

[Login](#)
 [Contact Us](#)
 [Subscribe](#)
 [Get News Updates](#)
 [Print Edition](#)



[General](#)
 [Dining & Entertainment](#)
 [Health](#)
 [Automotive](#)
 [Home](#)
 [Real Estate](#)
 [Classifieds](#)

[News](#)
 January 14, 2010
 Search Archives
 Search



Special Section Archive

News

Front Page

Community

Island News

News

Sports

Faith

Obituaries

Calendar of Events

Business

Home & Garden

Opinion

Legals

Archives

Submit a Letter to the Editor

Contact Us

Advertising

Advertising Rates

Advertiser Index

Classified Order

Subscribe

Links

City of Gulf

Turn ON the off season Thousands of local residents are looking for places to shop, dine, and play. Your ad in Gulf Breeze News can shine a light on your business. Call 932-8986 for details.



Legislators hear leaders' concerns

Several issues merit discussion during joint Chamber luncheon
BY PAM BRANNON Gulf Breeze News news@gulfbreezenews.com



Rep. Clay Ford of Gulf Breeze said some citizens did not understand why the state turned down money from the federal stimulus for unemployment funds. "We could have been worse off then we are now," he insisted.
Pam Brannon/Gulf Breeze News

Defeating Amendment 4 on November's ballot, opposition of off-shore drilling, skyrocketing costs to small business through the unemployment tax compensation law of Jan. 1, and Florida offering incentives for economic development similar to ones offered by Alabama were top concerns of business leaders meeting with legislators in Pensacola last Thursday.

The Chambers of Commerce and leaders from Santa Rosa and Escambia counties met members of their legislative delegations to let them

Bay Bridge Roadblock
 Wednesday, 1/13
 Click HERE for Details

DUI Saturation Patrols
 7 pm - 4 am

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!
 CLICK HERE

The Breeze CINEMAS 8
 OPEN DAILY 1:00 pm
 (850) 934-3332
 3.7 miles west of Pensacola, FL

NOW SHOWING
 Friday, January 15th through Thursday, January 21st

- The Lovely Bones: PG13 1:30...4:00...6:30...9:30
- The Book of Eli: R 2:05...4:30...7:00...9:30
- The Spy Next Door: PG 2:15...4:25...6:55...9:05
- Daybreakers - In 3D Digital: R 4:40...7:10...9:30
- Leap Year: PG 2:15...4:25...7:05...9:20
- Sherlock Holmes: PG13 1:45...4:20...6:50...9:25
- It's Complicated: R 9:35
- Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeak! PG 2:45...5:00...7:00
- Avatar - In Digital 3-D: PG13 2:00...5:15...8:30
- The Blind Side - In 3D Digital: PG13 1:50

SPECIAL
 Saturday
 Screenings:
 Sat., Feb. 6
 10 a.m.
 Rating
 Lower \$5.00
 A Limited Time!
 PG Parents
 Machine Price

*No Patrons Accepted!
 To buy tickets online, go to: WWW.MOVIESHOWTIME.NET
 Find us on Facebook! Go to: www.facebook.com

Breeze
 Splash Magazine
 Copyright © 2005-2009
 The Gulf Breeze News
 All Rights Reserved



Newspaper web site content management software and services

DMCA Notices

know what local business concerns are in the region right now.

State Rep. Ray Sansom said agency cooperation is one thing that makes Northwest Florida a good place to live and work.

“Northwest Florida is unique in that communities are willing to work together, like today. You don’t see that as much in south Florida,” Sansom said. “Our delegation also works together in Tallahassee, and that is the way we can get things done for you here.”



Gulf Breeze Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Meg Peltier greets the large crowd of leaders who attended the joint-Chamber legislative luncheon at The Civic Center.

Pam Brannon/Gulf Breeze News

Speakers from both counties outlined the issues the chambers were concerned about for this area.

Economic development was a key theme of the day. Charles Wood, representing the Pensacola Chamber, said all of the things outlined in their presentations affect economic development – from lessening the burden of the unemployment tax, to incentives for new business, as well as protecting military interests in the area.

Sen. Don Gaetz told the group he understood their concern about the unemployment tax increases. With the new tax rate becoming effective two weeks ago, some businesses received a bill for 12 times what they had paid in 2009 for their unemployment tax compensation to the state.



Gulf Breeze Mayor Beverly

“I have 120 employees whose paychecks I sign every Friday,” Gaetz said. “I understand the concern over the increase in unemployment taxes on small businesses. But we are now borrowing Obama Bucks to pay our unemployment claims in Florida, and we are digging our hole deeper.”

Gaetz said the state is paying out \$200 million a month in unemployment payments.

“Our unemployment fund is dry. We had to turn to the federal government and are now \$900 million in debt to the Feds,” Gaetz said. “We could ratchet back what we pay out in

Poll

Will the current TV wars affect your viewing options?

Yes
 No

[Vote](#)

[View results](#)

GULF BREEZE CINEMA 4
 Friday January 15th - Thursday January 21st

Art Films
 Adults \$8.00 Child & Seniors \$6.00
 Matinees \$6.00

Invictus
 (PG13) Daily at 1:00 4:00 7:00

Me & Orson Welles
 (PG13) Daily at 1:00 4:00

Up in the Air
 (R) Daily at 1:00 4:00 7:00

Bad Lieutenant: Port of Call New Orleans
 (R) Daily at 7:00

Bargain Movies
 Evenings \$4.00 • Matinees \$3.00 • Wed. & Sat. \$2.00
 Please call theatre for features and showtimes 850-916-9404

www.gulfbreezecinema4.com
 JPN CINEMAS
 Live Oak Plaza • Hwy 98
916-9402

Get the
BEST NEWS
 For the
BEST PRICE



Yes! I want Gulf Breeze News mailed to the following address:
 Name _____
 Street _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Telephone (____) _____
 Email _____

Send '30 for one year or '60 for three years
 to P.O. Box 1414, Gulf Breeze, FL 32562
 or Subscribe by phone (850) 932-8986
 We accept VISA, MasterCard, Discover & American Express

Zimmern shares a moment with Rep. Clay Ford, a former Mayor of the city.
Pam Brannon/Gulf Breeze News

payments.

“One problem we have also discovered is people will go on unemployment and a year later they are still drawing it and are

no longer eligible. Businesses have a whole year to challenge a claim. It has been estimated by people who are studying the problem in Tallahassee that if we could get all the people off Florida’s unemployment that are no longer eligible for benefits, we could save at least \$80 million to \$100 million a year.”

Rep. Clay Ford of Gulf Breeze said people did not understand when the state turned down money from the federal stimulus for unemployment funds.

“We could have been even worse off than we are now,” he said. “We took some grief when we turned down a half-billion dollars in federal stimulus monies last year to ‘help’ with the unemployment fund. But if we had accepted it, we also would have been made to accept the terms – which would mean anyone who got mad at their boss in Florida could quit and start drawing unemployment from the state. We would be in even worse shape if that had happened.”

Cindy Anderson, Director of the Economic Development Council TEAM Santa Rosa, told legislators that she would indeed be their favorite speaker because she was asking for something that would cost them no money. After outlining the success of TEAM over the past few years, with 800 jobs created from new business locating in Santa Rosa County last year alone, she warned, “There is only one thing that could stop this momentum. I am so afraid we will get into a position where all our notes and records regarding new contacts and clients will have to be made public, and we will not competitive any more with surrounding states.”

Anderson said she wants the state to work with the economic developers to find a balance under the Sunshine Law.

“I think we are all smart enough to come up with some standards and rules that will protect the public’s right to know and still keep us competitive,” she said.

One major concern of both Chambers is Amendment 4, which is to be placed on the election ballot this November. If approved, it would amend the state constitution to demand that all local communities and counties take every change to their comprehensive land use plans to



Rep. Ray Sansom praised local business communities for working together.
Pam Brannon/GBN

Splash!
Northwest Florida's Entertainment Magazine

Reserve your ad today for February

The only thing closer to Northwest Florida's beaches

Deadline to reserve space or submit information is **Friday, January 15**.
Call (904) 932-0904 for details.

On News Stands Now

View your unborn baby as never before!
Introducing video ultrasound pictures of the unborn baby in the womb!

See amazing photos of babies as young as 6 weeks from 3d ultrasound & 4D ultrasound

Vicky Griffin, D.O. New Patients Welcome
OBSTETRICS & GYNECOLOGY

2261 Gulf Breeze Pkwy.
Gulf Breeze Medical Plaza
916-4300

the voters for approval. On the ballot it will be called "Hometown Democracy" and is already in place in St. Petersburg Beach. Community leaders there say it has stopped all economic growth.

CPA Jack Rowell of Pensacola explained to business leaders that most small communities can have as many as 600 small changes to their comprehensive land use plan within a year, and if each of those needed to be approved by voters, it would stall any new business growth.

Sansom said it would be the worst thing to ever hit Florida.

"We would encourage the local chambers to get out to the public and let them know what the real, honest consequences are of passing Amendment 4," he said. "We in Tallahassee can partner with local communities to try to get the word out, but the most effective impact will be from people living here talking to groups and individuals you know.

"It is very important that you put together a plan on how to defeat this amendment now."