

FOR RELEASE**Feb. 11, 2020, 11 a.m.****Montcross Area Chamber****Heath Jenkins - 704.678.8093**

Montcross Area Chamber president announces plans to retire

After almost 15 years in a position he thought would be part-time and temporary, Montcross Area Chamber of Commerce President Ted Hall has announced plans to retire.

Hall notified the Chamber Board of Directors of his decision at a meeting this morning. He plans to continue in the position until a new president is named.

Chamber Board Chair Heath Jenkins said a search committee that includes six former board chairs has been appointed and will begin work immediately.

Hall, 70, suffered a surprise heart attack in January 2018, but returned to work within two weeks and hasn't experienced further health problems. He credits the cardiac rehab program at CaroMont Health with helping him modify his diet, lose weight and adopt a regular exercise regimen.

"My wife, Freda, and I have considered this decision for the past two years, and we agree this is the right time," he said.

"While my health is good, my stamina and energy levels are diminished," he told the Chamber Board. "It has been a struggle in recent months to perform at the level required for our dynamic and growing organization."

It was announced at the Chamber's recent 60th annual celebration that an all-time record membership of 538 had been achieved. The Chamber had 84 members when Hall became the part-time executive director in April 2005.

"Words cannot begin to express our gratitude to Ted, said Chamber Board Chair Heath Jenkins of the Town of Stanley. "His leadership as president of the Montcross Area Chamber of Commerce has helped bring about positive economic growth, a spirit of cooperation among local governments and small businesses, and has ignited a spark of entrepreneurship that continues to spread throughout Gaston County. Ted will be missed, and we look forward to continuing the momentum that he created as we begin a search for our next president."

(more)

Hall's career stretches 48 years since he graduated from the school of journalism at UNC Chapel Hill and accepted a position in public relations in Durham with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina. He worked 21 years in the newspaper business, including 13 as editor and later publisher at the Shelby Star. He was self-employed in consulting and management recruiting for 10 years before moving to Belmont and beginning his career in Chamber work.

"My years with the Chamber have been the most fulfilling of my career," Hall said. "The exciting growth of the Montcross Area Chamber, along with the tremendous economic progress of the businesses and the cities and towns we serve in Gaston County, have made every day fun and challenging."

He said the people with whom he's worked, including his fellow Chamber employees and hundreds of volunteers and members, have been the secret to the success of the organization.

"I love everyone who has shared this journey with me," he said, "but I give thanks daily for the years I've worked arm in arm with Teresa Rankin and Elizabeth Atterberry."

Vice President Teresa Rankin became the Chamber's second staff member in 2007, and she continues in the post today.

"Teresa's experience in Chamber work combined with her vast knowledge of Gaston County and its people and her irresistible personality enabled her to play a major role in the success and growth of the organization," Hall said.

"Liz became a volunteer for the Chamber on the first day after Freda and I moved to Belmont, and she has been a partner in every achievement the Chamber has accomplished in the years since," he said.

Hall and his family plan to remain in Belmont, where his wife, daughter, son and son-in-law operate Belmont Realty. After some time to rest, and a short vacation without a work phone or a computer, he vows to continue supporting the Chamber as an active member.