



## Message From the Chairman



**JUNE CHEATHAM**  
Chairman 2019-2020

What a beautiful time of year as life bursts out full bloom here in Tyler! The past few weeks of dreary and rainy weather are already paying off as the buds on the trees have created a haze of pale green about to take over the grey forest of winter. With the Azalea Trail right around the corner, life in East Texas will soon be in living color!

LIVE~LOVE~TYLER as you experience the beauty this Spring! The energy Spring generates is similar to the energy generated by the Volunteers that are committed to the Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce! From the committee members who bring their experience to the table to accomplish much, to the Contact Club who scurry

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## Spring Into The Azalea and Spring Flower Trail!

### 61st Annual Azalea and Spring Flower Trail slated for March 20-April 5

Azaleas, tulips, dogwoods, oh my! Spring into Tyler this season with our blooming beauties that have graced the yards of so many homes in the Azalea District for decades. Each spring visitors from far and wide travel to town to see the Azalea and Spring Flower Trail and enjoy the various community spring events.

This year marks the 61st time Tyler has opened its doors and welcomed guests from all over to stroll our streets, join our events, and bask in the beauty that is Tyler in the Spring. Last year the Trail brought more than 700,000 tourists to Tyler, and this year we are expecting even more.

Tourism lends a significant economic impact and plays a big role in the well-being of the local economy.

*Travel and tourism is one of the most important "export-oriented" industries in Texas. Spending by visitors generates jobs and tax revenues for communities within the state. (The Economic Impact of Travel on Texas, Dean Runyan and Associates)*

Visit Tyler encourages everyone to be a tourist in your own backyard, and take advantage of the natural beauty of the city in which we live. We are all so fortunate to live in a city that literally comes alive in the spring!

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**Chairman** Continued from front page.

about their daily lives diligently seeking out new Chamber members as well as working the listings for memberships up for renewal... these volunteers exude LIVE~LOVE~TYLER weekly, and for that we should all be grateful!

Spring is a busy time with a few major Chamber events coming along. The Energy Summit has become a signature event for the Chamber with sellout crowds, tickets are available now. The Seniors Celebrating Life event is a repeat event which many of our seniors attend annually to enjoy the various classes. The 2020 Smith County Commitment Report Luncheon in April will feature Judge Nathaniel Moran reviewing the new courthouse plans. Such an exciting project! The details for these events arrive in your weekly TACC emailed newsletter, or go to the TACC website at [tylertexas.com](http://tylertexas.com). Grab a ticket to an event that is dear to your heart and

**LIVE~LOVE~TYLER!**



### **The History of the Trail**

While oil booms gave Tyler an economic head start in the 1930's, azalea and rose blooms gave the city its beauty. Azaleas were introduced to Tyler in 1929 by Maurice Shamburger, one of the city's early nurserymen. Pleased with results of a test garden of azaleas, Shamburger shipped the colorful plants here by the boxcar loads from Georgia. After completing his garden in 1929, Shamburger discussed the beautification potential of azaleas with Mrs. Sara Butler of the *Tyler Courier Times Telegraph*. Mrs. Butler not only encouraged Shamburger to promote azalea plantings in the city, but planted a number of bushes at her own home on Charnwood Street. That home site, along with several other gardens on Lindsey Lane, soon became springtime showplaces with their colorful azalea blooms, and Tylerites began buying the plants by the thousands. Some of the thick, towering azaleas at older homes on the Trail date back to the '30's and '40's. By 1960, the blooming azaleas were attracting much attention, and that year the Chamber of Commerce established a marked route. The first Trail featured about 60 homes on a five-mile route. The Trail was an instant success. Within two years it had expanded to 75 homes and was attracting 15,000 visitors. By 1964, 25,000 people a year were coming to see the azaleas. In 1986, it expanded to two miles and as of 2009, the Azalea Trail stretches ten miles and attracts more than 700,000 visitors to Tyler. The homeowners make the Trail the success it is. They regularly increase their azalea plantings and spend countless hours making sure their yards are spotless for the annual visitors. The Trail has been featured in numerous newspapers and magazines, including Southern Living and Texas Highways, drawing visitors from all over America.

### **The History of the Belles**

With the success of The Trail escalating and more tourists coming to town The Chamber decided guests needed to be welcomed in true southern style. In 1964, the first Azalea Belles were introduced to the Azalea and Spring Flower Trail. The first group of Belles was made up of two chamber secretaries. These ladies made their own costumes by hand and distributed brochures to guests along the Trail.

Now the Belles are a much beloved and anticipated part of the three weekend event. Tourists are taken aback by the local hospitality and the extra flare these young ladies add to the overall experience. These Belles are truly the ambassadors of the Trail. They are always happy to visit with guests and pose for photos in any of the beautiful gardens along the Trail.

This year, 35 local sophomores and freshmen girls will serve this role. Watch the *Tyler Morning Telegraph* in the weeks leading up to the Trail for more information on this year's stewards.

**Get ready, Tyler, for the most spectacular spring flower trail in East Texas just outside your window, March 20-April 5, 2020.**

**For a complete list of events or to see the progress of the blooms go to [VisitTyler.com/AzaleaTrail](http://VisitTyler.com/AzaleaTrail) or pick up a brochure at the new Visitor Center located right on the square in Downtown Tyler at 110 N. College Ave.**

14th Annual *Seniors Celebrating Life*

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# contactor talk



**Cheryl Sartain**  
December

A real estate agent with ERA Property Shoppe, Cheryl is the Contactor of the Month for December. Now serving her

first year in the Contact Club, Cheryl has been active in the Chamber as Visit Tyler Chairman in 2016-17 and this year as Chairman of the B2B Business Expo. Cheryl is married to Toby and they have 2 children.



**Nicole Cox**  
January

Contactor of the month for January, Nicole is an 10 year member of the Contact Club and has earned 9 Production Awards. She is a

Johnny Wright Lifetime Member of the Contact Club and currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Chamber. She is in sales and marketing for Ables-Land. In addition to the Chamber, Nicole serves on the Cabinet for United Way. Nicole and her husband, Daniel, are the parents of Mackenzi and Colin.


# tacc officers

2019-2020

Chairman of the Board .....June Cheatham  
 Chairman-Elect of the Board .....Roy Martinez  
 Past Chairman of the Board .....Skip Ogle  
 President / CEO .....Tom Mullins  
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Area Development Council Chairman .....Claude Figueroa  
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