

June 2009

Old Fort Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting and Picnic

FELLOWSHIP! CHAMBER MEETING BEGINS AT **3:30PM**

- Meet your 2009-2010 Board Members
- Lend your voice to topics important to Chamber businesses

FUN! COOKOUT/GAMES START AT **4:30PM**

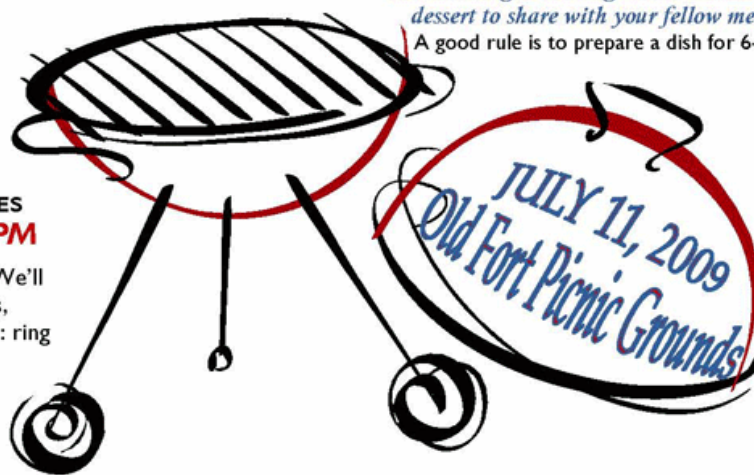
Bring your family! We'll have games for kids, both young and old: ring toss, egg toss, sack races, and more!

FOOD!

MENU PROVIDED BY YOUR CHAMBER

Ribeye steaks, hot dogs and hamburgers on the grill, potatoes, dinner rolls, sweet tea, unsweetened tea, water, paper products and eating utensils will be provided by your Chamber of Commerce.

In keeping with Old Fort's community spirit, *you are encouraged to bring a covered side dish or dessert to share with your fellow members.* A good rule is to prepare a dish for 6-10 folks.



Old Fort residents, town representatives and businesses met with a talented design team of faculty and students from NC State University College of Design at the Old Fort Depot on May 12. The purpose of the meeting, hosted by the Old Fort Mountain Heritage Alliance and the Town of Old Fort, was an opportunity for local residents and business owners to share ideas and visions for the town of Old Fort. The designers broke up into groups to discuss with attendees four different

DESIGNERS MEET WITH OLD FORT COMMUNITY TO

elements of design opportunities: Regional Planning (parks, outdoor recreation, greenways and transportation), Structural Elements (including buildings, landmarks, facades, and districts), Location and Identity (gateways, entrances and signage), and Public Space (landscape and streetscape design, pedestrian planning and parking). Overall, there was a positive atmosphere at the event and many

residents and businesses of the town were able to put forth their suggestions, concerns and ideas for Old Fort's present and future.

On Tuesday, June 9, the design group will present its findings and ideas for Old Fort, based upon the collaborative efforts of the attendees at the May 12 meeting. This presentation will showcase Old Fort's potential, while

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maintaining a strong sense of historical purpose and community. More information on location and time for the presentation will be disseminated closer to the date of the event.

As a member of the Old Fort Chamber of Commerce, your opinions are very valuable. Please plan to attend the presentation on June 9, to provide feedback and to take an active role in the economic future and success of our charming small town.

Davidson's Fort Historic Park Marches on!



As we move forward with big plans to make a historic centerpiece for Old Fort, the namesake of this town and its earliest trademark as a place on the map, we have run into troubling times. Just as things were getting done and progress was being made, the economy knocked-down all of our progress. We have dusted our pants off and continued our mission, but we have less to work with. The agreement for the land we have been trying to raise money for has faltered due to the economy. The owner of the land, who has worked with us for three years, has finally had to withdraw the agreement for the purchase of the full 22+ acres.

Davidson's Fort Historic Park Inc. board members have decided to go with a proactive plan "B". Plan B is to move the stockade fort to a smaller portion of the land already in possession of Board Member, Gary Jones. It is the first 6 acres closest to the Lackey Town Road.

Potentially, all is good news. We can now build the fort in a much more visible location. It will be easily viewable from I-40 in both directions and from Lackey Town Road. The cost for buying the smaller piece of land is substantially less. We estimate that we can get the fort built and continue the programs to enhance Old Fort and Davidson's Fort's Mission to educate and promote our revolutionary war heritage.

Davidson's Fort represents a unique time in our country's early days. It is not represented in our schools' history lessons due to lack of recognition. It is an integral part with all development plans in McDowell County and North Carolina and is a point of interest along many of the upcoming historic site and heritage area development plans. It integrates with the Mountain Gateway Museum heritage message and will encapsulate a time that is important to historians and history buffs of both the American settlers and the American Indians. Davidson's Fort Historic Park will produce substantial tourism influx into Old Fort and McDowell County and from that, small businesses and supporting businesses will flourish with new business, creating scores of new jobs and opportunities.

The future of Davidson's Fort remains bright; we have started the planning for the immediate construction of the welcome center as well as the fort. We invite you to join us in re-building this historic site that will provide a place to reconnect with our past and re-educate everyone on the significance of Davidson's Fort in American history.

For more information visit our website, www.davidsonsfort.com



Tony Silver of Silvers Welch Road in Old Fort has joined the Kirksey Funeral Home staff in Marion as their Pre-Arrange Funeral Counselor, Tony is a native of Old Fort and is the son of the late David and Maxine Silver.

Having grown up in Old Fort, he attended school there and graduated from Old Fort High School in 1966. After graduating high school he entered Western Piedmont Community College. After attending classes in Morganton he enlisted in the United States Army and was stationed in Fort Bragg, NC, Fort Bliss, TX and Athens, Greece. While in Athens he met his wife Ellen. Following his tour of service he returned to the local area and worked and attended Western Carolina University where he graduated in 1979 with a degree in Business and Marketing Management. Having completed the requirements as a licensed North Carolina Insurance Agent he has been employed in the funeral home industry since 2003.

Tony and Ellen are proud parents of daughters Tonia Harris and Monica Tessneer and two beautiful granddaughters Aubrey and Ally.

Tony is a member of the Old Fort First Baptist Church serving as a Deacon and Adult Choir member. As a member of the Old Fort Chamber of Commerce he serves on the Board of Director's. He is past president of the McDowell West Gideon Camp and is involved in habitat for Humanity.

As Pre-Arrange Funeral Counselor Tony will be available to help the citizens of both McDowell and Burke Counties with their advance planning. Tony will be available at the Morganton or Valdese offices Thursday and Friday of each week and other days at the Marion or Old Fort location.



The Old Fort Chamber of Commerce announces their new board of directors. The Board will be officially seated during the Chamber's picnic at the Old Fort Picnic Area on July 11, 2009. The Chamber offers their most sincere thanks to Debbie Acrivos, Tony Yacovelli and Bill Bach for their many years of dedication while on the Board of Directors. Pictured id Debbie Acrivos and Tony Yacovelli working on the Major Wilson monument and Bill Bach at the Chamber dinner.



Board of Directors 2009-2010

Scott Swickle	Expires 7/1/2010
Jennie D. Miller	Expires 7/1/2010
Tony Silver	Expires 7/1/2011
Kim Lukasiak	Expires 7/1/2011
Jerry Wheeler	Expires 7/1/2011
Tami H. Newman	Expires 7/1/2012
Brigette Walters	Expires 7/1/2012



Old Fort chamber of



Recovery Act Gives SBA Tools to Boost Small Businesses

By Lee Cornelison, District Director – Small Business Administration, North Carolina District

New help is available to small business borrowers and lenders through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and U.S. Department of Treasury actions.

Effective February 17 the Act temporarily eliminates fees charged to borrowers on SBA loan guarantees (a potential savings of 3.5%) and increases to 90 percent the amount the SBA can guarantee on most loans. These changes will remain in place through December 2009.

The Treasury Department has committed \$15 billion in TARP funds to help unfreeze the secondary market for SBA loan guarantees. The money will be used to purchase SBA-backed loans made by banks. This will restore a capital source previously used by about 40% of SBA lenders. Reinvigorating this secondary market will free up capital for banks to lend to local small businesses.

SBA staff is working hard to implement the rest of the Recovery Act's programs for small businesses. We hope to have them in place very soon. The other changes include:

An improved 504 loan program (fixed asset financing):

Can now be used to refinance existing fixed asset loans as part of a business expansion project.

Gives SBA authority to establish a secondary market for bank loans made under the 504 loan program.

Permits loans to broker-dealers who buy SBA-backed loans from lenders and pool them for sale to investors.

- Improved SBA surety bond guarantee – permits bonds up to \$5 million. The old limit was \$2 million.
- Additional funding (\$30 million) for SBA's Micro-Loan program. This program operates through non-profit, community-based lenders*, who can make loans of up to \$35,000 to small businesses and start-ups.

Increased SBA funding available to SBA-licensed Small Business Investment Companies to make venture capital investments in small business.

* Three Micro-lenders in NC: (1) Self-Help in Durham; (2) WAMY Community Action in Boone; and, (3) Mountain BizCapital in Asheville: **828-253-2834, ext. 16.** www.mountainbizworks.com

A new program, America's Recovery Capital (ARC) Stabilization Loans, is in the works. This temporary program will offer deferred-payment loans of up to \$35,000 to viable small businesses to make payments on an existing, qualifying loan for up to six months. These new loans will be 100 percent guaranteed by SBA. Repayment can begin up to 12 months after loan disbursement and the repayment period can be up to five years.

More Information:

Eileen Joyce, Lead Business Development Specialist

U.S. Small Business Administration, 6302 Fairview Road, Suite 300, Charlotte NC 28210

(704) 344-6787 / Fax (704) 344-6769

The SBA N.C. Small Business Resource Guide is available online at: www.sbaguides.com/pdf/english/northcarolina.pdf.