

Chamber News

Castroville Area Chamber of Commerce

By Ashlee Tondre Bates

This Monday was the first meeting of the Chamber Economic Development Advisory Board and we had a really good turnout. With eight of the 15 members there, several speakers, the Committee and newspapers, it was a packed house at the Airport Meeting Room. Joe Ramos of AACOG was very helpful in letting the Board know what economic development is and what steps this group can take to get a plan off and running. Jim McAden of City Public Service also had some insight for the group and let them know that one thing we have to have to get new businesses to come to Castroville is utilities. If we can't provide those, they won't come. Kara Hill, an Economic Development consultant offered her expertise on the subject letting us know that this process needs a long term goal, but also short term goals to keep us on track. After the speakers left, the Board continued to meet to discuss what they felt was the next step for this group. They all agreed while making Castroville more appealing to new businesses is important, they also need to work to retain the businesses that are already here. The next meeting of the Board will be on Thursday, October 1st at the Airport Meeting Room.

A man by the name of John F. Aceti is writing a book titled "Ambassadors of Texas," and would like to include some individuals from Castroville in the book. This book is designed to include people from out of state and country who have moved to Texas to work or retire. He is looking for interesting people - men and women - who lived an interesting and exciting life and are willing to share their life stories with others. He would like to come to Castroville on Thursday morning, September 24 to interview and photograph one or two people in the afternoon and possibly one on Friday morning. If you are interested in participating in this book please call him at (830) 257-1432 or email him at jcaceti@kct.com.

I wanted to give you all another update on the Chamber Building. We get many inquiries on when we will be breaking ground and we may be a step closer. At our recent member luncheon, I mentioned that we ran into a problem when we realized the position of the new building was sitting right on top of a drainage culvert. This became an issue because the engineer said the culvert is designed to leak a little which could later cause foundation cracks, sticking doors and windows. So after hitting another bump in the road we went straight to work trying to find a new place for the building. It was suggested to put the building in front of the Steinbach House near the parking lot. However, that caused a bit of a stir because of the fear you would not see the House any longer. So we went back to work again and as of now we believe we may have a solution. We are currently waiting on the City Engineer to come out and survey the land for us again so we can make sure the new placement has plenty of room with set-backs and such. Hopefully all will go smoothly and we will be back on our way to a ground breaking. We have a Workshop scheduled with City Council on October 5th to discuss our lease agreement because the new building will be located on City property. If all goes well at that meeting we will then head to the Design and Review Board and then hopefully be breaking ground before the end of the year. It is a long time coming, but hopefully very soon we will be starting construction on the new Chamber Building!

This weekend don't miss the 30th Annual Medina County Fair on Saturday the 18th and Sunday the 19th. Gates open at 10 a.m. and admission is just \$5 per adult and \$2 per child. Children 5 and under are free. This year's event will feature a Ranch Rodeo, Tractor Pull, Amusement Park, Parade, Prospect Shows and so much more. And you won't want to miss the live music by Gabe Garcia and Johnny Rodriguez. There will be plenty for all to enjoy, so head on out to the Fair Grounds in Hondo this week. Hope to see you all there!