

THE CHAMBER

ANNUAL REPORT

2016

The Chamber
Hailey, The Wood River valley

ABSTRACT

The Chamber is pleased to present this annual report for fiscal year 2016 (October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016).

**The Chamber
2016 Annual Report
October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016**

Board of Directors

Twelve members served as directors throughout fiscal year 2015 (October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016).

Richard E. Stahl – President	John Blackman
Chris Roebuck –Vice President	Patrick Buchanan
Vaelene Bryant – Secretary	Mike McKenna
Sandi Viau – Treasurer	Sheri Thomas
Debra Hall – Past President	Stacey Doby
Jon Volyn	Erin Crawford
Esmeralda Palomera	John Blackman

Seventeen members are currently serving as directors for Fiscal year 2017.

Richard E. Stahl – President	Esmeralda Palomera
Jon Volyn –Vice President	John Blackman
Stacey Doby – Secretary	Mike McKenna
Sandi Viau – Treasurer	Vaelene Bryant
Debra Hall – Past President	Patrick Buchanan
Adam Marcroft	Jane Drussel
Andy Hawley	Chris Roebuck
Todd Hunter	Carl Johnston
Stefany Mahoney	

Name Change

Following goals developed during its strategic planning retreat, The Hailey Chamber of Commerce took official action during the year to change its name to The Chamber – Hailey, the Wood River Valley. This valley-wide approach will allow The Chamber to grow membership while serving the entire business community in the Wood River Valley.

Strategic Planning

The Chamber held its annual planning retreat on April 27, 2016 at the Community campus. Participants included The Chamber board of directors and staff and invited guests. Board President, Richard Stahl facilitated the group in answering the four questions.

1. *How can the Chamber better collaborate with local economic development initiatives and with organizations such as Visit Sun Valley and Sun Valley Economic Development?*
Representatives from Sun Valley Economic Development and Visit Sun Valley joined Chamber board members in addressing the first question. The top two actions to address the economic question were, form joint policy positions on public issues and understand the partner's focus or mission.
2. *In what way can the Chamber improve its image throughout the community?*
Board members listed develop a new logo and develop a regional image as their top actions.
3. *Name three things which the Chamber can do to promote business other than event promotion?*
Board members decided that they needed to survey members, develop Instagram as a new social media platform and improve connections between the Chamber and the Small Business Administration and the Small Business Development Center.
4. *How can the Chamber build our internal capacity to better serve our members and community?*
The Chamber decided to offer incentives to Chamber Ambassadors and to work to involve more non-board members in Chamber activities.
5. *Chamber stake-holders were asked to select the top community issues for attention by the Chamber.*
Community housing, Hailey Town Square and providing public information on community issues were the top ideas selected by participants.

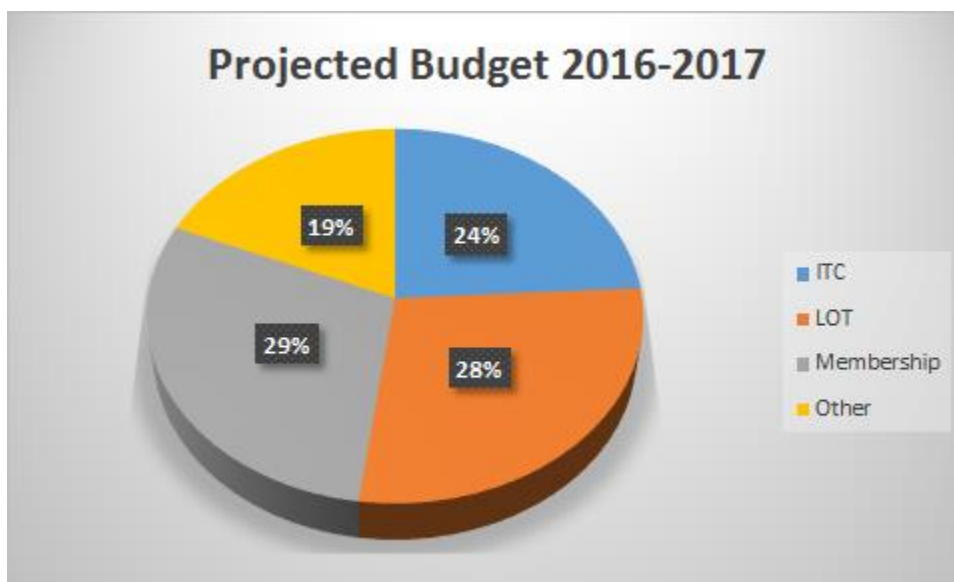
Membership Directory/Community Guide

The Chamber launched a major new initiative during the year - development of a glossy multipage directory of members of the Hailey Chamber of Commerce and a guide to Hailey and the Wood River Valley. After evaluating several proposals, the Chamber contracted with Centerlyne Graphics from Bellevue to develop the publication. This publication launched on May 19, 2016 and has been used to fulfill thousands of requests for information received by the Chamber this year. Distribution of the community guide remains focused on the visitors before they get to the Valley and at locations where visitors naturally congregate; the airport, property management and real estate offices and at the Welcome Centers in Ketchum and Hailey. A digital version is posted on the Chamber website. The second edition of the guide is planned for release in May 2017.

Financial Status

Expenses for 2016 totaled \$177,771, versus a budget of \$205,581. Projected expenses for 2017 are \$232,140.

Income for The Chamber comes from four primary sources; membership dues (29%), City of Hailey Local Option Tax (28%), Idaho Travel Council (24%), and sponsorships and fundraising (19%). Projected revenue for 2017 includes \$68,000 in membership dues, a \$65,000 contract from City of Hailey to provide visitor services and advertising support, a \$56,020 grant from Idaho Travel Council and \$43,120 in sponsorships and fundraising.



Staff

Staff serving The Chamber during the fiscal year include: Pat Bowton, Operations Director; Jeff Bacon, Membership Director; Julie Gates, Visitor Services.

Staff support is augmented through many hours of volunteer activity. The Ambassadors Program volunteers assist with events such as Wake-Up Hailey, Business after Hours, and in staffing the Welcome Center.

Visitor Services

The Chamber staff provides visitors services both in person at The Welcome Center and through phone, email, and internet. As of the end of the fourth quarter, The Chamber had provided visitors support services to a total of 1,272 individuals at The Welcome Center and 956 individuals through phone inquiries. Relocation/information packets were sent to more than 4,683 individuals. This included providing maps, directions, events information, referrals to local businesses, and relocation information.

Website/Social Media

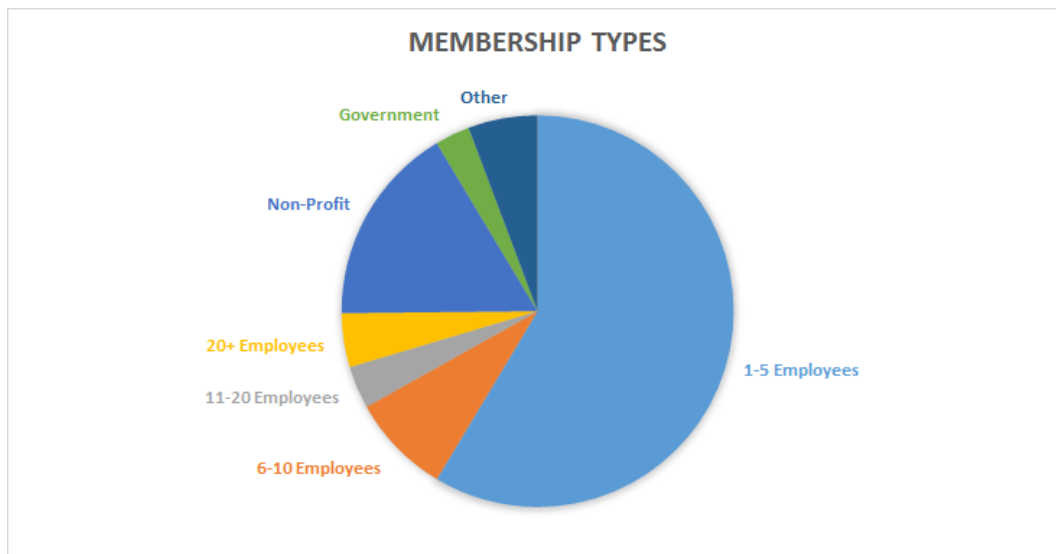
Our website www.haileyidaho.com, you can find info about The Chamber, events happening in the Wood River Valley and business resources, just to name a few. The Chamber website had 229,280 unique visitors. We currently have Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Facebook posts totaled 2,204, our total reach to unique users was 815,295 with 4,135 followers.

Community Support and Partnerships

The Chamber is involved with multiple projects related to improving the local economy and community: Fly Sun Valley Alliance, Sun Valley Economic Development, Visit Sun Valley, Rotarun, Do the Right Thing and the City of Hailey. The Chamber is represented on the boards and committees of these organizations and actively participates in cooperative strategies to grow the economy of Blaine County.

Membership

As of the end of September 2016 the Chamber had 302 members, a gain of 30 from previous year. The majority of Chamber members are small businesses employing five or fewer employees.



Staff promoted the many benefits of The Chamber’s membership throughout the year: advertising on The Chamber’s website (www.haileyidaho.com), Hot Deals for business to business, event promotion, Facebook and e-blast. KECH, KSKI & KYZK, Locally owned radio and The Weekly Sun and KMVT has extended member discounts.

Chamber Members continue to enjoy Wake up Hailey and Business after Hours. During fiscal 2016 11 Wake up Hailey and 11 Business after Hours events were held. Our first Ketchum Business after Hours was held in July. Average attendance at Wake up Hailey was 35 and 120 at Business after Hours.

The Chamber continues its partnership with “The Weekly Sun” in publicizing member businesses in “Chamber Corner”. In June of 2016, our Chamber Corner also became a Radio feature on KECH 95 FM. Weekly Executive Director, Jeff Bacon talks about local happenings and member businesses. This is broadcast every Wednesday morning is shared to our Facebook followers and to the KECH Facebook page as well.

Events and Programs

The Chamber works year ‘round on event creation and promotion. Creating, marketing and maintaining events is an integral part of keeping business in the Wood River Valley thriving. The Chamber is both an organizer and promoter for four major events each year. Additionally, we work with a dozen or more events as promoter, using social media, print and radio advertising, over-the-road banners, posters and press releases to get the word out about these great Valley events.

Community Events and Projects

The following events took place during this period with volunteer and/or promotional support from The Chamber:

1. ArborFest, May, 2016
2. Fiddlers Inc. State Championships May, 2016
3. Flowers on Main Street, all summer *
4. Washington Federal Hailey Family Carnival June, 2016
5. Skatepark Competition, June, 2016
6. Sheeptown Drags Races, June 2016
7. Sawtooth Rangers’ Rodeo, July 2 – 4, 2016
8. Hailey Fourth of July Parade and Fireworks, July 4, 2016 *
9. Wood River Land Trust RiverFest, July 4, 2016
10. Insanity Monster Truck Sept 9-10, 2016
11. Wood River HarvestFest, September 17, 2016
12. Trailing of the Sheep, October 2016
13. Crosstoberfest, October 2016
14. Wood River Business Expo, October 20, 2016 *
15. Halloween Hoopla October 31, 2016 *
16. Turkey Trot, Thanksgiving Day 2016 *

*Chamber Sponsored Event

Marketing and Public Relations

The Chamber markets the City of Hailey as a travel destination and markets local businesses and events through various avenues. These marketing efforts are cooperatively funded through a grant from the Idaho Travel Council and funding from the City of Hailey’s Local Option Tax. The Chamber successfully doubled its grant funding in August 2016 for use in the Fiscal Year 2017.

18 Summers and USA Today

The Chamber advertised in an integrated newspaper insert and online campaign sponsored by the Idaho Travel Council for the second year. This was a simple 1/8th page ad that resulted in over 4,600 inquiries for information about Hailey and the Wood River Valley. We also placed an ad in the 'USA Today' travel magazine. These ad campaigns generated big impact with minimal cost.

Events

Last year the Chamber received Idaho Travel Council funds to promote the Sun Valley Film Festival for public relations and social media marketing. Through a partnership with CW Communications, a total audience of 633 million was achieved. This was done through print, TV, radio and online. Total value of advertising 5.8 million

Last year The Chamber received Idaho Travel Council grant funding to promote the Trailing of the Sheep Festival using public relations, advertising and social media. Through a partnership with CW Communications, articles on Trailing of the Sheep (promoting both Hailey and the Festival) appeared in national and regional publications. The value of this public relations effort is over \$800,000 in coverage. The total media reach was 83 million using print, TV, radio and online advertising.

The Hailey Chamber produced press releases that were distributed to national bike media outlets, which resulted in media coverage in the Pacific Northwest for the Crosstoberfest event.

Annual Awards

At its 2016 Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet, The Chamber presented several awards to organizations and individuals who have served the Wood River Valley:

Community Service – Dr. Ron Fairfax

Customer Service – LL Green Hardware

Business of the Year – Power House

Special Recognition – Friedman Memorial Airport

Chamber All – Stars – Dev Kalsha, Fisher Electronics, Terry Turner

Chamber Bucks Program

This program is designed to help promote shopping locally. Chamber Bucks sales were \$23,640 for the year, and redemptions totaled \$19,265. Chamber Bucks are a popular local gift certificate that can be redeemed at over 75 local businesses. Chamber Bucks can be purchased at the Washington Federal, which took over management of the program in 2015.

Bellevue Chamber

In response to a request from the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce, The Chamber agreed to welcome present Bellevue Chamber members on a one-time reduced fee basis. The Chamber also welcomed Bellevue business representatives Erin Crawford and Stef Mahoney to the Board. The Board also agreed to take over a section of Idaho Route 75 near Timmerman Hill under the Idaho Department of Highways Adopt a Highway Program.

Something Old, Something New, Ideas for 2016

The Chamber President, Richard Stahl presented his ideas for moving the Chamber forward in 2016 at the Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet. He suggested that, first, the Chamber needs to continue programs already underway, 'something old:'

- Continue to strengthen the Chamber's finances through increased membership, sponsorships and fund raising.
- Update the Strategic Plan in 2016.
- Continue to implement the Strategic Plan.
- Continue and improve the Quarterly Meetings to provide quality speakers on topics related to business and community.
- Publish a Chamber Membership Directory and Community Guide.

Secondly, the Chamber needs to find new ways to serve its members and the community, 'something new:'

- Develop an employee handbook and fringe benefit package to assist in attracting and retaining top employees to the Chamber.
- Hold an Annual Membership Meeting and Awards Banquet, designed as a community celebration and fund raising event.
- Integrate more Chamber promotion into our communication (print and electronic) to increase the visibility of the Chamber in the community.
- Offer additional high quality member benefits in the form of marketing opportunities, workshops, networking opportunities and improved web presence.

The Chamber is a membership organization, seeking to grow the economy of Hailey and the Wood River Valley and to serve the needs of Chamber members. The Chamber seeks to involve its members in all aspects of the organization; as committee members, as Ambassadors and as board members. With the help of its members, the Chamber and the Wood River Valley will grow and prosper.

A comprehensive membership survey was distributed to all Chamber members in September. This is a follow-up to the previous 2014 membership survey.