



BUSINESS MONDAY - JIM CHARAPICH, COMMUNITY COLUMNIST,
JCHARAPICH@CULPEPERVACHAMBER.COM

Published: June 29, 2009

I was honored to be invited to speak at the Aging Together – Culpeper Community Conversation – 2009 last week at the Culpeper Baptist Retirement Community. I was asked to talk about the business impact of the statistic that one in four Culpeper Residents will be over the age of 60 by the year 2020.

This is characterized as an “age wave” that will certainly have an impact on our community. Just as we need to make sure that our teenagers have the resources to succeed, we need to make sure that our “keenagers” (seniors) have the resources to thrive in our community.

Some of the questions that were put forth for the “conversation” :

- 1) What can we do to promote healthful aging for people of all ages in our community?
- 2) What services do we need in order to support our aging residents?
- 3) How can we gain input on solutions and resources for a healthful-aging community?
- 4) Are there other communities that you have seen with interesting models for aging senior programs?
- 5) What role should government, business, and civic organizations play in developing and supporting a healthy aging Culpeper?

Of course I was able to look at the issues from a business point of view. However, it is rare that one point of view can offer the best solutions for the community. That is why I was very appreciative to hear the perspective of Lee Kirk, the President and CEO of the Culpeper Regional Health System as to what the impact and preparations from the medical community are for the aging residents of the region.

We are very blessed to have the leadership of Lee Kirk and the resources of the Culpeper Regional Health System in our community. Mr. Kirk described the many improvements planned at CRH. In addition, what is equally impressive is the commitment of the Culpeper Regional Health System to preventative health care. Offering opportunities for the aging community to gain a healthy lifestyle is a significant step toward enhancing the quality of life for Culpeper residents.

In addition, we heard from Mr. Frank Bossio, the Culpeper County Administrator. Mr. Bossio enlightened us as to the role of Government with regard to our aging community. Of the many plans in place and being developed, the one that is most interesting to me is that of the discussion related to the highly experienced volunteers in our community.

Those life experiences gained through the years are treasured wisdom and so valuable. It is up to us to find a way to connect the wisdom with the need in order for our community to fully benefit from one of our most precious natural resources – the wisdom and experience of our senior citizens.

Pastor Brad Hales of the Reformation Lutheran Church spoke about the need for spiritual support for our aging community. And finally, Alan Rasmussen of the RRCSB gave a positively positive talk about the benefits of educating our community in the power of good attitudes and healthy thinking.

My take away from the “conversation” was simple – We need to facilitate the network of people to people, all aging together, aging wisdom to youthful passion, youthful energy to aging need, and a community awareness of the opportunities to enrich personal fulfillment.

This of course is good for business.

Best Regards,

Jim Charapich
President / CEO
Culpeper Chamber of Commerce