



1920  
2017



2017  
THE GREATER SARASOTA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

# THE PAST IS ALWAYS PRESENT



READ ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE GREATER SARASOTA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND THE LEADERS WHO HAVE SHAPED THE GREATER SARASOTA COMMUNITY FOR NEARLY 100 YEARS.



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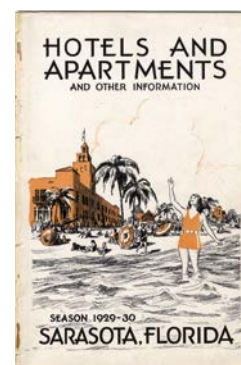
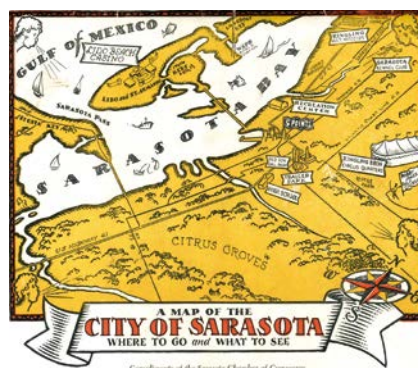


## CHAMBER ROOTS RUN DEEP IN SARASOTA

C.V.S. WILSON, EDITOR OF SARASOTA'S FIRST NEWSPAPER, the *Sarasota Times*, said it best in 1901 when he wrote, "what Sarasota needs more than anything is a progressive Board of Trade or Chamber of Commerce."

The foundation of Sarasota's modern-day Chamber of Commerce can be traced back to 1911 when local business leaders established the Board of Trade, which became instrumental in establishing the first locally owned bank and advocating for the creation of an independent Sarasota County. The Board of Trade looked to bring new industries to the area, such as cigar production and aviation. It wasn't until 1920 that the Board of Trade reorganized to become The Sarasota County Chamber of Commerce, honoring local ice company owner Hamden S. Smith as Chamber President.

Over the next century, The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce has continued to evolve. Each decade has brought new challenges to the area and along the way The Chamber has consistently answered those challenges with the steady support of business leadership. The history of The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce runs deep within this community and has always focused on one underlying theme: making Sarasota the best place to live and work. It has been through the leadership



of its members and board of directors that the Chamber has taken a lead on key initiatives that have brought solutions to some of our community's biggest struggles and opportunities.

Early Chamber leadership quickly realized the need to attract visitors and new residents to the area and did so through specialized marketing and

business development. In 1922, Chamber leaders and city officials worked with developer Andrew McAnsh to build a hotel in hopes of drawing new visitors to the area. Through a deal struck with Chamber and city leaders, McAnsh built the Mira Mar Hotel, which was fully outfitted with modern amenities. Through the 1920s, the Chamber



Board of Trade established (the precursor to our modern Chamber). Donates \$10 to build the Roth Cigar factory in an effort to bring the cigar industry to Sarasota.

1911



Board of Trade reorganizes to become the Sarasota Chamber of Commerce. Hamden S. Smith is the first Chamber President. Hamden owned a local ice company.

1920



SOURCE: tincantourists.com The Dixie Highway nearest to the Tampa bay region, circa 1923

Chamber advocated for highway projects to connect Sarasota to southern cities including Miami.

1926

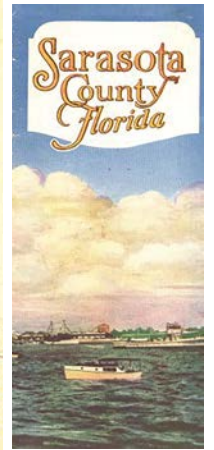


Mayor E.A. Smith represents the city and the Chamber of Commerce in Washington, DC to lobby for extension of water mains, a Municipal Auditorium and recreational facilities.

1935

SOURCE: The Historical Society of Sarasota County





advocated for projects that made visiting the area easier and faster, including: road signs, highway projects, and tourist conventions. Publications, including the "Apartment and Hotel Guide" and "Visitor Guide" created and promoted by the Chamber, drew thousands of visitors each year. Listeners as far away as Saskatchewan and Hawaii could tune in to the WJBB Radio Station: "The Voice of the Semi-Tropics" for special programming arranged by the Chamber. As Sarasota grew, so did the need for municipal projects. The Sarasota County Chamber of Commerce was heavily involved in bringing about the Sarasota Municipal Auditorium, the Lido Beach Casino, recreational facilities and water main projects. In the 1950s, Chamber leadership advocated to improve the Intracoastal Waterway and was integral in supporting the development of the area now known as Bayfront Park. The Chamber also had a major role in attracting and supporting Major League Spring Training throughout the years: the New York Giants in the 1920s, the Boston Red Sox in the 1930s, the Chicago White Sox in the 1950s and most recently in 2010, the Baltimore Orioles. As The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce approaches its 100-year anniversary in 2020, it continues to bring the business community together to solve problems, create opportunities and strengthen Sarasota's long-term economic vitality and quality of life.

ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Sarasota Chamber 1966 Laurel St. Builders, Cecil B. DeMille's The Greatest Show on Earth, Land of opportunity postcard, 1920s, Sarasota County brochure, 1928.  
SOURCE: The Historical Society of Sarasota County.



Chamber sponsors the Florida Outdoor AAU swimming and diving championship at the Lido Beach Pool.



Chamber advocates for a university, citing Sarasota as "a college town without a college." College Committee of the Chamber plays important role in the establishment of New College.



Sports Committee of the Chamber of Commerce seeks a replacement team after the Boston Red Sox leave Sarasota, and recruits the Chicago White Sox to hold their spring training at Payne Park.



Sarasota Chamber proposes city develop a marina park at the foot of Main Street in Sarasota Bay.

1946

1950s

1958

1960





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# A HISTORY BUILT ON THE FOUNDATION OF GREAT LEADERS

The strength of a chamber of commerce lies in its membership. Success for a chamber not only requires a healthy membership, but it demands that a core group of dedicated volunteers emerge from that membership in order to lead the organization forward. Over the Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce's 97 years, the many successes realized can be largely attributed to the literally thousands of volunteers that have committed their time, expertise and passion to this community. Few volunteers, however, have elevated their commitment to the highest level by assuming the most demanding and time-consuming of roles: Chair of the Board. Indeed, it is the Chair who is expected to be the one volunteer most entrenched in all chamber activities. It is the Chair who is charged with ensuring that the organization remains on solid ground while also guiding it along a path for future success. It is the Chair who becomes synonymous with the era of their chamber. It should come as no surprise, then, that the Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce has proudly welcomed a long list of community leaders to the rank of Chair. After all, it is the chamber that is often at the forefront of the issues that the community faces. So, it is natural to see so many of Sarasota's greatest business and community leaders extend their legacy to include the role of Chair of the Board. Over the past century, the Chamber has welcomed the names and faces that have shaped our community and are proud of the legacy that each has cemented as they passed the baton to future generations of volunteer leadership. From Ringling to Robarts, from Berlin to Buchanan, the past Chairs of the Chamber have long since been those who have become well known locally for their contributions both in and outside of the organization. The Chamber takes great pride in highlighting those volunteers who have answered the call at the highest level.



## Hamden S. Smith, Former Mayor - Chairman: 1920

Hamden S. Smith was the first Chairman of the Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce in 1920 right after the formation of Sarasota County. Smith was born in Owensboro, Kentucky. He was like many of the migrants who sought out Florida's healing aura. He regained his health soon after moving to Florida in 1884. In 1903, he moved to Sarasota to work for the Seaboard Air Line Railway. He went on to manage the Belle Haven Inn, started a general store, became the town's first milliner, was elected Mayor, was founder of the Sarasota Board of Trade (Chamber of Commerce).



## John Ringling, Founder, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus - Chair Term: 1927-1929

John Ringling was the sixth Chairman of The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce from 1927-1929. Originally from McGregor, Iowa, Ringling was the second youngest of eight. Ringling got his start in show business in 1884, along with five of his brothers, on "The Yankee Robinson and Ringling Bros. Double Show." Ringling first starred as a clown, eventually overseeing the scheduling and contracting of acts. Soon he began investing in railroads, oil and real estate, amassing a fortune of nearly \$200 million. In 1911, Ringling and his wife, Mable, purchased 20 acres of waterfront property in Sarasota, and Ringling moved the circus' winter headquarters to the area by 1927. Upon his death in 1936, Ringling willed his Sarasota mansion and personal collection of art to the State of Florida.



## Frank G. Berlin, Sr., Founder, Bay Drugs Walgreens Agency - Chair Term: 1944-1945

Frank G. Berlin, Sr. was the 18th Chairman of The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce from 1944 to 1945. Frank was well-known for his dedication to the wellness of the community. Originally from Illinois, Berlin and his wife Mildred moved to the Sarasota area in the mid-1930s, where he opened Bay Drugs/Walgreens Agency, on the corner of Main Street and Lemon Avenue. Berlin continued his dedication to the community and founded the Sarasota Family Young Men's Association—the precursor to the YMCA named in his honor.



Members of the Chamber's Economic Development Committee propose the establishment of an airport commerce center to the Sarasota-Manatee Airport Authority. Chamber Board also works with chambers around Florida to advocate for the prompt commencement of construction of I-75.

1975



Chamber's Impact Fee Task Force presents to the County Commissioners about reducing road impact fees.

1993



SRQ | THE MAGAZINE  
SB2  
SARASOTA & BRADENTON

THURSDAY, MAY 18, 2017

# GOOD PEOPLE: TOURISM

2017 in Tourism: Impact of Tourism on Quality of Life.

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

**CAROL DOVER** President & CEO, Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association

Carol B. Dover has served as President/CEO of the more than 10,000 member Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association (FRLA) since July of 1995. Dover is a professional association manager, a lobbyist, a former government insider, and a Florida State University Dedman School of Hospitality graduate with a degree in Hotel and Restaurant Management. Dover serves as a member of the Board of Directors for the National Restaurant Association, National Restaurant Association Education Foundation, Council of State Restaurant Associations, International Society of Hotel Association Executives, VISIT FLORIDA, Florida Tourism Commission, Florida TaxWatch and the Florida Horse Park.

**GUEST PANELISTS**

**RICK PICCOLO**  
President & CEO, Sarasota Bradenton International Airport

**JEFF MAYERS**  
General Manager, The Resort at Longboat Key Club

**ELLIOT FALCIONE**  
Executive Director, Bradenton Area Convention and Visitors Bureau

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**Charles Stottlemyer, Vice-President of Stottlemyer & Shoemaker Lumber Co. - Chair Term: 1967**

Charles Stottlemyer was the 41st Chairman of The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce in 1967. Stottlemyer was the Vice-President of the Stottlemyer & Shoemaker Lumber Company. He grew up in Anderson, Indiana and served in the Army during the Korean War. Upon his discharge from the Army, Stottlemyer moved with his family to Sarasota and went into business with his brother-in-law. Continuing to shape the Sarasota community, he helped to establish the Argus Foundation in the early 1980s to further the economic wellbeing of the area.



**Debra Jacobs, President & CEO, The Patterson Foundation - Chair Term: 1992**

Debra Jacobs was the 64th Chairman of The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce in 1992. With a strong background in the Sarasota business community, Jacobs has a diverse background in the banking, education, and philanthropic community. Prior to joining the Selby Foundation in May 1998, Jacobs was the Vice President for Institutional Advancement for Ringling College of Art and Design. Debra came to this position after 11 years as Executive Vice President for SunTrust Bank, Gulf Coast. Prior to joining SunTrust in December 1985, she was Senior Vice President and Retail Division Administrator of Central Trust Company in Rochester, New York. Debra is currently the President of the Patterson Foundation where she works with partners to accelerate positive change by sharing fresh perspectives on strategy, contributing new ideas and providing resources.



**Vern Buchanan, US Congressman - Chair Term: 2001-2002**

US Rep. Vern Buchanan was the 72nd Chairman of The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce from 2001 to 2002. A self-made businessman, he is a respected leader in Florida's business community. After his Chairmanship with the local Chamber he went on to Chair the Florida Chamber of Commerce. In addition to his commitment in the business community, Congressman Buchanan is a dedicated philanthropist. He has committed himself to diverse community causes, including the Boys and Girls Club, the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, the Walk to Cure Juvenile Diabetes, the American Heart Walk, the Mote Marine Laboratory and the Ringling Museum of Art. US Congressman Buchanan is currently the co-chair of the bipartisan 29-member Florida congressional delegation and Florida's only member of Congress to serve on the powerful House Ways and Means Committee, which has jurisdiction over tax policy, international trade, health care, welfare, Social Security and Medicare. Buchanan is chairman of the Human Resources Subcommittee, which oversees federal assistance for families, children, the disabled and the unemployed.



**Fredrick "Rick" Piccolo, President, CEO, Sarasota Bradenton International Airport - Chairman: 2010**

Fredrick "Rick" Piccolo was the 80th Chairman of the Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce in 2010. With over 40 of experience in the aviation industry he has been the President/CEO of the Sarasota Bradenton International Airport since 1995. Beginning his career as a janitor at the Buffalo International Airport, he moved up the ranks with a number of airport positions before his arrival at SRQ. In addition to his role with the Sarasota Chamber he has served on various boards in the community and in the aviation profession. He was selected as the Florida Department of Transportation's Aviation Professional of the Year in 2005 and was the Airport CEO honored as the "Small Airport CEO of the Year" in 2009 by Airport Revenue News.



The American Chamber of Commerce Executive's Membership Development Division recognizes GSCC with the "Award for Excellence" as one of the top three chambers in the nation in terms of membership development.

2005



Chamber leads the charge to bring baseball back to Sarasota, Baltimore Orioles sign on with 30-year commitment.

2010

SOURCE: Baltimore Orioles



# NUTRU

**NUTRU PRESIDENT JIM DONOVAN LIVES BY THE MOTTO OF NOT TAKING TOO MUCH AND GIVING BACK AS MUCH AS HE CAN.** After growing up and living in the Chicago area, Donovan now takes advantage of Florida's natural sunshine, powering his office, car, bike and home with solar and electric energy. His company NuTru develops high-end vegan supplements and nutraceutical products, and thrives on the same model, growing out of the Taoist and Buddhist philosophy of living as much as you can in tandem with nature and natural forces. "We want to minimize our footprint," he says. A pioneer in the late '90s of removing and encapsulating high-potency omega-3 oil from algae, Donovan and NuTru believe that every effort should be made to preserve the earth's sustainable resources, protecting the rapidly decreasing fish population in the process. Like the products he produces, Donovan is committed to wellness, crediting Sarasota's vibrant tennis community, along with the cultural and outdoor-friendly aspects of the area, as a draw for his move south. He also appreciates the business climate here fostered by the Sarasota Chamber of Commerce: "I like the spirit of openness here," he says. "People are very receptive and supportive."

NuTru, Inc. grew out of certain previous activities in new product development in areas such as prescription pharmaceuticals, nutritional supplements, herbal products and cosmetics, for many well-known international companies. As such, we developed an intricate knowledge of new and unique products on a global basis.

NuTru, Inc. develops products that the individuals on our staff believe to be worthwhile high quality products, which meet certain dietary, nutritional and health needs. Anyone who goes into a health food store, drug store, etc. where supplements are sold knows that there are a wide range of different products to choose from. Market research points to the fact that there is much confusion and lack of information in the consumer nutritional supplement market.

At NuTru, Inc. we have grown tired of this type of approach, of exaggerated claims, of high prices, and the lack of objective information. NuTru® has evolved into a developer and manufacturer of unique and proprietary products, especially in the vegetarian area that have clinical and scientific documentation behind them. We established this company to present products that are well-established in their native markets, are proprietary and/or patented, and have clinical and scientific documentation behind them. Nutritional supplements, dietary supplements, and herbs when used wisely, and in moderation can be a viable alternative to many OTC products that have been available for decades in drug stores, pharmacies, etc. Over twenty-five years NuTru has studied thousands of nutraceutical formulations and nutritional supplements and have developed those we personally believe in and use.

**Truth in Nutraceuticals™.**





# GORILLA KLEEN



## **GORILLA KLEEN PRESIDENT JOHN CLOUD KNOWS THE VALUE OF HARD WORK.**

And the Sarasota Chamber of Commerce recognized his commitment by awarding him and his Gorilla Kleen family the 2016 Small Business of the Year Award. "We really are proud to be the recipients of the Small Business of the Year Award," says Cloud. "Starting a business from scratch is a lot of hard work and we are really proud of what we have accomplished. With over 1800 members of the Sarasota Chamber it is quite an honor for us to be chosen." A quintessential model for building a small business, Gorilla Kleen has created a large, well-equipped business that is capable of handling any sort of exterior cleaning need. Now the company cleans and maintains large commercial areas such as Ed Smith Stadium and Sarasota Memorial Hospital—as well as providing an extensive array of home cleaning services and paver brick sealing. Cloud's advice to other businesses trying to grow: "Be dependable. Do what you say you are going to do. Treat people fairly." Recognition from the Chamber has been a career highlight for Cloud, especially after five years of hard work to build Gorilla Kleen. "I have lived in Sarasota for 50 years now. I am not about to do anything short of the very best that I can to support our clients and this community. We are proud of what we do and the way that we take care of people."



## TABLESEIDE RESTAURANT GROUP



**YOU WOULDN'T BE WRONG TO THINK THAT THE TABLESEIDE RESTAURANT GROUP HAS REDEFINED BOTH FINE AND CASUAL DINING IN SARASOTA.** The family behind area high-hitters Libby's Café + Bar, Louie's Modern, Muse at the Ringling, The Francis, Banyan Café, Modern Events Catering and the newly-opened Oak & Stone is out to change the Sarasota culinary scene for the better—the group is run by Owner Stephen Seidensticker, along with his children Joe, Patrick and Lisa and business partner Jeff Greco. Focusing on fresh, quality ingredients, simplicity and great atmosphere, each dining experience at one of TableSeide's establishments is completely one-of-a-kind. As such, it is no wonder their restaurants have become something of a Sarasota institution, loved by the community as a whole. As Trustee members of the Sarasota Chamber of Commerce, the Seidensticker family charges the Chamber with helping the community grow for the better. "The Chamber has been a huge supporter of helping Sarasota grow in a nice healthy way," says Steve. "It's a more vivacious town because of businesses they've brought in. They helped bring the Orioles here, which was great boon for our town." Joe reminds his father that other than sponsoring numerous Chamber lunches, The Francis hosts the opening party for the Orioles. The next step for the Tableseide Group: according to Joe, "Winning Small Business of the Year is next on our list."



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# Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce CHAIR'S CUP AWARD 2017



## CHAIR'S CUP HALL OF FAME

1987	Karen Matteson	2002	Senator John McKay
1988	Edwin H. Smith	2003	Charles Githler
1989	Robert L. Anderson	2004	Ray Villares
1990	Dr. Charles W. Fowler	2005	Timothy Clarke
1991	John M. Dart	2006	Pam Truitt
1992	Dr. Kay Glasser	2007	Lisl Liang
1993	Stuart H. Barger	2008	Robert E. Messick. Esq.
1994	John B. Harshman	2009	Larry Thompson
1995	Joel Freedman	2010	Bob Hite
1996	Robert J. Lane	2011	John M. Cranor III
1997	Jeffrey S. Russell	2012	Chris Gallagher
1998	Debra Jacobs	2013	Shaun Merriman
1999	Michele Grimes	2014	Lisa Krouse
2000	Cathy L. Layton	2015	Rod Warner
2001	Jimmy Dean	2016	Lisl Liang



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