

From the Chairman

Jacksonville, a Super Bowl city



Since I returned from Super Bowl XXXVIII in Houston, many people have asked me, "Do you think Jacksonville will be able to pull this off successfully?" My answer is unreservedly "Yes." There is no question that Super Bowl week is a major production the likes of which this city has not seen. Until you have experienced it first hand it is difficult to comprehend the magnitude and complexity involved.

Our city is smaller than most Super Bowl host cities, yet we have so much to offer visitors. In conversations with members of our Super Bowl Host Committee and City officials, I have learned how we plan to address critical matters like hospitality, transportation, event production, security, entertainment and crowd control. There can be no doubt that much remains to be done; however, we are well on our way both in planning and preparation.

The game day experience will be par excellence. Recent improvements by the Jaguars make our stadium comparable with any in the NFL. The ambiance options include river front, ocean front, open air or semi-private. During the day fans can choose from golf, river cruises, our excellent zoo, visiting the beaches, St. Augustine or Amelia Island, the equestrian center or the outdoor version of the NFL Experience.

The clincher for Jacksonville will be the unbridled spirit of our citizens. The Host Committee already has half the 8,000 volunteers it will need. These folks and our hospitality partners are ready to do everything they can to make Jacksonville's Super Bowl the most enjoyable to all our 100,000 plus visitors. Yes, Jacksonville will be able to pull off a Super Bowl that is not only successful but memorable.

-Barry Allred, 2004 Chairman

From the President

Welcome to aCCess



We are truly excited to introduce to you the Chamber's newest publication, *aCCess*.

After careful consideration and months of research, which included six focus groups of Chamber members, we are proud to present our inaugural issue of *aCCess*, the monthly member newsletter of the Jacksonville Regional Chamber of Commerce.

The consensus of our research was that members want the type of newsletter represented by *aCCess*.

With this new publication, there is a new opportunity for visibility. To maximize your visibility among the other 4,000 Chamber members, contact Janelle Behr at 366-6681 or janelle.behr@myjaxchamber.com to learn more about advertising in *aCCess*.

Bringing you this new, slick publication required a great deal of planning, and we are thankful for the extraordinary efforts our partners poured into its production: Nancy Ulrich with Ulrich Research Services Inc. for conducting the focus groups; Tom Robinson and David Smith with Husk Jennings Galloway + Robinson for designing this sharp, modern layout that puts us at the forefront of Chamber publications; and Paramount Miller for its printing expertise.

We are also grateful to Jim Bailey and Fred Seely of Bailey Publishing & Communications Inc. for their efforts and expertise in producing our previous newsletter, *FOCUS*, during the past decade. We hope you enjoy reading *aCCess* as much as we enjoy producing it for you each month.

-Walter "Wally" M. Lee, III President

Chamber lobbies amendment reform

Citizen's right to put legitimate constitutional amendment proposals before Florida voters is important. However, the majority of proposed "citizens' initiated" amendments are instigated by a small group of citizens able to finance the various steps in the initiative process. Often, they seek to circumvent the legislative process by achieving policy changes in the Florida Constitution instead of through the Legislature.

Florida's Constitution is five times longer than the Constitution of the United States. According to the Florida Chamber of Commerce, more than 52 amendment petitions are already being circulated for consideration on the November, 2004 ballot.

Gov. Jeb Bush, Lt. Gov. Toni Jennings, Senate President Jim King and Speaker of the House Johnnie Byrd know Florida's citizen initiative process as flawed. The House has formed the Select Committee on Constitutional

Amendments and the Senate has created the Select Committee on Constitutional Amendment Reform. Both of these Committees are seeking public input on the current process and solutions on improving the process and thereby protecting the integrity of Florida's Constitution.

There are some protections that our policymakers can enact to help fix the flaws in the citizens' initiative process. One protection would be to pass a Joint Resolution for the August 31, 2004 primary election. This Joint Resolution is an amendment that would be put on the ballot by Florida legislators. This amendment could focus on several solutions, including increasing the number of signatures required for a citizen initiative to be on the ballot and/or the number of ballot votes required for the initiative to pass and be added to the Constitution. This process would allow voters to have the final voice for approving the Joint

Resolution and preserving Florida's Constitution.

Another protection would be statutory changes.

This would add a new law or change a current law that is in the Florida Statute. This would provide additional protections in the citizens' initiative process. For example, petition signatures that are gathered to place an initiative on the ballot are currently valid for four years. Therefore, a statutory change may be an effort to reduce the amount of time that these signatures are valid and provide more protection to the process.

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