

## Guest Commentary

# Chamber CEO answers reader's questions

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Peoria Chamber of Commerce CEO Bob Ware offers the following response to a reader's questions called in to the Peoria Independent's anonymous

**Speak Out line:** "Why does the Chamber of Commerce



**Bob Ware**

have lunch-  
eons spon-  
sored by groups, like the upcoming one by the Bade Cos., essentially an advertisement for their firm, and yet charge \$16 to attend. Also, is it open to the public if chamber members do not fill all seats in advance? At their business show, which aside from networking, should benefit the public, why is there an annual charge of \$100-\$400?"

### By Bob Ware

It is the Peoria Chamber of Commerce's goal to have business partners sponsor every event

possible. This makes great economic sense. The Bade Companies are a positive influence throughout the western side of the Valley and especially in Peoria. By being the sponsor of the March business luncheon, they were given up to five minutes of time to share their message to those in attendance, though they used less.

We would do the same for a bank, any business, a nursing home, a special event organizer, or a newspaper. The revenue the Peoria Chamber of Commerce earns is used to pay for part of operating expenses.

Similar revenue might be earned from a Chamber golf tournament, a business breakfast, or any gathering designed to encourage networking and relationship building.

At our sponsored events, we always encourage that the sponsor bring at least one large banner to placed in a conspicuous location. We ask them to bring a specific information piece that only they are allowed to put at each place setting. Why?

Business sponsors of the Peoria Chamber of Commerce are very important partners in the economic well-being of Peoria.

There is always a fee to eat our Chamber luncheons. For example, if we had 150 people come to the luncheon, a lunch tab might be \$2,400. There is absolutely no way that any of the Peoria Chamber's sponsors can cover the bill so a few people may dine for free.

We encourage the community to attend our luncheons. Why? We want them to witness the dynamic interaction and synergy that is the norm at the Peoria Chamber of Commerce.

If the public wishes to attend our luncheons, we will take their names down and put them on our waiting list. To ensure that our membership and their guests receive first consideration, we cannot guarantee that there will be a place at a table until twelve hours prior to the luncheon. Many of our luncheons maximize the capacity of the reserved meals that will be prepared for our members and their guests. In all cases there is a price to attend the

luncheon.

The Peoria Business Showcase, which is designed to showcase Chamber members to the public and to other Peoria Chamber members as well, will be held at Westbrook Village Golf Club 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 21.

The fee for all Peoria Chamber members, the entry fee is \$400. If non-members join the Peoria Chamber, these businesses will immediately realize dozens of excellent value benefits, as well as enjoy the opportunity to reserve a booth at a favorable pricing level. We expect thousands to attend, register for many dozens of Peoria Chamber member raffle prizes and gain information that will assist each to enjoy a better life and lifestyle.

I hope everyone uses the information that is provided by the Peoria Chamber of Commerce and the Visitor Center. Our hours are Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Friday until 4 p.m. For more information, contact 979-3601 or visit [www.peoriachamber.com](http://www.peoriachamber.com).