

CHAMBER NEWS



Blount-Oneonta
Chamber of Commerce

CHAMBER BREAKFAST

January 12, 2012
7:30 a.m.
Twin Oaks

SPEAKER

U.S. Congressman
Spencer Bachus

SPONSORS

FOR THE
DAY WITH THE CONGRESSMAN

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U.S. Congressman Spencer Bachus to speak at next week's breakfast

Please join us on Thursday, January 12, 2012, at Twin Oaks for the monthly Blount County-Oneonta Chamber of Commerce breakfast. The breakfast will kick off a day of activities as United States Congressman Spencer Bachus visits Blount County.

He will begin the day as our speaker at the Chamber breakfast. This will be followed with a visit to the Blount County Courthouse to meet with county officials. Then from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. the Congressman will meet with mayors and council members from across Blount County at a luncheon to be held at Limestone Springs.

We would like to thank our sponsors – Millennium Satellite & Video as well as Sherrer & Sherrer and Smith & NeSmith – for their support in helping us make this day with Congressman Bachus possible.

Congressman Bachus is serving his 10th term in the U.S. House of Representatives. Currently Bachus serves as the Chairman of the House Financial Services Committee, which holds jurisdiction over the banking, securities, insurance, housing, and domestic and international monetary policy sectors.

A native of Birmingham, Congressman Bachus graduated from Auburn University and the University of Alabama School of Law. He and his wife Linda live in Vestavia Hills. They are the parents of five children and attend Hunter Street Baptist Church. Prior to his public service career, Congressman Bachus was a practicing attorney.



SPONSORS

The Chamber appreciates the generosity of Millennium Satellite & Video in its continued support of the chamber. This family owned small business began in 1997 when Lane and Matt Denard purchased Locust Fork Satellite Sales & Service. Since that time, it has grown to be on of the south's largest commercial satellite dealers. Its clients include NASA, Jack's Family Restaurants, WJOX, Ruth's Chris Steakhouse, Wind Creek Hotel & Casino, UAB Athletics, Alcorn State University, and many others. Their focus for 2012 is to continue to provide business solutions with television services and expanding with business phone and internet services for their clients. "Television Excellence Everywhere -- That's Millennium!" For more information, call 205-681-5549.

We are also grateful to local attorneys Jeff Sherrer of Sherrer & Sherrer and Alex Smith and Dalton NeSmith of Smith & NeSmith, for their roles in making this Day with the Congressman possible.

Chamber Update

The past year was a busy and exciting one here at the Blount County-Oneonta Chamber, and we are looking forward to what 2012 will bring.

We closed out the year with our largest Blount County Christmas parade. More than 120 entries and more than 500 people paraded through the streets of Oneonta in front of an estimated 18,000 onlookers.

A week later, another annual celebration was held with the chamber's holiday themed chamber breakfast. An overflow crowd in excess of 150 people came out to take part in the program of celebration, worship and song. Our thanks to Lester Memorial United Methodist Church for sponsoring the program and to everyone who had a part in the program.

Bert Goodwin delivered a Christmas message in a way that only he can, Bill Barnett of Union Hill Baptist Church presented the scripture reading, and Moses Clark, director of music at First Baptist Church of Oneonta, led the audience in the singing of Christmas songs. We also thank Miss Covered Bridge Alyssa Boyd and Miss Covered Bridge Outstanding Teen Miranda Cornelius for sharing their talents with us, as well as David Wilson, Barry Hallman of Lester Memorial, and R.C. Smith.

Once again, we were honored by the presence of an outstanding group of young people from Locust Fork High School as their Ambassadors welcomed guests.

As we get set to kick off 2012, we are excited about new businesses that chose Blount County in the closing part of 2011. In December, we welcomed Title Cash as new members of the Chamber. We also welcomed Dr. Ashley Fox, O.D., who has opened The Eye Shop at 1904 Second Avenue East in Oneonta. A grand opening and ribbon cutting was held on January 4.

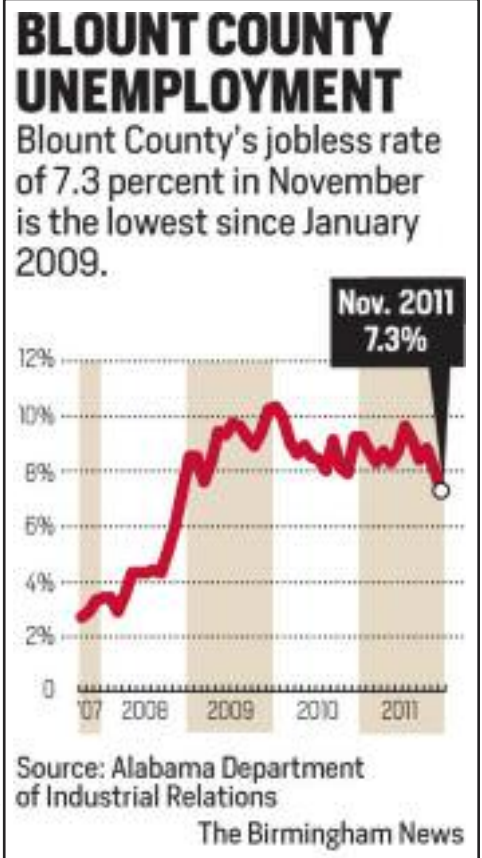
We anticipate several other ribbon cuttings in the next few weeks in the Oneonta area as well as the West Blount area.

Other new members include Oneonta Auto Mart (Steve Morton) and Sun City Tanning (Danny and Reba Skillman).

There continues to be plenty of things to see and do in Blount County. Always remember to SHOP and PLAY in Blount County FIRST!

The chamber continues to promote our county in many different ways and we appreciate the continued support of our members. We have some exciting things planned for 2012. In 2012, we will be implementing programs targeting retail retention and recruiting, tourism, and industrial development.

As we move into the new year, there are many reasons to be encouraged about the economic future of the county. The county's unemployment rate fell to 7.3 percent in November, its lowest point since January 2009. Through the first 11 months of this year, unemployment is averaging 8.7 percent, an improvement over the annual averages of both 2009 and 2010. And in an article in the Birmingham



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The Blount-Oneonta Chamber of Commerce...

...working *together*
towards a brighter *future!*



"We are very happy to be able to service the residents of Oneonta and Blount County with their financial needs. The city and the chamber has made us feel very welcome and we would like to welcome everyone that may need our services. Our goal is to provide unique financial solutions with superior service and integrity," said Monika Rausch, Regional Director Title Cash. Pictured above are Tim McNair, Tammie Noland, Mayor Darryl Ray, S. Dixon (Area Supervisor), Monika Rausch (Regional Director), Barbara Andersen, Donny Ray, Christa Mayo (Store Manager), and City Manager Ed Lowe.

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News, Franz Lohrke, a professor at the Brock School of Business at Samford University, said for counties like Blount there are some positive signs.

"The numbers are starting to trend back up in terms of small business optimism," he said. "I don't think anybody is saying we've completely turned the corner yet. We've hit bottom and we're moving back up."

As always, we welcome your input and support as we begin projects to accomplish these initiatives. Please call us anytime at 274-2153.

LEADERSHIP BLOUNT COUNTY

The Leadership Blount County classes are in full swing. We have a great group of Blount County leaders in the program this year and have had two great sessions so far.

We started off with an orientation held at Twin Oaks and then in December learned more about our local governments and law enforcement. In January, we will focus on economic development. This will include tours of local businesses and industries.

Still to come are tours of health care facilities, tours of both school systems, and a trip to Montgomery.

RELAY FOR LIFE

Relay for Life of Blount County will be kicking off the year on Friday, January 13, 2012, at 6 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall at Lester Memorial United Methodist Church. There will be guest speakers, complimentary food and door prizes.

It will be a great opportunity to learn more about Relay for Life, join the team and ask questions. For more information, please contact Pennie Bickerstaff at 274-8588.

This year's Relay for Life of Blount County will be held on Friday, May 11. Watch the newsletter as well as The Blount Countian for more information.



Blount-Oneonta Chamber of Commerce

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