

# PROGRESS

Leading Businesses...Leading Communities...

## Chairman's Message

In the Spring of 2002, SuAn and I hopped on a plane to come to Brownsville, TX. This was our first trip to Brownsville and WOW we really did not know what was in store for us... I will never forget that week as it was Texas Spring Break week and we had packed for the weather to be warm, which it was not. We went to a local retailer, who is a Chamber member, to get jackets to keep us warm from the in climate weather. The staff at this retailer could tell we were not from the area and helped us with directions and answered many questions that we had. I immediately realized that this community was full of advocates for great customer service and assistance!

When we got into town, we were overwhelmed with



**Glen Boles**

Chairman of the Board  
Valley Baptist Health Systems

how warm and caring the people of Brownsville were! We were in the area for my job interview and we immediately fell in love! Everyone then (and NOW) are the most warm and hospitable people on this EARTH!! (Trust me folks, I am not just saying this...) We have had many family and friends visit us in Brownsville and they feel EXACTLY the SAME WAY!!!

I say all of these great things to relay to our business

*continued on page 7 (Chairman's Message)*

## Dance the Night Away!

### Join the Chamber for the 13th Annual Diamond Ball

Get ready for a night of Glitz and Glamour! The Bienvenidos Committee will once again give-away a One-Carat Diamond at the 13th Annual Diamond Ball scheduled for Saturday, March 24th at the Brownsville Events Center.

The Diamond Ball is the Committee's Spring fundraiser, a black-tie dinner and dance, so named because a one carat

diamond is always given away to one lucky person at the ball. Last year's fortunate winner was Anna Rodriguez of Wells Fargo. Nevill Imaging Solutions will once again generously sponsor the one carat diamond.

Futhermore, this exciting event will feature a three course sit-down dinner prepared by Joe Kenney, Jr. of Cobblehead's

Bar & Grill. As well as, live entertainment by Choco Band, a versatile, international amusement band that doesn't just play music but entertains with state of the art technology and grand showmanship.

The Diamond Ball is always a fun night for Chamber members, an opportunity for them to dress up in formal attire,

*continued on page 7 (Diamond Ball)*

## Shining Star Customer Service Award



The Brownsville Chamber of Commerce recognizes the Holiday Inn and Workforce Solutions Cameron for the February 2012 Shining Star Customer Service Award. Both organizations stepped forward to support the Chamber in its effort to bring Bill Drury a nationally recognized customer service training consultant to Brownsville for "A Passion for Service" workshop. Due to their support more than 100 local employers and/or employees learned proven strategies and techniques designed to ensure customer satisfaction resulting in retention and ultimately economic growth.

The Brownsville Chamber of Commerce applauds the Holiday Inn and Workforce Solutions Cameron for their leadership and genuine interest in making Brownsville Shine by supporting excellent customer service.

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# President's Message

In the September 2011 issue of the "Progress" I addressed employment statistics related to veterans locally and nationally. In my President's message, I referenced three developing programs or incentives; 1) the federally proposed tax incentives; "Returning Heroes" plan



**Angela R. Burton,**  
IOM, CPM  
President/CEO

under which employers could earn up to \$2,400 for hiring recently unemployed vets and \$5,600 for hiring those unemployed more than six months, and the

"Wounded Warrior" credit of up to \$9,600 for hiring disabled vets out of work for more than six months. Moreover, I discussed the grant application submitted by the United Way of Southern Cameron County on behalf of the Cameron County Coalition for Veteran's of which the Chamber is a part of.

Well....I'm happy report the results were favorable. The Returning Heroes Tax Credit and Wounded Warriors Tax Credit were both included in the American Jobs Act and signed

into law by President Barack Obama on November 21, 2011. Both of these tax credit programs were codified into the IRC Sec. 51 as an extension of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) for qualified veterans and disabled veterans. With these programs now in place, employers will soon be eligible for income tax credits for hiring qualified unemployed veterans or disabled veterans.

Secondly, United Way of Southern Cameron County was awarded a grant by the Texas Vet-

eran's Commission. A portion of the grant is earmarked to provide incentives for internships and training for Veteran's. The idea is to support Veterans who need training in skill development as well as provide incentives to local businesses looking to hire.

A series of networking events are planned and will be geared towards matching unemployed veterans with employers. If you are a business and are interested in participating please contact me at your earliest conve-

nience. On a different note, I'd like to report your Chamber has been very busy the first quarter of our fiscal year. Since October 1, 2011, the Chamber has organized and implemented more than 50 networking opportunities to include:

- 1 - Holiday Business Mixer
- 2 - Speed Networking Events
- 1 - Power Hour
- 16 - Ribbon Cuttings/Grand Openings

*continue on page 6  
(President's Message)*

## Thank You! Gracias! Renewed Members

Renewed Members  
as of 1-26-12

Ace Eateries dba  
Denny's  
December 7, 2000

Alivio Pain & Injury  
Recovery Center  
February 3, 2009

All Star Realtors  
January 1, 1986

Alto Vista Realty, LLC  
January 4, 2011

American Contracting  
U.S.A, Inc.  
January 15, 2004

Bargain Book  
January 1, 1980

Bob Richardson &  
Associates, Inc.  
January 29, 1989

Border Properties, Inc.  
January 1, 1984

BrandyWyne  
Apartments/B-Wyne  
Management, LP  
January 1, 1989

Breeden/McCumber,  
Inc. January 1, 1983

Brownsville & Matamoros  
Bridge Co.  
January 1, 1987

Brownsville Affordable  
Homeownership  
Corporation  
January 31, 2005

Brownsville CrimeStoppers  
February 20, 2008

Brownsville Navigation  
District (Port of Brownsville)  
January 29, 1989

Brownsville Scrap Paper,  
Inc.  
February 4, 2005

C.H. Harden, Jr. Advertising  
Specialties  
January 1, 1980

D. Marty Bogart, CPA  
January 19, 2006

Dairy Queen West  
June 28, 1993

De Leon Insurance  
Agency & Real Estate  
October 13, 2010

Dipasa U.S.A., Inc.  
January 1, 1993

Dix Shipping Company,  
Inc.  
January 2, 1990

Duro Bag Manufacturing  
Co.  
January 1, 1986

Dutch Fisher Real Estate  
February 3,  
2009

Ecological Services  
International, Inc.  
January 15, 2004

Edwards Abstract and  
Title Company  
January 1, 1987

El Clavo Lumber Co.,  
Inc. January 1, 1987

El Toro Sporting Goods,  
Inc.  
January 16, 2002

Estrada Hinojosa &  
Company, Inc.  
January 13, 2004

Feldman's Market Center # 34  
November 3, 2010

Garza & Garza, L.L.P.  
January 1, 1987

Gladys Porter Zoo  
January 1, 1992

Gonzalez Engineering  
& Surveying, Inc.  
January 15, 2004

Gulf Breeze Mobile &  
R.V. Park  
January 1, 1987

Hughston Insurance  
Agency  
October 16, 1993

International Bank of  
Commerce  
January 1, 1984

Joe D. Zayas, D.D.S.,  
P.C.  
September 2, 1992

Kenmont Montessori  
School, Inc.  
January 5, 2011

KGBT - TV 4  
January 1, 1989

KVEO - TV NBC 23  
January 1, 1986

Las Palmas Pharmacy  
January 6, 2011

Lette Insurance Agency  
January 1, 1986

Loera Customs Brokerage,  
Inc.  
January 1, 1989

Madhavan Pisharodi,  
M.D.  
December 19, 1991

Manuel G. Guajardo,  
M.D.P.A.  
January 1, 1987

McCoy's Building Supply  
January 6, 1992

Mejia & Rose, Inc.  
January 1, 1984

Michele Sanchez, P.C.  
January 24, 1990

Mr. Music  
June 21, 1993

Newtek Business Services  
January 31, 2008

Perma-Temp Personnel  
Services, Inc.  
January 27, 2006

Plitt Crane & Equipment,  
Inc.  
January 1, 1986

*continued on page 3 (Renewed)*

# “A Passion for Service” Changing One Business at a Time

First impressions can either motivate customers to return to your business or run them off forever. This was one lesson learned at the workshop “A Passion for Service” organized by the Brownsville Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the Holiday Inn

and Workforce Solutions Cameron on Thursday, January 26, 2012.

In 3 short hours customer service expert Bill Drury helped attendees discover secrets and acquire skills to improve their customer service techniques. Topics covered in

the seminar were motivation, making first impressions, creating a vision for service, communicating with customers, personalizing service, handling irate customers and overcoming stress and burnout.

Moreover, participants

learned how to turn tough situations into future sales opportunities.

“I’d like to thank our CEO for investing in us,” Mina Garza, Housing Authority for the City of Brownsville Executive Secretary, expressed. “I think the seminar was great, it is

something we all need and can learn from it. We can always improve our customer service and we should always put ourselves in the customer’s position.”

Furthermore, Drury highlights the importance of building trust and com-

municating respect to customers. He talked about what practical things businesses can do to build their customers’ trust. Things like showing kindness and thoughtfulness to a customer, keeping their promises to the customer, remembering

*continued on page 7 (A Passion)*



*continued from page 2 (Renewed)*

Rio Grande Valley Abstract Co., Inc.  
January 1, 1989

Seahorse Transportation  
February 9, 1994

SGS Industrial Supplies  
January 1, 1981

Society for Human Resource Management  
September 25, 2000

Southwest Key Workforce Development  
January 7, 2010

Stewart Title Cameron County  
January 1, 1980

Terracon Consultants, Inc.  
January 7, 2011

The Brownsville Herald  
January 15, 2004

The Shop  
February 3, 2009

Tipton Motors, Inc.  
January 2, 1990

Top Cut Lawn Care Inc.  
February 4, 2009

TransMontaigne Partners L.P.  
January 13, 2004

Trevino Funeral Home, Inc.  
December 12, 1991

TrueBlue, Inc.  
January 28, 2004

University Park, Ltd.  
February 12, 2003

Valley American Contractors  
August 2, 2010

Valley Regional Medical Center  
January 1, 1986

Valley Wide Security  
January 15, 2004

Wal-Mart #5493 Supercenter  
January 6, 2005

Wal-Mart Super Center  
January 2, 1991

Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC  
January 1, 1987

Wings Pizza N Things  
December 17, 2008

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ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB  
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BUSINESS REVENUE.**



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Locations, Dates & Information.



Christ Church of The Valley located at 2900 Dr. Hugh Emerson Rd., hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony to dedicate their new building. Christ Church of The Valley is a non-denominational, Bible based Christian Church. They are a church who welcomes people from all backgrounds, regardless of their failure or successes in life.



On Wednesday, January 11, 2012 JesMar, Inc. located at 3040 FM 802 Ste G hosted a ribbon cutting in celebration of their grand opening. Jesmar, Inc. was established under the State of Indiana rules in March of 2006. Owner Maria Villarreal has been in the accounting field for more than 20 years. She is a graduate of Indiana Wesleyan University and currently taking the last 3 classes needed to complete her MBA with Accounting Specialization from the same university. The services provided are individual income tax preparation with professional audit assistance and representation.



On Thursday, January 19, 2012 Khan's Grill located at 2701 Ruben Torres Blvd. hosted a ribbon cutting in celebration of their grand opening and newest valley location. Khan's Grill is a Mongolian BBQ restaurant where customers create their own custom stir fry. Stop by and choose from a variety of vegetables, meats, spices, and then the cook prepares it right in front of you.



On Friday, January 20, 2012 Top Notch Tae Kwon Do located at 2039 Price Rd. Suite "C" hosted a ribbon cutting in celebration of their grand opening. Top Notch TKD is an academy guaranteed by the Sport Union of TKD as well the endorsement of the World Tae Kwon Do Federation. The Sport Union of Taekwondo is recognized throughout Mexico, and the U.S. and now has opened its doors in Brownsville, Texas.



On Tuesday, January 24, 2012 Chamber President in partnership with Staybridge Suites hosted Coffee Talk. More than 30 members from a variety of businesses attended the early morning event. Coffee Talk is an informal opportunity to discuss chamber programs, benefits and issues as well as network with member businesses. Claudia Cantu-Grimaldo, Wells Fargo, District Manager was special guest.

continue from page 2 (President's)

4 - Coffee Talk sessions  
28 - Chamber Committee Meetings

Additionally, the Chamber staff gathered and reported data for the ACCRA-Cost of Living Survey. The Brownsville Chamber of Commerce receives pricing report forms each quarter that require research and documentation for almost 60 categories such as grocery items, housing, utilities, mortgage quotations, transportation, health care, and miscellaneous goods and services.

The Chamber's online business directory has been displayed 464,467 times by internet guests from North America, Europe, Asia, South America Africa and Oceania. Each member averaged 394.62 referrals from the Chamber website with a daily average of 3,936 referrals from the website business directory. Moreover, the top five categories searched and displayed

on the online business directory were: Restaurants, Banks-Financial, Hotel-Motels, Organizations-Non Profit, and Employment Agencies.

With local partners, the Chamber planned and implemented 9 seminars with more than 163 small business owners, potential owners or employees participating.

Moreover, the Chamber continues to support and host Arturo Gonzalez our Small Business Development Counselor who meets with business owners and potential owners and assists them with advice on financial, marketing, production, organization, engineering, technical problems, business plans and feasibility studies. All services provided by the counselor are free and confidential.

More than 24 rewards totaling \$6,350.00 were reviewed and approved by Brownsville Crime Stoppers. The Chamber adminis-

ters Brownsville Crime Stoppers by organizing committee programs and hosting monthly meetings and activities.

Chamber members donated a total of 100 unwrapped toys towards the Brownsville PD "Christmas for Kids" project as the Commerce was a drop off location.

These are just a few of the highlights. We have had countless community leader meetings and a variety of planning exercises in preparation for next quarter's programs and events.

As I stated in last month's message, our commitment is to deliver business initiatives that ensure success for you, your business or organization and your employees! The Chamber will continue to provide more tools, more seminars, more staff expertise, more peer contact, more information, more advocacy and more individual support. Onward!



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continued from page 1 (Diamond Ball)

take keepsake photos by Edith Saldana Photography and dance the night away. Proceeds from the event are used to support committee activities and to purchase the beautiful hand-made ceramic plaques given to member businesses at ribbon cuttings on behalf of Brownsville Chamber of Commerce. Moreover, partial proceeds will be set aside for a special Chamber Member scholarship in honor of Debbie Musso a long time Bienvenidos Committee member and the very first Diamond Ball Chair who passed in December.

The Bienvenidos Committee, chaired by Judith Lucio, Hamilton & Lucio, PC is one of the largest committees at the chamber. The committee takes an active role in Brownsville's economic development by officially welcoming new member businesses to the chamber and to our wonderful city.

The Bienvenidos Committee formed a sub-committee called the Diamond Ball Committee

lead by committee chairman Judith Lucio, Hamilton & Lucio, PC. Members of the committee are Nelly Burguete, Mary Kay; Cris Garza, Darling Mouser Funeral Home; Rafael Guerra, KGBT-TV 4; Dollie Lucio, English Motors; Arely Pena, MaddAbbie's Jewelry & Gifts; Ana Rodriguez, Carruther's Embroidery; Anna Rodriguez, Wells Fargo Bank; Priscilla Saldana, American Firing Range, Inc. and Brunilda Villarreal, Farmers Insurance Group, David Villarreal Insurance.

This year there are three types of sponsorships:

**Gold Sponsor - \$1,000:** Eight Event Tickets, publicity as a "Gold Sponsor" in all advertisement, articles, sponsorship signs, and websites, recognition at the event, centerpiece/table tent with sponsor's name at each table, A free flyer insert in the "Progress" newsletter valued at \$200, (valid for one year after the Diamond Ball), a free highlighted online Business Listing valued at \$75 (valid for one year after the Diamond Ball) and premium seating at

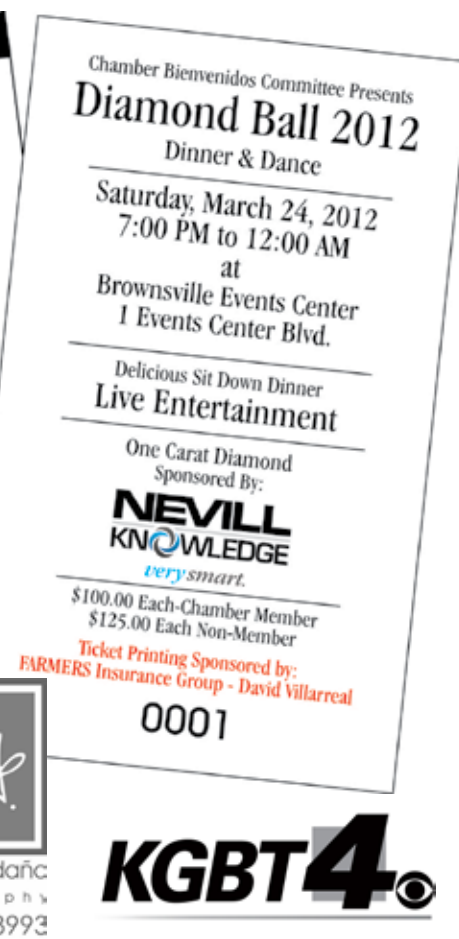
the event.

**Silver Sponsor - \$500:** Four Event Tickets, publicity as a "Silver Sponsor" in all advertisement, articles, and sponsorship signs, recognition at the podium the evening of the event, centerpiece/table tent with sponsor's name at each table and priority seating at the event.

**Bronze Sponsor - \$250:** Two Event Tickets, publicity as a "Bronze Sponsor" in all advertisement, articles, and sponsorship signs, recognition at the podium the evening of the event, and priority seating with other Bronze Sponsors at the event.

Individual tickets are \$100.00 for Chamber Members and \$125.00 for non-members. Don't miss out on this opportunity to support your Chamber, showcase your company and have a "diamond" of an evening. For more information about tickets or sponsorship opportunities call Jimena Perez at 542-4341.

**Tickets on Sale Now!**



continued from page 1 (Chairman's Message)

community in Brownsville to "keep doing GREAT and WONDERFUL work" and to let you know that my family and I will be relocating to Texarkana, TX. We have always felt welcome and at home in Brownsville. I want to thank each and everyone of you for making that our reality.

I am BEYOND CONFIDENT

that Angela Burton, our Board, Interim Chairman D. Marty Bogart and the Chamber team will continue to do a superb job for the Brownsville Business Community!! I look forward to watching your involvement from the PROGRESS.

Brownsville has many marvelous opportunities ahead of it. Today marks a closure for some and a new begin-

ning for others. It has been an honor to serve. I thank you all very much!!

¡Aunque estemos lejos a centenas de millas, una gran parte de nuestros corazones estará siempre aquí en Brownsville, TX! (Although we may be hundreds of miles away, a big part of our hearts will always be in Brownsville, TX!)

continued from page 3 (A Passion)

customers' names, etc. He also, highlighted the importance of customer service because of the incredible value of one customer and mentioned that a lot of times people focus business in making a sale. Businesses cannot stay in business if they just make a onetime

sale, what they have to do is build a lifelong loyal customer because he said 68% of customers leave due to perceived indifference.

"In the workshop I use the example of nurturing a plant, just like we have to do those little things like watering, fertilizing

and taking time, we have to give a plant tender loving care well, we have to do that with customers, we have to give them the tender loving care of building trust with them," emphasized Drury. "Communicating respect that's the other half of the coin, that's the whole idea of honoring a cus-

tomers, making them feel important, complementing them, thanking them and do what we can to make them feel number one."

This seminar has received rave reviews from more than 200 Chambers of Commerce and Associations. He has

delivered more than 2,000 seminar presentations the last 20 years and ninety nine percent of all attendees rate his programs as excellent in both content and presentation.

"This seminar was very impressive, informative and I hope to apply what

we learned with our staff at our store. Customer Service is the key to the success of your business, it needs to be taken seriously and we all need to focus to make sure it's a priority," Rose Jaramillo, Lack's Furniture Store Manager shared.

**Vamos a Celebrar!**

Join us for our annual  
**Charro Days Mixer**  
at  
**WELLS FARGO**  
on  
**Wednesday, February 22, 2012**  
**5:30 PM - 7:30 PM**  
**835 E. Levee St., Brownsville, Texas**  
**Food, Music & Charro Days Fun!**

Entrance \$5.00: Co-host fund-raiser benefitting Brownsville Society for the Performing Arts (BSPA). BSPA is a non profit organization that creates strategic alliances with civic, cultural and educational organizations to support and promote the performing arts in Brownsville.

R.S.V.P. by calling the Chamber at 542-4341 no later than Monday, February 20, 2012.  
Or e-Register at [www.brownsvillechamber.com](http://www.brownsvillechamber.com)

This networking event is organized by the Brownsville Chamber of Commerce and sponsored by Wells Fargo Bank for Chamber members. Refreshments are by L&F Distributors. The Chamber offers over three dozen opportunities for members to network. Public Affairs Luncheons and Business After Hours Mixers will expose members to an average of 200 face to face introductions at each event. Annual special events such as the Business to Botana Expo the Annual Banquet and member anniversary events offer even more opportunities to network. If your business is interested in hosting a Business After Hours Mixer please contact the Chamber at 542-4341.

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# PROGRESS

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Graphic Designer.....Angela R. Burton  
Writers:.....Angela R. Burton and Chamber Members

## Welcome! Bienvenidos! New Members

New Members as of  
1-27-12

**ABC Services LLC,**  
Income Tax Services  
Mr. Moses Sorola  
224 Palo Verde  
Brownsville, TX 78521  
Phone: (956) 542-1050  
Fax: (956) 542-2952

**Chocoterre Bakeries**  
Mrs. Ana L. Hernandez  
1425 FM 802 Suite F.  
Brownsville, TX 78521  
Phone: (956) 550-0536

**St. Lucia Eyesessible Services**  
Rehabilitation-Blind &  
Visually Impaired  
Mrs. Graciela Olivo  
1540 Capistrano Dr.  
Brownsville, TX 78526  
Phone: (956) 451-5983

**The Phoenix Tavern & Grill Restaurants**  
Mr. Ernesto Hernandez  
3101 Pablo Kisel Blvd  
Ste. A-7/A-10  
Brownsville, TX 78526  
Phone: (956) 550-0101  
Fax: (956) 982-1754

**Top Notch Tae Kwon Do Martial Arts**  
Mr. Sergio A Covarrubias Rios  
2039 Price Rd. Ste. "C"  
Brownsville, TX 78521  
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Placido Garcia  
2nd Vice Chair/Secretary  
PlaGar Engineering, L.L.C.

D. Marty Bogart  
Treasurer  
Marty Bogart, CPA

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Elayne Sloane  
Newtek Business Services

Humphrey Thomas  
Edward Jones

Norma Torres  
Brownsville & Rio Grande  
International Railroad

Brunilda Villarreal  
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