

# The Chamber

of COMMERCE | BLACKSTONE VIRGINIA

March 2010

The Blackstone Chamber of Commerce promotes and supports existing businesses, and encourages development of new businesses by being the resource of choice to the community. The Chamber fosters a cohesive and progressive business environment.

The Harlem Ambassador Exhibition Basketball Game tickets are now available for the March 18 game.



Contact the Chamber office at 434- 292 -1677 for more information !

#### Chamber Office Hours

Weekdays, except holidays,  
from 9:00 am until 4:00 pm

#### Blackstone Chamber of Commerce

300 Church Street  
P.O. Box 295  
Blackstone, VA 23824  
Phone: 434-292-1677  
Fax: 434-292-1588  
[director@blackstoneva.com](mailto:director@blackstoneva.com)

The chamber has a conference room available. Contact the chamber office for details.

## In the SPOTLIGHT: Business of the Month

# Just Sew EMBROIDERY



Just Sew Embroidery is the former Mary Lou's Monogramming of Farmville, VA. The business was purchased by Scott and Kris Walker of Kenbridge in June 2008, and re-located to Blackstone in August 2009. Just Sew's main focus is embroidery while also offering apparel printing and photo sports balls.

Just Sew Embroidery specializes in custom computerized embroidery on virtually every type of material. Scott and Kris can embroider your company or organization's logo on shirts, caps, blankets, bags, or whatever you like. Don't have a logo? Let them create one for you from their large selection of clip art and fonts. Embroidered polo shirts are a great way to give your employees a professional look while also advertising your business. Just Sew can order shirts, caps, and other apparel to meet your needs. They also gladly embroider on items brought in by their customers.

Just Sew has created printed t-shirts and uniforms for various area sports teams and organizations including schools, businesses, fire departments, and churches. Custom printed t-shirts help to identify group members and provide a sense of unity. They are also a nice way to commemorate special events like a championship season, family reunion, or fundraiser.

Scott and Kris Walker are a husband and wife team who enjoy working together to provide friendly and timely service to the members of the community. They pride themselves on attention to detail and provide their customers with the professional service that they deserve.

Just Sew Embroidery is located at 104 W. Broad St. in downtown Blackstone, between Dominion Carpet and the Citizens Community Bank drive-through branch. Hours of operation are Monday-Friday 9:00-5:00. Just Sew may be contacted by calling (434) 292-1800 or e-mailing [justsewemb@embarqmail.com](mailto:justsewemb@embarqmail.com). You may also become a friend of the Just Sew Embroidery page on Facebook to view samples and learn about any news or special promotions.

## *Executive Director's Message*

March is almost here and I am so happy the days are getting longer and I am awaking to birds chirping each morning. It is almost spring; a time of renewal and rebirth. I am hoping that with these signs of spring, that you as members are seeing happy beginnings in your businesses. It has been a rough winter and it certainly is time for some brighter days for us all.

The Harlem Ambassadors' event has been the focus of the many hours being put in at the chamber office. It is easy to find "nice to have events", but after committing to the event the real work begins; from finding a place to have the event to finding lodging, putting together a team, uniforms, volunteers to work the event, post game meal, escorts, media coverage, advertising, ticket sales, securing sponsorships and so many other things. The expected and the unexpected have all occurred!

We are hoping that you will purchase tickets for your family and friends. It is sure to be the LARGEST athletic event in this area in many years. The game will bring together an all volunteer team, **The Chamber Blazers**, to face the Harlem Ambassadors. What a night of great entertainment this will be!

Our new website is up, running and getting many hits each day. Please refer to our new website at [www.blackstoneva.com](http://www.blackstoneva.com) frequently as new information is posted weekly. You will find a chamber calendar and information on upcoming events. Use this tool as your source for current information on your chamber that is hard at work!

Thank you for being a member of the Blackstone Chamber of Commerce. Let us hear from you with newsletter ideas and opinions.

Until next month,

*Brenda*

## **Working for You With New Ideas...**

### **How Can A Website Benefit My Business?**

It would be an understatement to say that the internet has changed the way we live our lives. In fact, the internet influences our lifestyle so much that it's hard to imagine how we ever lived without it. The internet has revolutionized the way we do just about anything: communicate, learn, shop, do business. It has made some processes and procedures completely obsolete, for example, many businesses nowadays function only through web channels—email and websites. Even though they offer a tangible service or product, the business itself only exists via the World Wide Web.

### **That's not to say a physical store front doesn't have a purpose.**

However, the power of online presence—in the form of a website—is exponential compared to that of physical marketing, advertising, communication, and service techniques.

### **Just how can you save money and benefit your business with a website?**

The possibilities are endless. But most of all, a website allows you to connect with, inform and serve customers literally while you sleep.

If you only have a physical business and your customer has a question, he has to call and talk to a live person on the phone. It seems like a simple enough transaction, but it requires some tenacity on the part of your customer and availability on the part of your business. An informative website allows customers to seek out the information and answers they need to make a decision any time they want. Not to mention, they don't have to wait for you to be 'open for business' to get the information they need.

Traditionally, marketing and advertising your business takes man power: cold calling, mailings, fliers, advertising campaigns, etc. They work, but you can find yourself limited to a certain geographic area or even by the number of marketers or sales people you can afford to employ. Today, hundreds of millions of people are using the internet. A well-engineered website allows you to advertise to people across the globe and even by accident at that. Advertising campaigns that provide the same level of exposure—editorial, print, television—require serious capital.



*Blackstone Chamber of Commerce—<http://www.blackstoneva.com>*

## How Can A Website Benefit My Business? - Continued from Page 2

The cost of an effective website is very economical in comparison.

Most importantly, a proactive business owner has to be willing to engage its customers in a way that they want to be engaged. These days, if consumers can't get something online, they probably aren't getting it. People even order take-out online. If your information, services, and products aren't available on the web, there is a very good chance that some customers might choose to not engage you for that very reason. Any other avenue requires more effort on their part than they are willing to take.

At the end of the day, because the internet is such an important part of our lives, if your business doesn't have a website, you could be losing money because of it. If you don't have a website and you want to take your business to the next level, don't waste any time establishing your presence on the web.

**NOTE:** If you do not have a website and would like to have one....the Chamber has a new member who is willing to provide a one page website for your business for a nominal fee. There are other options available if you need more than one page. The company offers maintenance for your site too. Contact the Chamber for information.

### FINANCIALS YEAR TO DATE

Current Members:	120
Equity:	\$23,667.06
Assets:	\$25,667.06
Liabilities:	\$ 1,819.00
Revenue:	\$33,552.23
Disbursements:	\$50,091.72
Net Loss:	(\$16,639.39)

*If you would like to advertise your business, please feel free to drop off flyers and business cards at the office. We will be happy to include your flyer with the Blackstone Chamber of Commerce newsletter mailing for \$37.00 per month.*

### Upcoming Chamber Events

- Mar 10 *Networking Luncheon  
Mitchell's Restaurant,  
Blackstone, 12 Noon*
- Mar 18 *Harlem Ambassador Game  
Nottoway High, 7 pm*
- Mar 26 *Chamber Annual Dinner  
Camp Pickett Officers' Club  
5:30 pm*

*The Blackstone Chamber proudly welcomes its three newest members:*

*JTEC Consulting Services, Inc.  
(Web Design, Virtual Assistant, Computer Training)  
1318 Fernleaf Drive  
Richmond, Virginia 23235  
Telephone: 804-272-8246  
Email: [Jackiejones7@verizon.net](mailto:Jackiejones7@verizon.net)  
Website: [jtec-solutions.com](http://jtec-solutions.com)*

*WSVS Radio, AM 800  
Attn: Chris Goin, General Manager  
800 Melody Lane  
Crewe, Virginia  
Email: [wsvs@wsvsam.com](mailto:wsvs@wsvsam.com)  
Website: [www.wsvsam.com](http://www.wsvsam.com)*

*C.S.I. Commonwealth Security & Investigation LLC  
609 Church Street  
Blackstone, Virginia 23824  
434-294-3332  
[commsec1@gmail.com](mailto:commsec1@gmail.com)  
[www.commonwealthsecurityandinvestigation.com](http://www.commonwealthsecurityandinvestigation.com)*

## [March Networking Luncheon](#)

The monthly Chamber networking luncheon is 12 Noon, Wednesday, March 10 at Mitchell's Restaurant in Blackstone. Lunch is \$10 a person; payable by check, cash or invoice. Call the Chamber office by Noon on Monday, March 9 for a reservation. Our guest speaker is from the Community Healthcare Center, South Hill. Hope you can attend and network with other Chamber members.

**Blackstone Chamber of Commerce  
Annual Membership Meeting and Dinner Dance  
Friday, March 26, 2010**

On Friday, **March 26th**, the Blackstone Chamber of Commerce will hold its Annual Membership Meeting and Dinner Dance at the Camp Pickett Officers' Club. This year the meeting has a Hats On! Wear Your Party Hat theme. All attendees are invited and encouraged to wear their favorite party hat. There will be **prizes** for the best, funniest and most unique hats.

To continue the tradition of years past, there will be a silent auction with donations from many of the area Chamber member businesses. **The night will start earlier this year, at 5:30 p.m.**, with passed hors d'oeuvres, an open bar, and an opportunity for all attendees to participate in the silent auction. Another change this year is that silent auction items will be sectioned into groups with bids closing about every 20 minutes for each consecutive group throughout the night. If your business has not yet made a donation to the silent auction please contact Joe McMillian (434-294-3506) or Grace McDonald (434-607-9410). Remember, all donated items are tax deductible, as an advertising expense, for your business.

The business portion of the night will begin at 7:00 p.m. with the chairman's report and the introduction of this year's new board members. The numerous efforts of the board will be reviewed, thus, demonstrating what a busy year it has been. This will be followed by recognition and presentation of the *Business of the Year*, *Business Advocate of the Year*, *Volunteer of the Year*, and *Lifetime Achievement Awards*. Details and the form for nominating a business can be found inside this newsletter and on the website at [www.blackstoneva.com](http://www.blackstoneva.com).

A delicious dinner will be served beginning at 7:30 p.m. and includes a choice of Delmonico Steak or Chicken Cordon Bleu served with a baked potato, garden green salad, rolls and dessert. To continue the fun a **dance will immediately follow dinner**.

This wonderful evening can be enjoyed for only **\$30 per person which includes an open bar**. **Reservations will be accepted until March 19<sup>th</sup>**. You can call the chamber office at 434-292-1677 or email the Chamber at [director@blackstoneva.com](mailto:director@blackstoneva.com) to make your reservation.



Blackstone Chamber of Commerce  
P.O. Box 292  
Blackstone, Virginia 23824

Presorted Standard Bulk Mail  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Permit # 12  
BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA  
23824



## Nominate Businesses for the Blackstone Chamber of Commerce Annual Chamber Awards

It's time to start thinking of local businesses and companies that deserve recognition for their achievements and contributions to the community. The Chamber is accepting nominations for its 2009 Business of the Year, Business Advocate of the Year, and Lifetime Achievement Awards through March 15th and wants your help in finding worthy candidates to be honored. Don't hesitate to nominate more than one business or yourself if you feel you merit consideration for one of these awards.

**Business of the Year**, which will go to a business that will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Staying power, a substantiated history as an established business
- Growth in number of employees: a benchmark to judge the impact of the business on the job market
- Increase in sales and/or unit volume: an indication of continued growth
- Innovativeness of product or service offered: illustrations of the creativity and imagination of the nominee
- Response to adversity: examples of problems faced in the nominee's business and the methods used to solve them

Evidence of contributions by nominee to aid community-oriented projects: through the use of personal time and other resources

**Business Advocate of the Year**, which will go to a business or group that has supported and advanced the interest of the business community, and will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Voluntary efforts beyond business/professional responsibilities to advance the business community
- Effective support within the community for the establishment of new businesses
- Demonstrated efforts to improve conditions in the business community as a whole, note solely for individual personal advancement

Other accomplishments demonstrating the nominee's merit as an effective advocate for business interests

**Lifetime Achievement Award**, which will go to a business or individual (active or retired) that has been in business in the Blackstone area for over 20 years and will be evaluated by the following:

- Demonstrated exemplary commitment to the community above and beyond business contributions
- Service to the Blackstone Chamber of Commerce
- Established ability to be successful in changing times

Advocate for business in the Greater Blackstone area

The Chamber considers any company in the Blackstone area for nomination. Nominees must be current Chamber members in good standing. Winners will receive an engraved plaque at the Annual Meeting and the Chamber will publicize their honors through the media and our website ([www.blackstoneva.com](http://www.blackstoneva.com))



**Nomination Form for Annual Chamber Awards**

**Candidate for:**

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(Business of the Year, Business Advocate of the Year, Lifetime Achievement)

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Business Name

Contact Person

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Address

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Type of Business

Phone Number

With regards to the stated criteria, please give a statement of the qualities and performance which merit the award for the nominee. Also include any other supporting documentation deemed significant by the nominator, including news clips, letters of recommendation, and other evidence of the appropriateness of the nomination.

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(This sheet may be copied for numerous nominations—additional space may also be used)

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Signature of Nominator

Date

(This form must be signed as a condition of nomination)

Please send your completed form to the Chamber office **no later than 5 pm, March 15** via mail to P O Box 295, Blackstone, VA 23824 or email to [director@blackstoneva.com](mailto:director@blackstoneva.com)

For more information or if you need your form picked-up call 434-292-1677