Behind Oklahoma City's Booming Economy, Lessons For Up-And-Coming Cities

Mr. Smith Goes To Yakima

Creating A Prosperous Future For Yakima

President’s Report & Message From The Chair
The December Chamber luncheon, “Incoming Yakima City Council Reception” was the most well attended of the Year! Congratulations to the newly elected City Council members!

Register for the “2015 Yakima Valley Economic Year in Review” Luncheon on February 5th at yakima.org, Regional Labor Economist Donald W. Meech will be our keynote speaker. Plus we’ll have a presentation from Yakima County on the Yakima River Basin water enhancement project.

ON THE COVER
December Larsen Building - Downtown Yakima
Photo by Thane Phelan

Message from the Chair
January 2016
Happy New Year!

I hope your holidays were celebrat-ed with family, friends, and blessings abound! So, put the tree away, take the lights down, but continue stay in the spirit!

President’s Report

Find a place to give all year long, for example, by reading to a child; helping out at the medical clinic at the mission (they need bilingual volunteers badly); Rod’s House; YMCA or YWCA; the Humane Shelter; Veterans and even your Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce!

With the need so great, I’m sure you could find a place for your time and treasure! Our valley needs you to serve….. I can assure you the return on your investment will exceed the capacity of your heart!

We, also, need to support our new City Council as they learn, listen, and make decisions for the greater good. Yes, this will be their time to define themselves as the strong, caring, passionate individuals they are. They will be working for their districts, and the community at large. Their terms will be outlined by their ability to serve all. With pending issues, we need to encourage them to lead with integrity, honor, and selflessness. Huge decisions will be made regarding the Plaza, the Sozo Arena, and the Aquatic Center. These projects need to be fully voiced with no hid-den agendas or political posturing. Choosing a new city manager will be very important to our future and I’m sure these council members will be up to the challenge.

In closing, let’s all work together for a stronger, united community…. thank you in advance for all that you do and will do for the betterment of our Yakima Valley!

Mission Statement: “The Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce is an organization that promotes pride in our diverse communities through positive, active leadership aimed at creating a cohesive, successful business climate in our County.”

www.yakima.org | Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce

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Grown Yakima Grow
As the year-ends, and a new one begins I was reflecting on what has happened around Yakima. As you drive through town the landscape is changing, there are lots of new commercial buildings; the biggest changes I notice are Rainier Square and Tahoma Square. Both have na-tional and regional tenants that the Valley has not seen before, bringing our community new choices and new employment opportunities.

I have also noticed many changes downtown. Being a true downtown Yakima boy, I’ve spent all my life in the heart of the city and I see these changes daily. The next few paragraphs I will really show my age.

The old Harold H. Schultz building is now the new home of Standard Paint, a longtime Yakima Valley family owned business. What a fantastic remodel they have done to this struc-ture, wow! With the move to the new location, this opened up their previous location for the Print Guys to move downtown and continue to upgrade equipment and services for their growing customer base.

Then there’s the “old” Nordstrom building owned by Monty Mills of the Mills Music family. That building is also undergoing a major remodel. It has been a quietly kept secret but has me very excited to see what it will turn into.

Right across the street the Morrier building has been re-finished to attractive office buildings.

Another block down, the Neighbor-hood Health buildings have been re-finished to attractive office buildings.

I also cannot wait to see what the Memorial/Virginia Mason partner-ship does with their new purchase of the huge former ecology building on Yakima Avenue.

All of this is happening in just this short mile along Yakima Avenue. I’m very excited to see what else will take place in our great community in 2016. I love this Valley; it is truly my home and only continues to get better. God bless you all and I wel-come you all into 2016 from our All-America City.

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Find a place to give all year long, for example, by reading to a child; helping out at the medical clinic at the mission (they need bilingual volunteers badly); Rod’s House; YMCA or YWCA; the Humane Shelter; Veterans and even your Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce!

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Memorial’s Legacy Hall: Celebrating 25 years of philanthropy; transforming healthcare for generations to come

As another new year unfolds, so also begins a new chapter for The Memorial Foundation, the nonprofit philanthropic partner of Memorial Family of Services. It is through our community’s unwavering commitment that needed resources have been available to fund today’s healthcare initiatives and tomorrow’s promises with a mix of philanthropic and grants development.

To close out 2015, the Foundation celebrated its silver anniversary: 25 years of responding to community need and stewarding local generosity to improve health and create new models of care for those who live here in the Yakima Valley.

This celebration of community spirit was literally cast in bronze and glass in the form of the new Legacy Hall, a special place within Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital. Legacy Hall was designed to honor our community of donors, partners, and volunteers who have steadfastly supported the Foundation’s mission and Memorial Family of Services programs through those first 25 years. Many of the services provided to the residents of Yakima would not be possible without the support provided through the Foundation.

The story of this work—with the goal of building and stewarding local generosity to improve health and create new models of care for those who live here in the Yakima Valley—is easily told by the numbers:

- $54 million has been raised to support health programs and services.
- $17.5 million has been raised for capital improvements including at North Star Lodge Cancer Center, Cottage in the Meadow and Children’s Village.
- Over $23 million has been raised in federal and state grants secured for community health programs and services.
- Development of new models of care have resulted in 30,000 donors have contributed; support that remains local. They have made hope, care, compassion and wellness possible for many thousands of people in our community.

But that was just the first 25 years. Work continues. And The Memorial Foundation remains indebted to our community, to those who have given and continue to give of their time, talent and treasure in support of vital healthcare programs and services across the Memorial Family of Services. Healthy Yakima.

Since The Memorial Foundation began in 1990, more than 18,000 donors have contributed; support that remains local. They have made hope, care, compassion and wellness possible for many thousands of people in our community.

The latest pledges to the Yakima Central Plaza project as envisioned by Gustafson range from $100 to $1 million. Additional pledges are expected to be announced in the near future.

The latest round of pledges shows that business leaders and community members see the Central Plaza as a valuable economic development tool and a key piece of the ongoing revitalization of Downtown Yakima,” said City of Yakima Economic Development Manager Sean Hawkins. “Momentum has been building over the last few months and now we’re seeing real results,” said Hawkins. “I’m confident we’ll reach the goal of $7 million in private contributions.”

The most recent pledges bring the current private contribution total to $3,938,800. The City of Yakima has budgeted $2.8 million in 2016 to complete the first phase of the project. The City is expecting to pay $7 million of the cost of the $14 million project with the private sector matching the City’s portion.

The single largest private pledge made since the Plath family announced its pledge comes from Peggy Lewis at $1 million. Lewis’ husband Walter and his brothers Lester and Victor founded Yakima Pine Products in the 1950s, which after merging with another company, was sold to worldwide building products manufacturer JELD-WEN, Inc. in 1990.

Both B.T. Loftus Ranches, a major hop producer for craft breweries, and John I. Haas, Inc., the leading supplier of hops in North America, have each pledged $250,000 to the plaza project. Poppoff, Inc., a Yakima concrete firm, has donated $100,000.

The balance of the current nearly $4 million in private pledges is made up of contributions in varying amounts from 18 other individuals or businesses.

Pledges to the Downtown Central Plaza Project can be made online at yakimacentralplaza.com or by contacting Sean Hawkins by phone at 575-6274 or by e-mail at sean.hawkins@yakimaw.gov.
With sixteen school districts, a Technical Skills Center, Yakima Valley Community College, Heritage University, Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences, Perry Tech, and a strong collaboration with both CWU and WSU for four year degrees available locally; we quickly envisioned our three boys, Adam, Marshall, and Andre growing up here and going through the K-12 system and pursuing their post-secondary education in whatever field they chose. Whether it’s vocational and skills based training or a four year degree, they will be able to do it right here.

Yakima is in control of its destiny

On the first trip our family made to Yakima to really look at the community I noticed a small banner on the side of the road just after we took the downtown exit. It was a simple sign with only three words; “All American City.” I immediately knew that this is a community that takes charge of its future. It isn’t afraid to own up to its faults and shortcomings and then pro actively come together and do something about it.

No city is perfect, and that’s okay. However, in a world where it is increasingly even easier to point the finger at the state, or the federal government for why things aren’t the way every one would like them to be locally, it is encouraging to see accountability, responsibility, and community leadership. Not everyone knows what that little “All American City” banner signifies. For my family though, it signified that this is a community we want to be a part of.

Yakima is a growing and dynamic community

The tenth largest city in Washington State and the third largest city in Eastern Washington is Yakima. Of the more than 285 cities and towns across the state, sixty-five percent of them grew less than 10% in total population over the past ten years. Conversely, ten of the fourteen cities in Yakima County saw growth of ten percent or greater over the same time period. This is a place that is attracting people and at the same time it is offering those people a lot of activities, events and programs to keep everyone connected and involved. There is the fair, the Y, events at the Convention Center, the symphony, theatre, sporting events, cultural festivals, concerts, and more. These activities are spread throughout the entire County. What a great place to live and learn from all the area has to offer.

Yakima County equals outdoor recreation

Its location against the Cascade Mountains gives quick access to multiple national forests and wilderness areas including the Goat Rocks Wilderness, Mount Adams Wilderness, and William O. Douglas Wilderness. These areas along with the Snoqualmie, Gifford Pinchot, and Wenatchee National Forests provide easy access for hiking, backpacking, paddleboarding, skiing, camping, and whole host of other outdoor activities. The Tieton, American, Bumping, Naches, and Yakima Rivers makes it a great place for fly-fishing, rafting, kayaking, and canoeing. The many lakes and reservoirs offer opportunities for boating, water skiing, and more.

In short, Yakima County has all of the qualities that my family and I appreciate in a community. We are so excited to be here and to call the Valley our home. We look forward to making new friends and becoming involved in all the area has to offer.
Oklahoma City is something of an enigma. Located in the Great Plains, the city doesn't benefit from a temperate climate or a lush natural landscape. Even so, young people are continuing to move there in large numbers, a trend that has only accelerated over the past decade. What’s attracting them? Depending on whom you ask, you’ll likely hear any range of responses. It has a nice feel. It’s laid back without being sleepy. It’s the perfect compromise between the butility of places like Chicago and the placidity of smaller towns like Tulsa.

Anecdotal tales notwithstanding, there are some hard facts that are undeniable. Between 2004 and 2014, Oklahoma City’s population expanded by roughly 50,000. Yet unlike other cities that grew at a steady clip, the city’s growth was not limited to traditional demographic windows. The most noticeable demographic shift has been the entry of 25- to 34-year-olds, a factor that has had a compounding effect, drawing more young, educated residents hoping to take advantage of the metro area’s robust job market. (Favorable state and city regulations have also helped.)

For links to the original story and links to stories referenced in this story scan the QR code to the left with your smart phone or tablet or use the link below.

A committee of employees from Legends Casino undertakes the daunting task each year of evaluating over 700 grant applications for the Yakama Cares fund. As the committee gears up for the 2016 review, we visited with three of the 2015 recipients to learn more about their impact on the Yakima valley.

We started with a first-time recipient—Lieutenant Shawn Boyle from Yakima SWAT. He learned about the opportunity from the canine unit last year, and now, he and his team are anxiously awaiting delivery of the ballistic shields that they were able to purchase with their grant. These hand-held shields will be used for extra protection of both law enforcement personnel and our citizens during a rescue or armed situation. “We review our needs and evaluate what we can purchase with our budget,” noted Lieutenant Boyle, “Then, we determine what will help not only our department but patrol and other agencies.”

His department will apply for a grant again in 2016, and he recommends that others in the law enforcement community consider applying as well. “With limited budgets, these grants are a way to subsidize our efforts,” explained Shawn, “We greatly appreciate that Legends is willing to partner with the law enforcement community.”

North Star Lodge and Children’s Village have proven repeatedly that they’re up for the challenge.

North Star Lodge receives a grant for the cancer patient’s travel fund. According to Ann Caffery, “Our social worker, Megan, works with patients to use the funds to the best advantage with people of the highest need, and still, funding is flying out the door. We’re in the midst of receiving 700 new patients in 6 weeks due to the closure of a wonderful cancer practice in town, and we’re helping people who struggle to get to those appointments.”

North Star Lodge has received the Yakama Cares fund grant several years in a row, and their request is not only for the same program each year but for more. Ms. Caffery shared, “We tend to stay with the same request because the need is relatively endless, and we’ve noticed that Legends does not move away from need. We see over 1,000 patients each week for cancer care.”

North Star Lodge and others express many of the same recommendations for new applicants, and the committee wholeheartedly agrees with their assessments:

• Determine the biggest need you can address for our community.
• How will you help alleviate the most suffering?
• How will you work with the casino to create a lasting partnership that benefits the people in the valley?

The committee began accepting applications on January 1st for the 2016 grant cycle, and the grant cycle closes on March 31, 2016. Please encourage non-profit organizations making a difference in our community to apply this year!
Empowering children and families to achieve lifelong success is the mission of Community Resource Group (CRG). CRG accomplishes this mission by contracting with the State of Washington Department of Children and Family Services as a Child Placing Agency (CPA) to license foster homes and place children in need of care in those homes; and by providing professional staff to work with licensed foster families and children & youth placed in CRG foster homes.

CRG is licensed to work with children and youth from 0-18 years of age and includes Behavior Rehabilitation Services (BRS) and for non-BRS foster children. BRS is a temporary intensive wraparound support and treatment program for youth with extreme, high level service needs used to safely stabilize youth and assist in achieving a permanent plan or a less intensive service. The desired outcomes for this service are to increase the child’s behavioral stability, school stability, placement stability and potential to reach permanency. A major focus is to develop necessary supports which would allow the child to maintain or develop a permanent family connection and to reside in his/her own community in an identified permanent resource.

Non-BRS children are often not able to remain in their family home due to an unsafe environment, or risky parenting practices by the adults in their home. Families that have more than one child and younger children are usually placed in this level of care. This allows time for the parents to work in collaboration with Social Workers and other professionals towards the correcting of issues and behaviors that led to the separation of the family and placement of their children in foster care. Reunification of the family is the priority; however there may be times when it is determined that reunification is not in the best interest of the child. In the case a child or children are not returned, they may become available for adoption.

CRG is currently serving an average of 16 non-BRS youth and 30-BRS Youth. BRS youth have needs that are related to various mental health challenges such as aggression, depression, various types of acting out, alcohol and drug abuse/dependence, poor peer relations, and deficiencies in the arenas of social, work and coping skills as well as issues of self esteem.

In addition, the agency started with eight foster homes in Yakima County and has expanded services to Chelan/Douglass Counties; more than doubling the number of foster homes previously licensed. All of our foster parents receive training to become Therapeutic Foster homes so they have the skills to work with BRS children & youth. CRG staff and Foster Parents work closely together to insure the needs of the children and youth are being met by developing and implementing appropriate long and short range goals.

In addition to the many services we provide, the agency also realizes the importance of awarding and recognizing individuals and families in a variety of ways. Each foster child receives a gift, card and cake for their birthdays; activities such as participation in the Seattle Mariners’ Family Day and Yakima Pippins & Wenatchee Applesox Non-profit Nights; end of Summer BBQ for all of the foster families; and Christmas parties, supported by local businesses and individuals, in Yakima and Wenatchee complete with gifts for every child. CRG is fully vested and passionate about all of the families, foster children & youth that we serve and will continue to work hard on behalf of foster children in our community.

Community Resource Group opens new facility August 2015 with Chamber Ribbon Cutting and Open House

Community Health of Central Washington
Highland Clinic ribbon-cutting on Dec. 2nd at 915 Wisconsin Ave, Tieton. Pictured: Dr. Maria Ferkovich – Clinical Site Director; Dr. Dale Mapes – CEO; Elizabeth Herres Miller – Board Chair, Judy O’Neal – RN COO, Juan Figuera – Director of Environmental Health, Claudia Rojas – Medical Assistant, Stan Hall – Mayor of Tieton, (behind the mayor, Mireya Galvez – RN, Clinic Manager)

Northwest Harvest has announced their Central Washington Advisory Committee members for the 2016 year. Sharon Allen ESID 105, Crystal Bass Confederated Tribes & Bands of the Yakama Nation, Mel Brink HomeStreet Bank, Patty Dion Community Volunteer, Cris Hales Tree Top, Greg Knoebel US Bank, Ignacio Marquez WA State Dept. of Agriculture, Keith Mathews First Fruits Marketing of WA., Michael Rollinger Rollinger Transport Solutions/Gilmer Logistics and Jennifer Tangerman of Community Health of Central Washington. This committee works under the direction of Sheri Bissell, Northwest Harvest Community Engagements and the two Yakima Board of Directors, Kay Basset Heritage University and Naomi Lule First Fruits Marketing of WA.

Community Resource Group opens new facility August 2015 with Chamber Ribbon Cutting and Open House

 Acquisition Expands Hayden Homes in 2 new Cities, 10 new Neighborhoods

A new homebuilder is entering the Yakima market, but the company has deep roots throughout the four state Northwest Region. Hayden Homes LLC, recently acquired 325 lots from Sullivan Rowell Homes as it phases out of the homebuilding business. This expands Hayden Homes’ operation to the city of Yakima (Yakima Ridge and Washington Heights communities) and to the city of Ellensburg (Greenfield Estates).

This lot acquisition and another

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Chamber Members who renewed their Memberships in October & November 2015
Please support these businesses that support your Chamber!

Members for 1-4 Years:
- Absolute Comfort Technology – 1 Year
- Friendly Automotive & Tires – 1 Year
- Gray & Osborne Inc. – 1 Year
- Hyperbaric Centers of Washington – 1 Year
- The Yoga Practice – 1 Year
- Westside Pizza – 1 Year

Assurance Healthcare and Counseling Center – 2 Years
Inklings Bookshop – 2 Years
Law Office Sonia Rodriguez True – 2 Years

Members for 5-9 Years:
- Orchard-Rite, Ltd. – 18 Year
- 3 W Trucking – 18 Years
- Yakama Nation Legends Casino – 17 Years
- Sound Mart Satellite TV – 17 Years

Members for 10-14 Years:
- Columbia Asphalt & Irrigation Co., Inc. – 17 Years
- Glennmor Green Apartments – 16 Years
- AAA Washington – 17 Years

Members for 15-19 Years:
- Advanced Digital Imaging – 15 Years
- Camp Prime Time– 15 Years
- URM Cash and Carry – 15 Years
- Bruner Painting, Inc. – 16 Years

Members for 20-29 Years:
- Triumph Treatment Services – 21 Years
- Central Washington Family Clinic – 23 Years
- Community Health of Central Washington – 23 Years
- Design Service Corporation – 25 Years
- Century Link Communications – 26 Years
- Valley Marine, Inc. – 28 Years

Members for 30-39 Years:
- DVIS – Division of Vocational Rehabilitation – 30 Years
- Gray Surveying & Engineering, Inc. – 31 Years
- OIC of Washington – 31 Years
- United Business Machines of Washington – 32 Years
- Yakima Valley Museum & Historical Association – 32 Years
- Stephens Metal Products, Inc. – 37 Years

Members for 40-49 Years:
- All Seasons Heating & Air Conditioning – 40 Years
- Dunbar Jewelers – 46 Years
- Smith, Phillips & DiPietro Advertising – 48 Years

Members for 50-59 Years:
- Clifton/Larson/Allen – 50 Years
- Smith Law Firm – 52 Years
- KINDO TV – 56 Years

Members for 60-79 Years:
- Borrowe Tractor, Inc. – 70 Years

Members for 80-89 Years:
- Town Square Media – 80 Years

We are pleased to announce the following new businesses have joined the Chamber during the months of October and November

- AS Plumbing & Water Heaters
  (509) 901-0892
  A5Plumbingandhe@ymail.com
- Better All Auto Sales
  914 S. 1st Street
  Yakima, WA 98901
  (509) 452-7780
  www.betterall.com
- Central Washington RV
  913 S. 18th St.
  Yakima, WA 98901
  (509) 248-2978
  www.cwrvcenter.com

We are pleased to announce the following new businesses have joined the Chamber during the months of October and November

- Kyoto
  Steakhouse
  2405 West Washington Ave
  Yakima, WA 98903
  (509) 971-1919
  www.kyotorestaurant.com

Meet the new owners of The Little Soapmaker, downtown at 302 W. Yakima Ave. Find out more about them online at www.thelittlesoapmaker.com