President.

This was especially awkward since Jack had worked with this individual on a relocation project for Victor Equipment. I hired him from Lone Star Gas Company. He was a field representative and brought several prospects to Denton.

For some on the city council, it was a personality issue, but I had to sacrifice a friend to maintain the economic development contract.

THREE MAYORS
Dr. Perry McNeill

June McNeill worked for the chamber in our economic development office. Her husband Perry was an electrical engineering professor at the University of North Texas.

Perry went through our Leadership Denton program and got all fired up about public office. He immediately jumped into our Government Relations Division and was instrumental in coordinating our first Elected Officials Reception.

He headed our State & Federal Relations Committee and was soon elected to our board. Perry served as our Board Chair during the 2002-03 Chamber Year.

A conservative philosophically, he maneuvered through enemy fire from both sides. During Perry's annual membership banquet he unveiled: *The Triangle of Cooperation!* The business community, the city and the universities … "focus on what we have in common."

Despite significant push back, Perry negotiated a compromise amendment to the Leadership Denton guidelines allowing individuals holding public office to apply, as well as serve on the steering committee.

When Mayor Euline Brock encouraged *The Third City* as an economic development positioning statement, Perry convinced her that it inferred the less appealing phrase … *Third World.*

After Serving on the Planning & Zoning Commission, Perry was elected to the Denton City Council and then mayor.

THREE MAYORS
Mark Burroughs

We set a precedence during the 2013-14 Chamber Year when local attorney Mark Burroughs was elected Board Chair while also serving as Denton Mayor.

Thanks to Mark's skills as a statesman and knowledge of the political landscape, the chamber supported creation of a much-needed gas utility district for the industrial area west of the Denton Airport. The result was a valuable retention and sales tool for our major private sector employers.

He authored numerous resolutions for board consideration that advocated important public policy issues at all levels.

During Mark's joint terms, the Denton City Council hired George Campbell as City Manager.

George came out of retirement and wasn't looking for any additional grief over and above the council. Mark proposed that an anonymous Suggestion Box be linked to the chamber homepage. Members could outline issues they were facing with City of Denton regulations.

George called in Mark, Chuck Fremaux and me to express concern about not only the Suggestion Box, but the fact that the chamber was even involved in public advocacy.

Mark *manned up* and promptly explained that representing the local business community at any level of government was one of the primary aspects of the chamber's mission.

He was an early graduate of Leadership Denton and rapidly moved up to general chair. During our first couple of State Government sessions, we flew the class to Austin. Mark drove his father-in-law's Winnebago and, in multiple trips, hauled everyone to and from the hotel, state capitol and 6th Street.

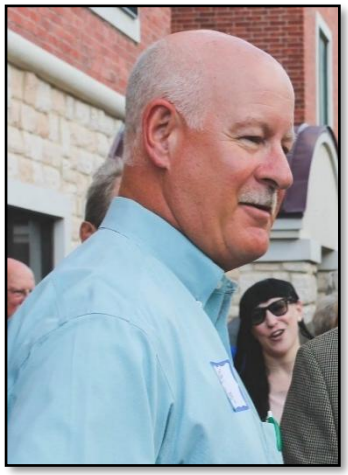
December 10, 2018, Seated, L-R: Jill Jester, Mary Anne McKenzie, CWC, Barbara Russell, Michele Barber, Bob Crouch and Richard Hayes.
Second Row: Paul Chandler, Jack Miller, Dr. Perry McNeill, Harry Hall, Dr. Derrell Bulls, Dr. Hal Reed, Ellen Painter, Priscillas Sanders, Jeff King, Jerry Mohelnitzky, Larry Parker, Glenn Carlton and Jim Fykes.
Back Row: Erik Clark, Stan Morton, Carl Anderson, Chuck Fremaux, Hank Dickenson and Marty Rivers.

Glenn Carlton

Erik Clark

Harry Hall

Carl Anderson & Chuck Fremaux



Jeff King

Tonya & Larry Parker, Jim Fykes

75th Anniversary Denton Chamber *(June 17, 1984)*

First Row, L-R: W.C. Orr, Frank Martino, Mrs. R.W. Bass and Mrs. Riley Cross (widows of chamber presidents who served in the 1940s) Bob Crouch, Stanley Monroe and Wynn Murrell.
Second Row: A.E. Wyatt, Ken Shaw, Millard Heath, Marvin Ramey, John Moellinger, R.L. Selby, Raymond Pitts, Bill Utter, Sr. Ed Morrison and Rowe Meador.
Third Row: Dave Krause, Bill Brady, Roy Appleton, Fred Patterson, Homer Bly and Byron Smith.

Jim Fykes (upper left), Chuck Fremaux (right), Major Employers Appreciation Dinner, 1997
Carl Anderson, Mean Green Football Tailgate 2010

2013: Larry Parker, Carl Anderson, CWC and Chuck Fremaux, TWU

Tony Clark

Bill Patterson

Barbara Ball was on the Executive Committee when I was hired.
Her daughter, Jill Jester, was Board Chair-Elect when I retired.

Hank Dickenson, CWC, Larry Parker, Jim Fykes and Kathy Carpenter

Phyllis Pittman and Priscilla Sanders

Priscilla Sanders, Maryann McKenzie and Hal Reed

DENTON BUSINESS & Community News

Randy Robinson, Priscilla Sanders, and Fred Pole

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MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 26

John Moellinger, Bill Utter, Sr., and Barbara Russell

2019-20	JILL JESTER	Minor & Jester, LLP
2018-19	ERIK CLARK	Wellspring Insurance
2017-18	JIM FYKES	Peterbilt Motors
2016-17	GLENN CARLTON	North Texas Fair Association
2015-16	JEFF KING	Ramey King Insurance
2014-15	LARRY PARKER	Denton Depot
2013-14	MARK BURROUGHS	Sawko & Burroughs, LLP
2012-13	CHUCK FREMAUX	Fremaux Metropolitan Catering
2011-12	PAUL CHANDLER	Meridian Bank Texas
2010-11	HANK DICKENSON	North Texas Athletics
2009-10	STAN MORTON	Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Denton
2008-09	MICHELE BARBER	Northstar Bank (Guaranty Bank)
2007-08	PHYLLIS PITTMAN	Cookies by Design
2006-07	MARTY RIVERS	First State Bank (American National Bank & Trust)
2005-06	LEE ANN NUTT	North Central Texas College, Corinth
2004-05	JERRY MOHELNITZKY	Insurance & Investments
2003-04	RANDY ROBINSON	TexasBank
2002-03	PERRY McNEILL	UNT College of Engineering
2001-02	ELLEN PAINTER	Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Denton
2000-01	CONNIE PELPHREY	Boeing (Lewisville ISD Foundation)
1999-2000	TONY CLARK	Northstar Bank
1998-99	GEORGE HIGHFILL	Northstar Bank
1997-98	BILL PATTERSON	Denton Record-Chronicle
1996-97	FRED GOSSETT	Gossett Enterprises
1995-96	PRISCILLA SANDERS	Sears
1994-95	RICHARD HAYES	Attorney
1993-94	RUSSELL BATES	Bates Architect
1992-93	CARL ANDERSON	Bill Utter Ford
1991-92	BARBARA RUSSELL	Real Estate
1990-91	FRED POLE	University of North Texas
1989-90	HARRY HALL	DATCU Credit Union
1988-89	JACK MILLER	Victor Equipment Company
1987-88	DERRELL BULLS	Texas Woman’s University
1986-87	MARY ANNE McKENZIE	Sears
1985-86	MILTON HILL	Morrison Milling Company
1984-85	BOB CROUCH	Real Estate
1983-84	BILL BRADY	Denton Savings Association
1982-83	DAVE KRASUE	Toyota dealership

TREASURER

2018-19	CARRELL ANN SIMMONS	Stan's Flooring
2017-18	CARRELL ANN SIMMONS	Stan's Flooring
2016-17	CARRELL ANN SIMMONS	Retired banking
2015-16	CARRELL ANN SIMMONS	" " " "
2014-15	CARRELL ANN SIMMONS	" " " "
2013-14	JEFF KING	Ramey King Insurance
2012-13	JEFF KING	" " " "
2011-12	JEFF KING	" " " "
2010-11	JEFF KING	" " " "
2009-10	PAUL CHANDLER	Meridian Bank Texas
2008-09	PAUL CHANDLER	" " " "
2007-08	PAUL CHANDLER	" " " "
2006-07	JEFF KING	Ramey King Insurance
2005-06	JEFF KING	" " " "
2004-05	JEFF KING	" " " "
2003-04	JEFF KING	" " " "
2002-03	JEFF KING	" " " "
2001-02	DICK SMITH	Investments
2000-01	DICK SMITH	" "
1999-2000	DICK SMITH	" "
1998-99	DICK SMTIH	" "
1997-98	DICK SMITH	" "
1996-97	DAVID BILES	Attorney
1995-96	DAVID BILES	" "
1994-95	DAVID BILES	" "
1993-94	PRISCILLA SANDERS	Sears
1992-93	RICHARD HAYES	Attorney
1991-92	BOB WOODIN	First State Bank
1990-91	BOB WOODIN	" " "
1989-90	KEN BRADLEY	Insurance
1988-89	KEN BRADLEY	" " "
1987-88	KEN BRADLEY	" " "
1986-87	HARRY HALL	DATCU Credit Union
1985-86	HARRY HALL	" " "
1984-85	HARRY HALL	" " "
1983-84	BILL KING	First Denton County National Bank
1982-83	MILTON HILL	Morrison Milling Company

WALLY SHOE REPAIR GUY

Authors sometimes refer to *Every Man*, a stock character featured in literature, theatre and movies.

In Thornton Wilder's play *Our Town* there's an individual credited as The Stage Manager. In the movie version of *Evita*, Antonio Banderas portrays a similar role as Che Guevara.

Over the years, I found the term *Chamber Member* difficult to describe. For one thing, we're not a church or a service club. Other than a few loyal retired Board Chairs, individuals typically aren't members of a chamber of commerce.

A chamber membership is basically an *account.* These accounts are usually made up of various businesses, professional firms and organizations. Representatives of each account are listed and eligible for participation in the organization. The individuals involved in the chamber may or may not be decision-makers.

To hit the streets and call on *Chamber Members* required varying degrees of preparation. An attorney, physician or senior corporate executive necessitated an appointment, set agenda and navigate through any number of gatekeepers.

Many of our members were locally owned and operated and had an accessible store front. A multi-generation family name was usually displayed over the main entrance. I was philosophically steadfast on the *Shop Denton First* concept.

When we first returned to Denton, I frequented an establishment on North Elm Street to have my manly footwear resoled at a place called *Skip's Shoe Shop*.

The building was an old pier and beam, wood framed house. I would drive up to a window on the side; Skip would stick his head out to receive my shoes. Once the necessary adjustment was determined, I shifted into park and listened while Skip launched into his concerns about trying to survive as a small, independent business.

I was tough on my shoes and spent a lot of time at Skip's drive through. If it was an issue with local regulations, I tried to research the applicable codes for clarification. He seemed to appreciate the personal touch. Who wouldn't?

These visits became so routine that I eventually started using Skip as a metaphoric, *Every Man*. He portrayed the average *Chamber Member*. Unfortunately, Skip went out of business, but his persona remained as *Wally the shoe repair guy.*

BOX OF STUFF

Even after 40-plus years of representing the business community in three different cities, it was a challenge to make *Wally Shoe Repair Guys* truly understand or appreciate how the chamber benefited them.

Most of the *Wally*s were tethered to their shop. They couldn't justify leaving during normal business hours. All the good tables were reserved by the banks and hospitals at membership luncheons anyway.

The mixers were popular but tended to be frequented by the same circle or clique. Many weren't comfortable introducing themselves to total strangers. They could drink beer at the house and didn't want to bother with handing out business cards.

Chamber support for tax abatements and other public incentives were viewed as a slap in the face to the little guys. They were already struggling with the cost of service after applying Sales Tax.

No one from the chamber came in after their grand opening. Although there were nearly 1,500 representatives listed among the chamber accounts, if it wasn't *ME*, in person, *The Chamber* wasn't doing business with *Wally.*

Leadership Denton was just for lawyers seeking political office, or salaried corporate and university types that needed continuing education credit.

We were a major contractor for the City of Denton; some viewed the chamber as a *paper tiger.*

On the other hand, we stuck our nose into all kinds of public policy issues. At the local level, we negotiated revisions to Sign regulations, Tree Preservation, Zoning Overlay Districts, Property Maintenance standards and Fire Suppression Ordinances.

During Health Department inspections, we challenged the number of indoor tables constituting a dining room vs. a bar. We stopped just short of a lawsuit supporting privatization of solid waste removal, disposal and landfill options. In a town full of micro-breweries and courtyard taverns, we determined smoking regulations.

Making the rounds on a regular basis, however, was difficult. The *box of stuff* mentality was the root cause behind apprehension.

BARBARA NEEDS A PUPPY

A few select individuals felt like their membership entitled them to drop by the office at any time. They expected me to listen as they reminisced about past glory days.

One was a former mayor, a retired constable and a couple of past Board Chairs, all had been active in the community and respected opinion leaders. The old guy who took care of the flagpole in front of our building always insisted that I come down for an inspection, followed by a lengthy recollection of his career and latest trip to Vegas.

I described this process as: *He Needs a Puppy*. Before we enclosed the lower floor, we had three desks jammed in the reception area outside my office. One of our assistants was named Barbara. She would allow an appropriate amount of time, then stick her head in the door to let me know some fictitious appointment was waiting to see me.

Over the years, I began meeting the *Need-a-Puppy* guys downstairs. I would ask someone to call the front desk after about 15 minutes to let me know that I had a call from *Barbara.*

ENOUGH ALREADY

By the summer of 2017, I was at full tilt, *Don't give a Sh!t* mode.

During a presentation at a city council work session, one of the council members, a Leadership Denton graduate, took on what I would describe as *an attitude* regarding how we funded our Small Business Development Center.

I felt like she was being condescending and already knew the answers to her questions. She succeeded in making me lose my composure. We were on live TV.

Unfortunately, several of our volunteer leaders were present. I believe that cost me a lot of credibility, with both our leadership and the City of Denton.

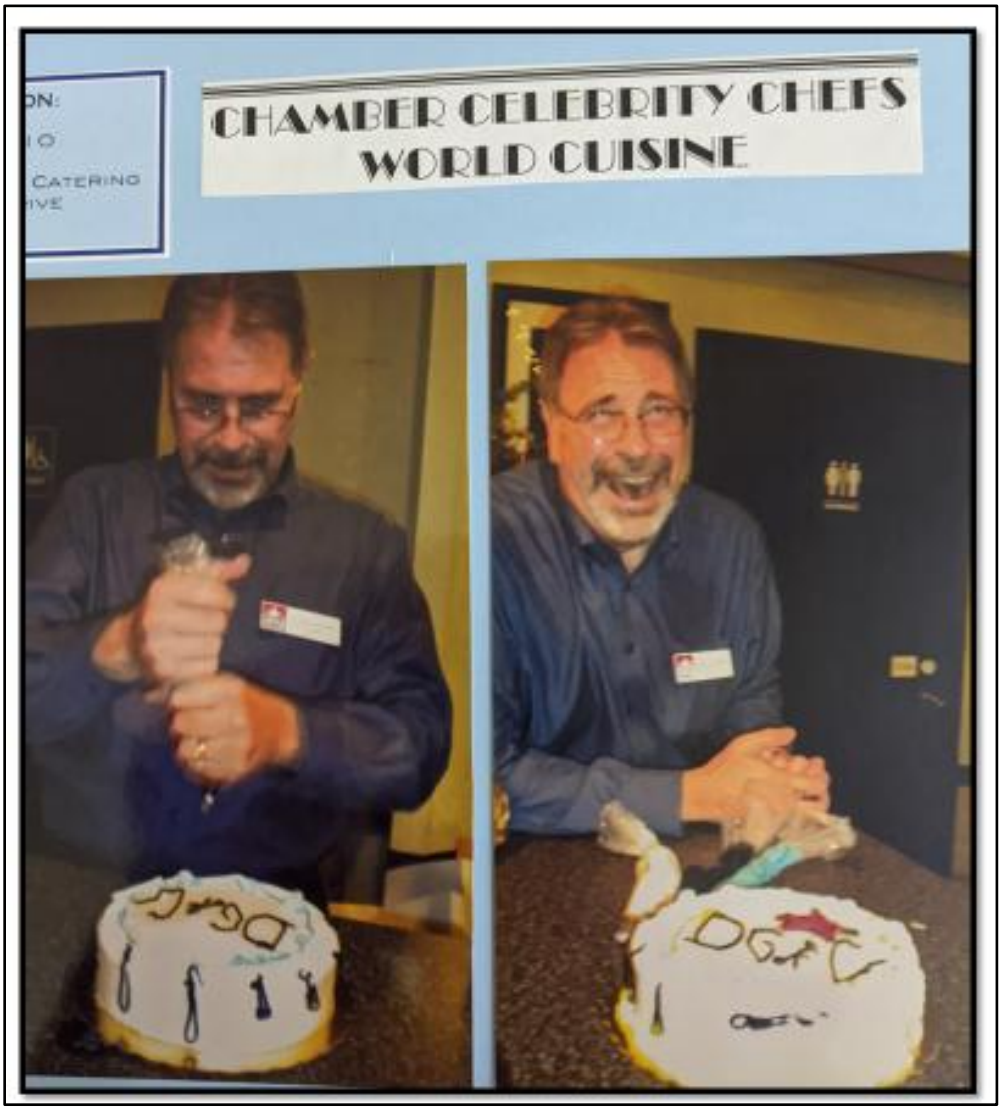
My friend, Jim Fykes with Peterbilt Motors, was our Board Chair. Although empathetic, he encouraged me to write a letter of apology to each of the council members.

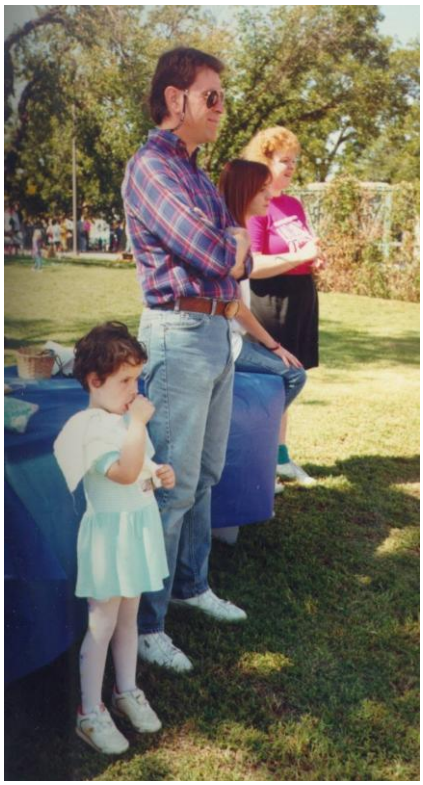
I complied, but Mayor Chris Watts later observed that my verbiage appeared contrived. Well, he was right. From that point on, I focused on an exit strategy.

On September 15, 2017, I reviewed the chronology for my retirement with Jim Fykes, Glenn Carlton, Jeff King, Mark Burroughs, Erik Clark and Carl Anderson. I submitted an official notice to the board on September 27, 2018, final day to be December 31, 2018.

They appointed an Administrative Leadership Transition Team:

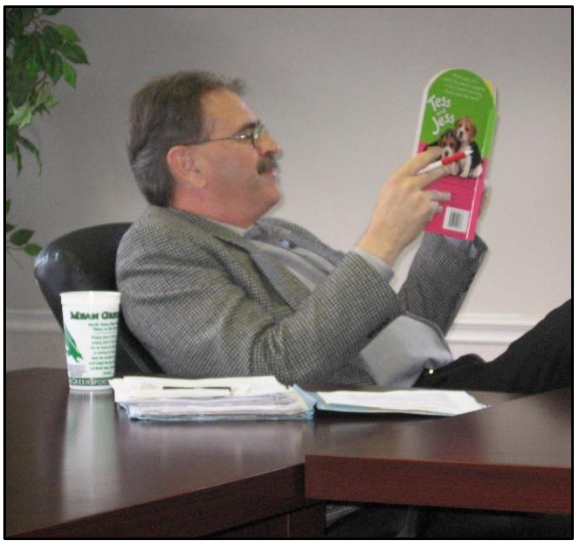
Erik Clark (Board Chair)
Jill Jester
Jim Fykes
Gary Henderson
Mark Burroughs
Amanda Oringderff
Jeremy Fykes





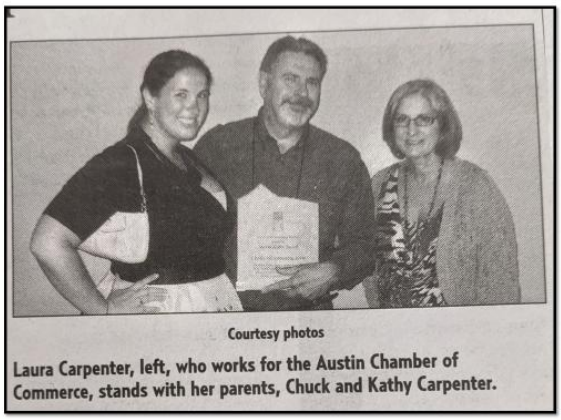
Downtown Bed Race

Denton vs. Lewisville Chamber Basketbal 1993l



Staff meetings were typically interrupted by a birthday celebration.

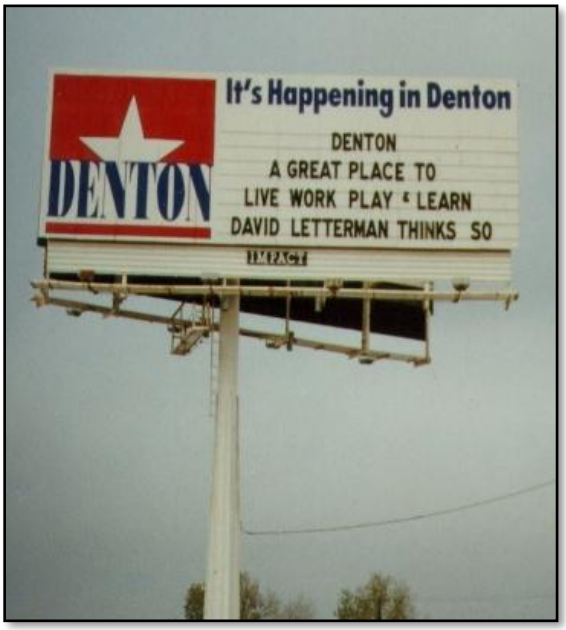
Surprise 20 Year Anniversary Celebration
Mabel, Laura, CWC, Kathy and Rex



Courtesy photos

Laura Carpenter, left, who works for the Austin Chamber of Commerce, stands with her parents, Chuck and Kathy Carpenter.

2010: TCCE, Nacogdoches



And, then I said, "No, all I ever did was work; I really didn't have time to eat any of that stuff!"

30 Year Anniversary, 2012

DBC

Business Update

Courtesy photo

Chuck Carpenter, left, chats with his father, Rex Carpenter, recently. Both have won the coveted Marvin Hurley Award, a statewide recognition for distinguished service in the field of chamber of commerce work.

Carpenter honored as best in the state

By Dawn Cobb

It was challenging, but family and friends kept Chuck Carpenter from finding out beforehand about receiving a top chamber executive award June 28.

While in Nacogdoches for a three-day seminar by the Texas Chamber of Commerce Executives, Carpenter — president of the Denton Chamber of Commerce — received the coveted Marvin Hurley Award for being the state's top, most distinguished chamber executive. The award, several say, is well-deserved.

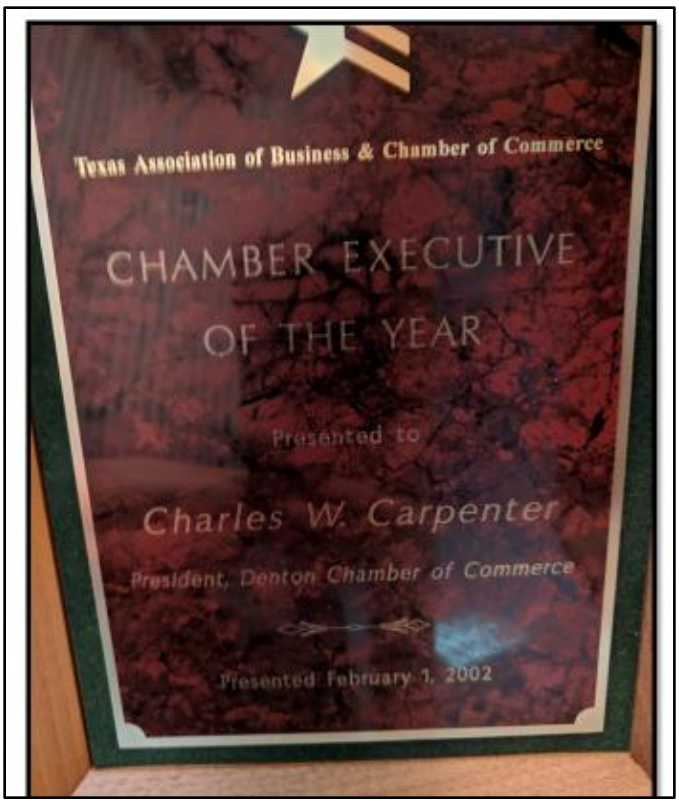
"Chuck is a mainstay for the Houston chamber executive

Chamber of Commerce and the city of Denton," said Larry Parker, owner of Denton Depot. "The fact that he's receiving this award is significant not just for him but also for the city."

The annual award is named for a longtime chamber executive believed to be one of the most distinguished in the country, said Rex Carpenter, a longtime chamber executive who happens to have won the same award in 1982 — the exact year his son took the reins in the Denton chamber.

"We are so proud of him and

AWARD | CONTINUED ON PAGE 9


Texas Association of Business & Chamber of Commerce
CHAMBER EXECUTIVE
OF THE YEAR
Presented to
Charles W. Carpenter
President, Denton Chamber of Commerce
Presented February 1, 2002

DENTON
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE
2015
TIS L. FOWLER AWARD
harles W. Carpenter
DENTON DISTINGUISHED CITIZEN AWARD
CHUCK CARPENTER
TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

CONGRATULATES
CHARLES W. "CHUCK" CARPENTER, DR. BETTYE B. MYERS AND DR. ANN STUART

RECIPIENTS OF THE 2014 FOUNDERS' AWARDS

From left: Chancellor Ann Stuart, Founders' Awards Scholarship Luncheon keynote speaker Dr. Ron Davis, Charles W. "Chuck" Carpenter and Dr. Bettye B. Myers.

Charles W. "Chuck" Carpenter has served as the president of the Denton Chamber of Commerce for more than 30 years. He is a recognized civic leader who is committed to promoting Denton and its events, organizations and universities.

www.lemonspublications.com

nton@lemonspublications.com ◆ AUGUST 2012

Chuck Carpenter was presented with a red velvet-covered gavel which signified his firm but gentle ways of getting things done.

Denton

Friends of Scouting
Distinguished Citizen Dinner

April 4, 2011
6:30 p.m. Dinner (6pm reception)
Metropolitan Catering

Recognizing and Honoring

Stan and Karla Morton
&
Chuck Carpenter

Chuck Carpenter

Chuck Carpenter has served as chief administrative officer at the Denton Chamber of Commerce since September 1982. He is responsible for implementation of policies and procedures. He hires and supervises all staff, coordinates day-to-day activities and functions of the chamber.

Chuck began working with the Denton Chamber when he started the Convention and Visitors Bureau in 1976. After holding positions in other chambers of commerce, he returned in September 1982 to serve as chief administrative officer for the Denton Chamber. Other past positions include serving as the assistant general manager at the Irving Chamber of Commerce, and staff assistant at the Waco Chamber of Commerce while attending Baylor.

During his 29 year tenure with the Denton Chamber, Chuck has been the recipient of the Chamber Executive of the Year, 2002, presented by the Texas Association of Business, as well as the Marvin Hurley Lifetime Achievement Award, 2010, presented by the Texas Chamber of Commerce Executives Association.

Chuck has served on the board of directors of the Kiwanis Club of Denton and the Denton Public Schools Foundation. He also serves on the Television Broadcast Team at First United Methodist Church.

Chuck is a graduate of Baylor University, the Institute for Organization Management through Southern Methodist University and the Basic Industrial Development Course of Texas A&M University.

I don't play golf, but, after I busted the pull cord on my chainsaw clearing a fallen tree at the chamber office, I became an expert putter with an axe.

Occasionally, we were fortunate to have professionalism and style as the MC for our membership luncheons, such as Chalese Connors.

Michelle Ray, known for her trademark "Hellooo" salutation, Kerry Goree & John Baines from the Denton Black Chamber … a good time was had by all when these individuals were in the house.

ED Vice President Ken Burdick gave me a case of authentic Dublin Dr Pepper for Christmas, sometime in the mid 90s

When reviewing the books, it's important to maintain a professional appearance

Priscilla Sanders, Jo Ann Ballantine and June McNeill

Chuckisms

"We don't want to look like we fell off a turnip truck" – Chuck's call to rally the chamber troops to care of details.

"Fat and happy" - Chuck's typical response to the question, "How are you doing?" when he really j doesn't want to go into the details of how he <u>really</u> feels.

"Swingin' and duckin'" - Chuck's typical response to the question, "What have you been up to?" w he really wants to spare the listener of the details of what he has <u>really</u> been up to.

"Idn't it nice" - Said with squinted eyes and a large grin while nodding the head slowly forward a back, this is Chuck's way of saying, "Hey, we're here so let's make the best of it."

"Chief" or "Coach" - Nicknames used when he can't remember a person's name, but has to greet when they walk into a room. (i.e. - Hey Chief, how have you been?)

"Staff Infection" - Otherwise known in the corporate world as a staff meeting.

"Flog Tournament" - Pig-Latin for Golf Tournament (this was Chuck's foreign language credited at Baylor)

"Lucy" - Doing the best Ricky Ricardo impression while walking through a door, this is Chuck's

Denton Record-Chronicle
DENTONRC.COM

Chuck Carpenter to retire from chamber after 36 years

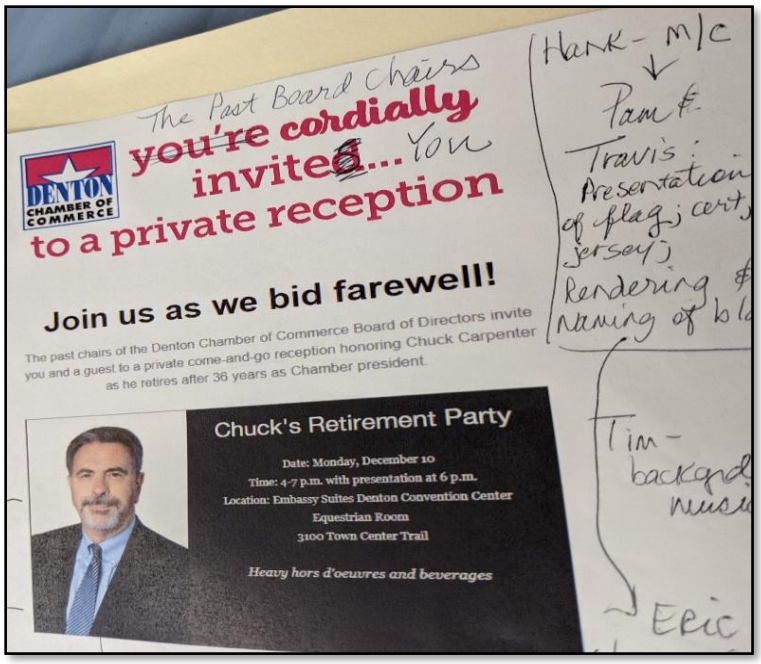
September 27, 2018

Denton Record-Chronicle
DENTONRC.COM

By Jenna Duncan Staff Writer jduncan@dentonrc.com
Dec 28, 2018

Outgoing Denton Chamber of Commerce head Carpenter 'humbled' by support as he enters retirement

Denton Chamber of Commerce's longtime President Chuck Carpenter, shown here in front of the chamber office on Dec. 21, is retiring after 36 years on the job.



The Past Board Chairs
you're cordially invited... you
to a private reception

DENTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Join us as we bid farewell!

The past chairs of the Denton Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors invite you and a guest to a private come-and-go reception honoring Chuck Carpenter as he retires after 36 years as Chamber president.

Chuck's Retirement Party

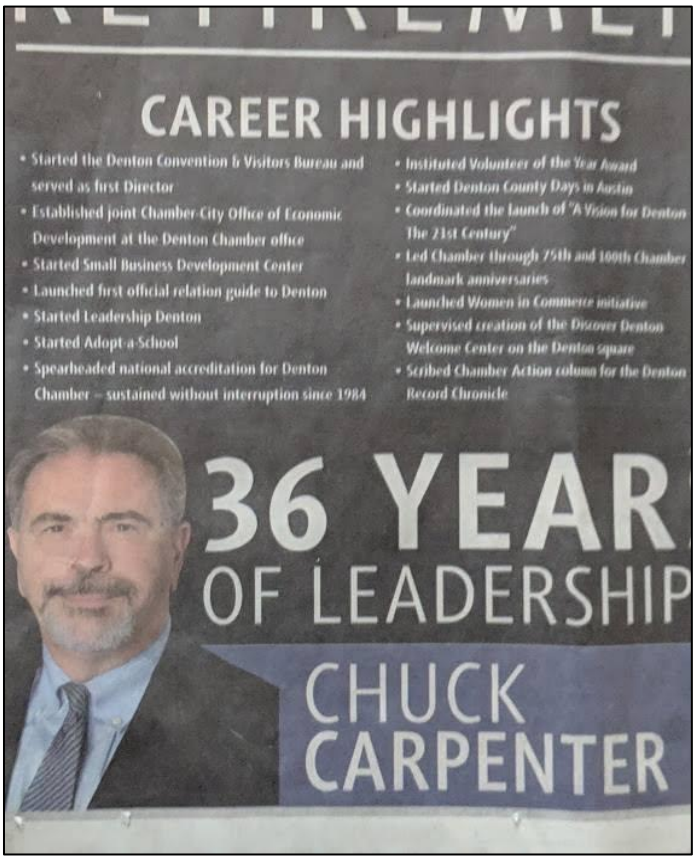
Date: Monday, December 10
Time: 4-7 p.m. with presentation at 6 p.m.
Location: Embassy Suites Denton Convention Center
Equestrian Room
3100 Town Center Trail

Heavy hors d'oeuvres and beverages

Hank - M/C
↓
Pam &
Travis:
Presentation
of flag; cert;
jersey;
Rendering &
Naming of bl

Tim -
backgnd
music

Eric



CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Started the Denton Convention & Visitors Bureau and served as first Director
- Established joint Chamber-City Office of Economic Development at the Denton Chamber office
- Started Small Business Development Center
- Launched first official relation guide to Denton
- Started Leadership Denton
- Started Adopt-a-School
- Spearheaded national accreditation for Denton Chamber – sustained without interruption since 1984
- Instituted Volunteer of the Year Award
- Started Denton County Days in Austin
- Coordinated the launch of "A Vision for Denton The 21st Century"
- Led Chamber through 75th and 100th Chamber landmark anniversaries
- Launched Women in Commerce initiative
- Supervised creation of the Discover Denton Welcome Center on the Denton square
- Scribed Chamber Action column for the Denton Record Chronicle

36 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP

CHUCK CARPENTER

Nearly 30 of our Past Board Chairs gathered December 10, 2018, to debate who started Leadership Denton. I thought it was fitting that Dr. Hal Reed, 1975-76, from our initial stint with the Denton Chamber, was the first to speak.

December 10, 2018: Former chamber staff types: Patti Temple, Gina De'Pingre, June McNeill, Robbin Fox, Christine Gossett, Jo Ann Ballantine and Jenny Newland

DENTON COUNTY DAYS
Behind the Scenes

PARTY WITH THE JUDGE

I probably should've held off retiring until the 2018-19 Program Year concluded on March 31.

As part of my departure agreement, the executive committee ask me to coordinate Denton County Days in mid-February. Frankly, based on a history of undependable and limited support from the other entities, I was always frustrated. In my opinion, the Denton Chamber bore all financial liability with little acknowledgement or appreciation.

Denton County Days was a source of personal pride through most of my career with the Denton Chamber. Not wanting to see it flounder, I agreed - reluctantly.

After a ten-year hiatus, we decided to reinstate the pre-assigned legislative calls. That's a spreadsheet nightmare, but I didn't trust anyone else to handle it. I tried to manage different aspects of the event by consensus. During a planning session with the Lewisville and Flower Mound Chamber, Monica Glenn, our own State & Federal Relations Committee chair announced that the County Judge would "*own* the reception."

And he did.

Upon arriving at the Stephen F. Austin Hotel, we discovered that the County Judge and several of his lackeys had already commandeered the bar for their own private party. There wasn't enough room for our crowd in the first place and then we ran out of hors d'oeuvres. The Denton Chamber had to pay for his personal entertainment expenses.

Carl Anderson and Glenn Carlton invited Kathy and me to join them for dinner following the reception. As the evening went on, Kathy started having chest pains and difficulty breathing. When we returned to the hotel, she couldn't get to sleep; I drove her to the emergency room at Brackenridge Hospital.

Brackenridge is the Travis County public hospital, and the experiences we encountered in the waiting area and hallways were eye-opening. They finally admitted her about 3:30 a.m. I had to oversee the legislative delegation breakfast and returned to the hotel. I didn't even try to sleep; we had to feed 200 people and then coordinate an invasion at the state capitol.

The senior legislators rarely stayed for the whole program; we usually adjusted the schedule for them to leave after their presentations.

On top of that, seems we didn't meet our first night room quota; the hotel penalized us. For the first time in the 30-year history of this marque event, we had a negative balance in the Denton County Days bank account.

HERDING CATS

At least half of the registered participants were elected office holders and government administrators. Because of the event's popularity, we often attracted public officials from Frisco, Carrollton, Roanoke and Trophy Club.

In terms of pure civilian chamber members, Denton always had the largest representation. We took advantage of this and coordinated separate presentations, before and after the main event. We delivered joint position statements in cooperation with the City of Denton, NCTC, TWU, UNT, United Way and the Denton ISD. In turn, most of them backed the chamber's state level agenda.

Denton Chamber allies often carried out 25 or more appointments; each had a different staging area and on-site orientation. I bivouacked in the rotunda with a master itinerary, directing confused individuals when and where they were supposed to be.

Due to state ethics regulations, we were careful not to mix our advocacy exhibits with the official Denton County Day *feel good* visits. For me, it was like herding cats.

In 2009, the delegates from Lewisville refused to participate in the pre-assigned legislative office visits. Denton ISD Superintendent Ray Braswell and his board scooped up the delicate, porcelain mementos and ascended - carefully - to the state capitol.

WHERE ARE THE PACKETS?

Carl Anderson typically provided an SUV, courtesy of Bill Utter Ford, to transport the packets and mementos. Besides porcelain models of the courthouse, we gave padfolios, canvass travel and garment bags, as well as laptop satchels with the Texas Flag on the cover.

District staff collected business cards from each of the 181 legislators. They were inserted in luggage tags and attached to the mementos.

One year, the Flower Mound Chamber exec offered to bring the registration materials and name tags to Austin.

The project committee usually arrived on Sunday afternoon to set up the hospitality suite, prepare packets and confirm schedule details. Team visits were pre-assigned; we had to link registered participants with specific legislative offices.

We met Sunday afternoon, at the agreed time and place. After waiting a couple of hours, I called the Flower Mound exec. They stopped at the outlet center in Hillsboro and had no idea what time it was, nor seemed to care that we had a room full of volunteers waiting for her.

OVERSLEPT

We usually opened registration early Monday afternoon, followed by separate briefings and a legislative reception that evening. Some of our attendees would only came for the county delegation breakfast on Tuesday morning, which required us to have their registration, mementos and assigned calls available then.

On that same trip, the Flower Mound crew overslept, with the registration and delivery packets locked in their rooms.

KEEP THE PARTY GOING

I always wished I could have as much fun as the Flower Mound and Lewisville Chamber folks during Denton County Days.

In theory, they were co-sponsors. In reality, they had no financial obligation. There were a couple of sessions where no one representing the City of Lewisville took part in Denton County Days. I've lost count of how many different execs they've had at the chamber. I was anal about funding and logistics and completely took over administration after the second events in 1989.

The hospitality suite was on the 16th floor of the headquarter hotel, including a full kitchen, bar, couches, dining table and big screen TV. The state capitol was visible from the west side. There was ample storage for food and beverages. Two sleeping rooms were accessible on each side; the hotel would comp one of these for me.

For those not making their own appointments or participating in the Monday afternoon briefings, the hospitality suite remained opened throughout the day. This worked out well; there were always several groups that took advantage of the convenient setting. We provided a full bar, and it was free!

The Monday evening reception was usually off-site. Beginning at 5:30 p.m., the reception lasted about two hours. Afterwards, various groups snagged a legislator or state agency exec and go to dinner. We often used this time to host our economic development private investors at an Austin restaurant.

We usually scheduled the legislative delegation breakfast early the following morning, I made it a point to limit my Monday night partying.

I had closed the hospitality suite for the legislative reception and gone to bed when I heard the door open. I'm not sure how the Lewisville-Flower Mound socialites scored a key; they had a boisterous post reception event of their own. I surfed through old black & white western movies.

LEWISVILLE DROPPED THE BALL

A few years later, we decided to include a local kick-off reception in December prior to the legislative session.

Following the Census count in 2010, Denton County was divided among four House districts and split between two Senate seats. All registered participants were invited to show support for our six state lawmakers. Great idea!

During a project committee meeting, one of the Lewisville Chamber staff announced that she would personally contact our six legislators and make sure the local event was on their schedule.

I made arrangements with the Hub Club at Apogee Stadium; and then accelerated the ratification process for the Denton Chamber position statements.

About two weeks out, I called the district offices; none of them were aware of our event. At the very least, I expected somebody from the Metrocrest, Flower Mound and Lewisville Chambers to contact the state representatives for their particular area.

So, we had this grand party planned to highlight our six-person legislative delegation, and none of them were coming. I contacted Chuck Fremaux, my Board Chair, and determined that this would obviously be a waste of time and money.

Then I called my counterpart with the Lewisville Chamber. He gave no explanation or apology for why his staff failed to carry out the assignment. As a matter of fact, he was indignant and threatened to put on his own event. Fine, at that point, it was less than a month until the start of the legislative session.

He left for a chamber in Missouri and was gone by the time we went to Austin for Denton County Day.

DISCOUNT

The Lewisville Chamber registered their leadership classes for Denton County Days and usually wanted a group discount. We had to cover the collateral materials, hospitality suite, open bar at the legislative reception and overpriced breakfast with our Denton County delegation.

Why not, it didn’t come out of their back account.

ENTERTAINMENT and THE ECONOMY

Denton County Days was a massive undertaking and considered a valuable complement to our six area state legislators. In a town with 7,000 state jobs, we embraced the fundamental need to retain adequate funding.

Optics from the outside: It was a two-day party. I had the dual responsibility of organizing a cohesive and meaningful county-wide event and keeping everybody suitably entertained. I was the only chamber exec that had to present a closing financial statement and maintain a net balance in the checkbook.

Thank you for indulging. I just had to get all of that off my chest.

Adios

The *Wally Shoe Repair Guys* are still going to expect a *box of stuff* for their chamber membership.

I suppose housing the chamber inside a City of Denton facility cuts down on maintenance issues, although the trends for partisan and political involvement, as pointed out in the Reaccreditation process, appear to be more acceptable.

Hopefully wine & cheese parties for young professionals will help retain memberships after their ribbon-cuttings.

A total of 38 years, we did the best we could, with the resources we had. I agree with Roy Appleton, Jr.

Yeah, and, I sure would like to be there

I'm not sure she ever really comprehended what I did for a living,
but Kathy Carpenter stuck with me.

DENTON COUNTY DAYS

86th Session of the Texas Legislature

Chuck Carpenter

February 18, 2019 **Monday, 3:30 p.m.** 1100 San Jacinto Blvd, Austin	**Presentation Governor's Office** **PROPERTY TAX CAP**
February 19 **Tuesday, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.** Sheraton at the Capitol 701 East 11th, Austin	**Registration, Memento/Information Packets** provided for participating pre-assigned teams
February 19 **Tuesday, 2 – 4 p.m.** State Capitol Complex, Austin	**JOINT POSITION STATEMENT DISTRIBUTION** Denton Partners Personal visits to pre-assigned legislative offices
February 19 **Tuesday, 2 – 4 p.m.**	**DELIVER DENTON COUNT DAY MEMENTOS and INFORMATION PACKETS**
February 19 **Tuesday, 5:30 - 7 p.m.** *Stephen Fs* Intercontinental Hotel 701 Congress, Austin, 78701	**STATE-WIDE RECEPTION** All elected members of both House and Senate well as key state-wide officials, invited.
February 20 **Wednesday, 7:30 - 8:30 a.m.** Sheraton at the Capitol 701 East 11th, Austin	**DELEGATION BREAKFAST** All incumbent members of the State Senate ar State House representing Denton County invit Individual recognition, brief remarks.
February 20 **Wednesday, 10 a.m.** State Capitol Complex House of Representatives Gallery	**House Resolution & County Delegation Recognition**
February 20 **Wednesday, 11:30 a.m.** State Capitol Complex Steps outside House Chambers	**GROUP PHOTO** All participating Denton County Day particip with Denton County Legislative Delegation