

It's Been a Great Ride!

By BJ Wiberg, President/CEO, CCEO



March 13, 2009 marks the end of an incredible nineteen-year chamber career for me that was preceded by many years as a chamber volunteer. In 1990 I began cutting my teeth as a chamber professional at the Chamber of Commerce of Sandusky County under the mentorship of my peer and great friend Lee Luff who at that time was the President/CEO of the Findlay-Hancock County Chamber. (Currently Lee is the President/CEO at the Anderson Chamber in SC.) He encouraged me to become an active member of CCEO which in turn opened the door to an invaluable network of other peers and professional growth that has continued to this day.

In 1996 I joined the staff of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce as the Director of the Ohio Small Business Council (OSBC), a division of the Ohio Chamber. My chief responsibilities were to be a strong advocate for Ohio's small businesses and building relations with local chambers. Then, in 2003, the leaders of CCEO offered me the opportunity to become its first paid professional staff person since the organization's founding in 1916. What a great way to contribute to a profession from which I had gained so much!

To you, my professional peers, incredible business partners that continue to support and invest in our association, and the many conference speakers that have become my friends over the years, I say THANK YOU!

Although I am retiring from the chamber profession, I look forward to crossing paths with many of you again as I plan to offer my services as a strategic planning facilitator and conduct special projects for chambers, along with other opportunities to advance chamber management, creating a conducive business environment and enhance the cause of free enterprise.

Effective March 31, my new mailing address will be 726 Vista Place, The Villages, FL 32159. My phone number will remain the same (614.906.8080) and until I can establish a new e-mail address you can reach me at bwiberg.cceo@ohiochamber.com.

Lastly I want you to welcome my successor and colleague, Vicki Lowery, who will take over the management reigns of CCEO on March 13. You will find her to be an energetic leader who shares my conviction that strong and effective chambers are the key to a community's vibrancy and economic vitality. I encourage you to offer her your skills and talents to advance CCEO's vision and mission. You can reach her at 937.554.9534 or at vlowery.cceo@ohiochamber.com.

Thanks for the great ride!

Winter Conference Wrap-Up

If you were not among the 131 attendees, you really missed out. The fine venue (Crowne Plaza Columbus North), the on-point program with informative speakers, combined with lots of peer-to-peer networking and great exhibitors prompted many complementary comments from the participants. A long-time member who has attended every conference for many years said *"This was the best conference ever!"*

You can find the PowerPoint presentations that were made by



many speakers posted on our website, along with other resource information from the conference. More will be posted over the next few weeks, so check for announcements listed under Recent Posts & Updates on the home page frequently.

Kudos to the following members of the conference committee for their contributions in making this event such a great success: Dan Yahraus, *Chair* (Bryan), Joel Miller, *MC* (Napoleon/Henry County), Kathryn Paugh, *Logistics & Food* (Worthington), Leslee Blake, *Logistics & Food* (Gahanna), Roger Blackburn, *Hospitality* (Fayette County), Marla Akridge, *Check-In Registration Table* (Ashland), Doug Johnson, *Sponsors/Exhibitors Relations* (Twinsburg), Cathy Hutton, *Sponsors/Exhibitors & First Timers' Relations* (Northmont), Amy Nelson, *First Timers' Relations* (Tuscarawas County), Melissa Krebs, *Speaker Relations* (Brunswick), Mary Jo Bockrath, *Silent Auction* (Ottawa) and Joe Kleinknecht, *Silent Auction* (Galion).



Achievements & Awards

A Winter Conference highlight was the recognition of members that have served the CCEO and chamber profession with distinction. Congratulations and thanks to:



Outgoing Chair **Mark V'Soske** (Toledo Regional) presenting the gavel to Incoming Chair **Jed Metzger** (Lima-Allen County)



Receiving their CCEO Accredited Professional pins: **Doug Johnson**, CCEO-AP (Twinsburg), **Jan Hills**, CCEOP-AP3 (Reynoldsburg), and **Cindy Girdler**, CCEO-AP3 (Madison-Perry Area).

[Here's the link](#) to find out what you need to do to be eligible to receive this distinction at the 2010 Winter Conference.

CCEO Professionals of the Year



Marvin Jones (Chillicothe-Ross), Large Chamber Professional of the Year
Jan Hills (Reynoldsburg), Small Chamber Professional of the Year.

In Case You Missed It.....

We have added some new information on the [website](#) under “Recent Posts & Updates” that you might find interesting and relevant.

- **Card Check.** For the latest updates on this critical issue. (Posted 3/9/09)
- **2009 Winter Conference Materials & Resources:** (Posted 2/22/09)
 - Speakers' PowerPoint Presentations
 - Speakers' Bios
 - Conference Program
- **2009 Board of Directors** (Posted 3/11/09)
- **CCEO Governance Structure** (Posted 1/5/09)
- **2009 CCEO Program of Works** (Posted 1/5/09)
- **Past CCEO Board Chairs** (Posted 1/5/09)
- **Records Retention Guidelines** (Posted 12/7/08)
- **Ten Responsibilities of a Chamber Board** (Posted 12/7/08)
- **The Weakest Links on a Chamber Board** (Posted 12/7/08)

Coming In July ... Not To Be Missed!

2009 Summer Networking Conference – July 16-17, 2009 at Mohican Resort & Conference Center near Loudonville. Put these dates on your calendar now. For a sampling of the type of program and activities that take place at our Summer Networking Conferences, go to the following link on our website: <http://www.cceohio.com/Summer-Conference-2008.120.0.html>. (Be sure to check out the Photo Gallery that's linked to that page!)

E-Mail Etiquette

Useful Tips & Hints

Source: ChamberExpress

Learning “email etiquette” can provide you with that all important competitive edge. Also, by educating your staff as to what can and cannot be said in an email, you can protect your chamber from awkward liability issues. Here are 10 top tips for using email professionally and efficiently.

- a. Be concise and to the point.** A long e-mail can be discouraging to read.
- b. Answer all questions, and pre-empt further questions.** Not answering all the questions in the original email will result in further emails, which will waste your customer's time and cause frustration. Also, if you pre-empt further questions, your customer will be impressed with your efficient customer service.
- c. Use proper spelling, grammar and punctuation.** Improper spelling, grammar and punctuation give a bad impression of your chamber. Correct usage also is important for conveying the message properly.
- d. Make it personal.** For this reason, auto replies are usually not very effective; however, templates can be used effectively in this way (*see next tip*).
- e. Use templates for frequently used responses.** Save the response text to frequently asked questions as response templates and paste these into your message when you need them.
- f. Answer swiftly.** Customers send an e-mail to receive a quick response, therefore, e-mails should be replied to within at least 24 hours. If the email is complicated, send an email saying you have received it and will get back to them as soon as possible.
- g. Do not attach unnecessary files.** Sending large attachments can annoy customers and even bring down their email system. Wherever possible, compress attachments and only send attachments when they're productive.
- h. Use proper structure and layout.** Use short paragraphs and blank lines between each paragraph. When making points, number them or mark each point as separate.
- i. Do not overuse the high priority option.** If you overuse the high priority option, it will lose its function when you really need it.
- j. Do not write in CAPITALS.** IF YOU WRITE IN CAPITALS IT SEEMS AS IF YOU ARE SHOUTING.

“Act as if it were impossible to fail.”

-Dorethea Brande