

Self-serving politicians are not just in Washington D.C.

Just when we begin to believe this awful economy is getting stronger, a store closes or we hear 100 workers are being laid off.

So what's up?

Several weeks ago, representatives from numerous Chambers of Commerce met in Meriden and were "treated" to brief talks by Democrat Chris Donovan and Republican Larry Cefaro.

Needless to state, Donovan did his best to praise the Obama administration and the stimulus project.

The stimulus, he said, provided Connecticut with funds it never could have secured. Even jobs were added. But for how long? No answer.

Cefaro did what any loyal Republican would do, but he had many on his side when he explained the shortcomings of the state budget and how the federal government actually did very little to help the state's fiscal woes.

The audience clamored for more details on how the economy would get better in the state. Donovan seemed to irritate people when he stated that, "things could be worse." He repeat-



Art Secondo Second Look

ed his stance that the Democrats had proposed their own budget which would salvage all those programs the Governor's budget would eliminate.

If we only saw restaurant parking lots on week-ends and drove past the movie theatre on Saturdays, we'd be convinced people are spending money and the recession is hardly as bad as Fox or CNN are reporting.

Unfortunately, restaurants are hurting during the week and few people are sitting in theaters. Every so often there is an unexplainable spike in revenue for retailers, but the reality is that Connecticut is suffering from much the same things President Obama said last week.

To Obama's credit, the man is a polished public

speaker who uses the right words with the right facial expressions to be explicit in what he wants to say. He accepted some blame but laid it on the line with those in Congress who use their status symbol as a life-long trophy. He decried the lack of progress in both chambers due to egos and petty differences.

The State Capitol is not much different. The Rell administration has, on several occasions, appealed to the masses via the media to lay much of the deficit blame on Democrats, whom the GOP claims, are playing politics over the welfare of state residents.

Cefaro stated at the Chamber meeting that Connecticut was rated 50th in the nation for being an unfavorable place to be in business. This doesn't surprise many of our state's small and medium-sized business owners, who struggle to make mortgage or lease payments each month.

Last year, the state virtually promised to eliminate the \$250 annual tax on all businesses. Called an "excise tax" it had no apparent reason when it was enacted, only to benefit the

state coffers.

It provided no benefit, no protection or safety valve. It was \$20 a week for the "privilege" of being in business. State lawmakers decided at the last moment to eliminate the tax. They went on to raise the minimum wage, and raised it again just weeks ago.

Obama may have been talking to the nation last week but in Connecticut he may have been staring at our legislators who have been infamous in recent years for egotistic and selfish. Obama echoes what Governor Rell has stated in the past several months. The time is long past for lawmakers to begin passing legislation that assists busi-

nesses because businesses provide a security net for families with jobs and insurance.

Businesses owners work long hours and are the catalyst for economic stimulus, Connecticut style.

State banks needs to loosen the noose it has placed on student loans, family saving accounts and business loans. Bank CD's and saving accounts are an insult to young people who want to save and see interest grow in their account. Last week an \$11,500 bank CD was given a .80 interest rate, allowing the account holder to relish about \$10 after a year. Insulting.

It should be an interest-

ing state election this year since it has become obvious that incumbents are vulnerable for defeat. A year ago, all this was unimaginable since Obama was the rock star of the nation and everyone who was everyone was clinging to his coattails. Now, Obama loyalists aren't comfortable from Washington D.C. to Southington.

Incumbent Democrats have a target on their backs and most of those targets were painted by Independents voters. The health care controversy is the best thing Republicans could have wished for.

Art Secondo is president of the Southington Chamber of Commerce.

Aresimowicz is named to new post

State Rep. Joseph Aresimowicz (D-Southington/Berlin) was named by House Speaker Christopher Donovan and House Majority Leader Denise Merrill to a new commission that will seek to identify opportunities for more regional collaborations designed to create efficiencies and save money for municipalities.

The Blue Ribbon Commission on Municipal Opportunities and Regional Efficiencies (MORE) will begin work Tuesday, Jan. 19 with the goal of recommending legislation during the 2010 session.

"We can be doing more with less," Donovan said. "Rep. Aresimowicz will help us find these new ways to help our cities and towns. I am confident we can bring about real property tax

reform by regionalizing certain activities that can both save money and improve the economic competitiveness of our state."

The MORE Commission will be comprised of 45 Democratic members of the House of Representatives and representatives of municipalities, regional organizations, education, business, unions and non-profits.

"I am pleased to be participating in this effort to find a better way for our cities and towns to work together," Aresimowicz said. "As a former three term member of Berlin's town council, I am well aware of the problems confronting our local communities and I applaud our leaders for taking up the fight because the times call for changes that will hopefully benefit our constituents."

The commission will

look at a wide spectrum of issues and opportunities facing municipalities: multi-town collaboratives, Board of Education functions, regionally-based organizations, collective bargaining, mandates and state grants.

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Education: Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine at Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science, North Chicago, Illinois; podiatric residency, St. Joseph Hospital and Ankle Institute, Chicago; fellowship, reconstructive foot surgery, The Hospital of Central Connecticut.



Yu Ming Victor Fang, M.D.
Maternal Fetal Medicine/Obstetrics & Gynecology
Practice: 85 Jefferson Street, Hartford, 860-545-2884
Education: School of Medicine at Stony Brook University Medical Center, Stony Brook, N.Y.; obstetrics/gynecology residency, Winthrop University Hospital, Mineola, N.Y.; maternal-fetal medicine fellowship, University of Connecticut Health Center.



Aly Hemdan Abdalla, M.D.
Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine
Practice: Giosa & Brown Pulmonary Associates, 455 Lewis Avenue, Meriden; 203-238-9726
Education: University of Cairo, Egypt; internal medicine residency, Bridgeport Hospital; pulmonary and critical care medicine fellowship, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, New York City.



Karim Namek, M.D.
Hospitalist Program
Practice: The Hospital of Central Connecticut
Education: St. George's University School of Medicine, Grenada; internal medicine internship, Danbury Hospital; hepatology and liver transplantation fellowship, Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York City.



Aaron Shafer, M.D.
Gynecologic oncology
Practice: 85 Seymour St., Suite 705, Hartford, 860-545-4341
Education: University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine; obstetrics/gynecology residency, Women and Infants Hospital of Rhode Island, Providence, R.I.; gynecologic oncology fellowship, University of North Carolina Hospital, Chapel Hill, N.C.



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