

# The Chamber

of COMMERCE | BLACKSTONE VIRGINIA

April 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.

**Office Hours:**

**Beginning May 3, 2010**

**Monday—closed**

**Tuesday – Friday 9:00 - 4:30**

**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**

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

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 \$30.00 per month.



## In the SPOTLIGHT: Business of the Month

### Clay's Garden Center, Inc.

1301 South Main Street, Blackstone, VA 23824

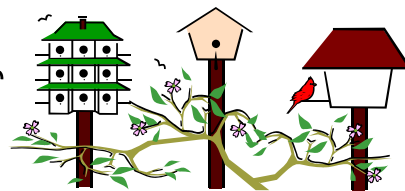
Phone 434-292-5603

Owned and Operated by Billy & Darlene Nash

*Services offered since 1995*

Clay's Garden Center is located on South Main Street and is a full service provider of all your horticultural and gift needs. They carry an assortment of shrubs, trees, fruit trees, perennials, annuals, vegetable plants, seeds, houseplants, poinsettias, Christmas wreaths, garlands and yard decor. The center also has an assortment of fresh fruits and vegetables; made to order fruit gift baskets, as well as old-fashioned candies, nuts, jellies, jams, fresh

eggs, Edwards and side meat. is a one-stop shop-center. Choose such as Willow Tree



country hams, bacon Clay's Garden Center ping garden and gift from many gift items Angel products, Yan-

kee Candles, nostalgic tins, decorative flags, and concrete statuary. Ask the experts questions regarding seeding, fertilizing, pruning and mulching. Landscaping services are also available. Come by today and enjoy shopping in a down-home, friendly atmosphere. Spring is here ~ Clay's is NOW fully stocked for all your planting needs!

**Clay's Garden Center will be having a SPRING FEST on Saturday, April 17<sup>th</sup> from 10 – 4 with seminars, food samples and expert advice. Something for the children too.**

Visit us at our website [www.claysgarden.com](http://www.claysgarden.com)

*Message from the Executive Director*

Spring is here and all is bright and beautiful! For me there is no prettier time of the year...a time of rebirth, a time of great expectation of the good things to come.

The last few months have been most busy in the Chamber office. I think my feet are finally feeling like they are on firmer ground. I am hoping to have more time to settle into the job of getting to know each of you better and have the opportunity to drop by your business and say hello. I have your new 2010 Chamber window decals that I need to get to you.

The Harlem Ambassador event is over and I can say it was a huge success. It was a pleasure for the Chamber to bring this night of wholesome and quality entertainment to Blackstone and the community. Our team the Blackstone Chamber Blazers is pictured below. A big thank you players!

To the Chamber member businesses who sponsored this event a HUGE THANK YOU! Events like this required sponsors and in return the Chamber proudly promoted your business through the print media, radio, marquees, posters, flyers, banners and the Chamber website.

Additionally, the Chamber just had its Annual Dinner at Fort Pickett Officers' Club. The theme, "Hat's On", was delightful with a wide array of hats being worn. Three new board members were elected for a three year term. Those elected were Kimberly Broughton, Branch Manager of Citizens Band and Trust Company; Mitch Lynn, VP of Credit Administration, Citizens Community Bank in South Hill and Bryan Wright, owner of Wright Automotive Supply.

The Annual Chamber Award recipients were: "**Business of the Year**", double winners; Clay's Garden Center (Billy and Darlene Nash), CAWS (Cheryl Sprinkle-Wilson); "**Business Advocate of the Year**", Joyce Taylor, Administrator at Heritage Hall; "**Volunteer of the Year**", Grace McDonald, owner of Main Street Framing, LLC and "**Life Time Achievement Award**", Wade Hamner, former long-time associate with Hamner and McMillian Funeral Home.

Mark your calendar for the Legislative/Governmental Breakfast and Forum on April 28, 7:30 a.m. at VUMAC. All candidates, running for public office in the May town election, will be invited and you are encouraged to attend and ask questions. The candidates will respond. This is the chance for all of us to get to know our candidates who are running for election and re-election.

If you have comments about this newsletter or ideas for a business training session or workshop, please call the chamber office and let me know. I will do all I can to make it happen for you, our members. Additionally, I would enjoy hearing from you.

*Brenda*



## 8 Winning Tips to Make Your Financial Plan Profitable

From [C.J. Hayden](#)

To be successful in business, you need to make a financial plan and check it against the facts on a monthly basis, then take immediate action to correct any problems. Here are 8 steps you should take:

- **Create a Financial Plan:** Estimate how much revenue you expect to bring in each month, and project what your expenses will be. If you need it, get help from business planning books, software, or an accountant.
- **Review the Plan Monthly:** Even if time is taken to prepare a financial plan with profit and loss projections, it often sits in a desk drawer. It's not enough to have a plan -- you have to review it regularly.
- **Lost Profits Can't be Recovered:** When comparing your projections to reality and finding earnings too low or expenses too high, the conclusion often is, "I'll make it up later." The problem is that you really can't make it up later; every month profits are too low is a month that is gone forever.
- **Make Adjustments Right Away:** If revenues are lower than expected, increase efforts in sales and marketing or look for ways to increase your rates. If overhead costs are too high, find ways to cut back. There are other businesses like yours around. What is their secret for operating profitably?
- **Think Before you Spend:** When considering any new business expense, including marketing and sales activities, evaluate the increased earnings you expect to bring in against its cost before you proceed to make a purchase. You can often increase your profitability simply by delaying expenses to a later month, quarter, or year.
- **Don't be Afraid to Hire:** Retailers and restaurateurs wouldn't consider operating without employees, but many service businesses limit themselves by being understaffed. Almost any business can benefit from hired or contracted help. You can better use your talents for generating revenue than for running errands and filing.
- **Pay Yourself a Salary:** If you are incorporated, you may already be doing this. If not, allocate an amount to owner's compensation on a monthly basis. Each month that your business meets its profitability goal, pay yourself the full amount. When you miss your target, dock your "pay" and when you exceed it, pay yourself a "bonus." Writing yourself a monthly paycheck will give you a strong incentive to keep your business profitable.

### ***FINANCIALS YEAR TO DATE 2/28/10***

**Current Members: 122**

<b>Assets</b>	<b>\$21,826.56</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 2,430.04</b>
<b>Equity</b>	<b>\$19,396.52</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>\$35,731.08</b>
<b>Disbursements</b>	<b>\$56,722.01</b>
<b>Net Loss (YTD)</b>	<b>-\$20,990.93</b>

- **It's About Profit, Not Revenue:** It doesn't matter how many thousands of dollars you are bringing in each month if your expenses are almost as high, or higher. Many high-revenue businesses have gone under for this very reason -- don't be one of them.

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

Richard C. Keller, Individual Membership

P.O. Box 401

Blackstone, Va. 23824

434-22-7716

[richardkeller@circlesales.com](mailto:richardkeller@circlesales.com)

Kingdom Community Outreach Ministries

Attn: Ronnie and Barbara Smith, Pastors

P.O. Box 489

Blackstone, Va. 23824

[kcompastors@yahoo.com](mailto:kcompastors@yahoo.com)

### ***April Networking Luncheon***

The monthly Chamber networking luncheon is 12 Noon, April 14 at VUMAC in Blackstone. Lunch is \$10 a person; payable by check, cash or invoice. Call the Chamber office by Noon on Monday, April 12 for a reservation. Our guest speaker is Chamber member Chris Goin, General Manager of WSVS Radio 800 in Crewe. Chris will be speaking on the history of WSVS, the museum he is creating at the historical station and on his work with the Civil War Trail. Hope you can attend and network with other Chamber members.

### ***Upcoming Chamber Events***

**Apr 14 Networking Luncheon**  
12 Noon, VUMAC

**Apr 28 Legislative Breakfast**  
7:30 a.m., VUMAC  
Q & A session for local  
candidates running for election

**May 13 Post Strategic Planning Retreat**  
VUMAC, 6:00-9:00 p.m.



“Professional Security Services at Reasonable Prices”

**Attention Blackstone area businesses!**

We now offer process service and courier service.

Do you need to get important papers in someone’s hand?

We can find them.

Call now!

**434-294-3332 or toll free 877-294-4API**

**[www.commonwealthsecurityandinvestigation.com](http://www.commonwealthsecurityandinvestigation.com)**

**Private Investigation- Armed/Unarmed Security- Process Service**



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

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