Ginger Zee Announced as 2020 Chamber Banquet Speaker

The Board of Directors and staff of the Benton Area Chamber of Commerce are excited to announce that Mrs. Ginger Zee will be the speaker at our banquet to be held on Tuesday, March 10, 2020.

Ginger Zee is the chief meteorologist at ABC News covering the nation’s weather on Good Morning America and across all ABC News broadcasts and digital platforms. She also hosts an ABC News original digital series, Food Forecast, focused on climate and its impact on agriculture.

When it comes to nationally recognized broadcasters, the phrase “I've seen it all” has become a tired cliché. In the case of Ginger Zee, however, the expression doesn’t even scratch the surface. Known to millions as the face of ABC News’ meteorology team, as well as for her third place finish on the 22nd season of “Dancing with the Stars,” Zee's story goes far beyond the confines of television.

With the release of her New York Times best-selling memoir Natural Disaster: I Cover Them, I am One, Zee brings readers along the immensely difficult path that took her from a depressed fledgling meteorologist to the first female chief network meteorologist at a network. After obtaining a B.S. in Meteorology from Valparaiso University, Zee worked her way up through various news outlets in the Midwest as a weather reporter and storm chaser. But as she puts it, by chasing these storms she was avoiding the real one brewing at home—a string of misguided relationships, including a horrifically abusive one that wouldn't end until she was forced to call the police, and a deep soul search that lead her to check in to a mental health hospital ten days before starting her job at ABC. Zee was struggling with significant mental health issues that went undiagnosed until she entered that inpatient therapy and began—slowly but surely—to get her on track.

Despite all of this dysfunction, self-doubt, and turmoil, Zee has managed to build a remarkable career and family. Now, she is taking her message of resilience and self-care around the country. Zee will leave audiences feeling renewed, empowered, and intensely moved by her raw, poignant chronicle of life as a natural disaster.

A banquet table for 10 is $750 and can be reserved now. Individual tickets go on sale January 2 and will be $80. Contact Amy McCormick at 501-860-7002 or amy@bentonchamber.com to reserve your tables.

The 2020 banquet is sponsored by Jones Heating and Air, Pear Tree Wealth Management, LLC, First Security Bank, Everett Buick GMC, Ashley Furniture, Baxley-Penfield-Moudy Realtors, CDI Contractors LLC, McCauley Services, Reed’s Metals of Benton and Smith Benton Family Funeral Home.
The sounds of Christmas music and eager shoppers filled the Benton Event Center at Glitz & Garland where the Chamber once again partnered with the Saline Health Foundation to present the event that was sponsored by Everett Buick-GMC. With over 80 vendor booths, there was a huge variety of merchandise waiting to be purchased. With women’s and children’s clothing, shoes, jewelry, Christmas ornaments and decorations, Louis Vuitton purses, duck calls, specialty food and home décor – it was easy for each shopper to find that perfect item they needed or wanted.

The fun started with our Mistletoes and Mimosas Ladies Brunch sponsored by Dillard’s on Friday morning. This exclusive event offered a delicious brunch buffet from Gina’s Catering, mimosas and bloody marys for shoppers who took advantage of this opportunity to be the first shoppers in the building.

The weekend continued with over 4,900 attendees who enjoyed shopping for themselves and others in the festive Christmas atmosphere. Some shoppers even started and finished their Christmas shopping for the year!

There was lots of suspense at the end of the show on Saturday as we gave away a 2019 GMC Sierra truck. Thank you to Everett Buick-GMC and the Everett family for your continued support of the Benton Area Chamber of Commerce and the Saline Health Foundation. The ten finalists gathered and waited their turn to select a key that they hoped would start the truck. The fifth finalist, Paula Welch, chose the correct key and the engine roared to life! She and her husband were in shock and hugged in disbelief. The other finalists were Waynnette Earhart, Linda Miller, Janie White, Phil Collins, Chad Slaughter, Dollie Carey, Sara Miller, Cloyd Poole and Charles R. Brown.

The planning for Glitz & Garland takes all year, and it’s always fun for the weekend to arrive and see all the moving parts go smoothly and see everything come to life. Thank you to all the volunteers from the Chamber and the Saline Health Foundation that worked tirelessly and took many steps to make the show successful. There would be no show without the vendors, and we are extremely grateful to them for participating and trusting us with their time. We hope it was a successful show for their businesses!
Thank You To Our Participating Chamber Members

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blue Door Salon &amp; Boutique</th>
<th>Blush of Benton</th>
<th>Braswell &amp; Son</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brooke + Owens, LLC</td>
<td>Candles &amp; Cream Collection</td>
<td>Civitan Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Express Your Self</td>
<td>Gina’s Catering</td>
<td>Just for Jada</td>
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<td>Lillian Trails Kids</td>
<td>Montalvo Interiors &amp; Apparel</td>
<td>Nelson’s Jewelers</td>
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<td>Play Town</td>
<td>Smith Caldwell</td>
<td>Southern Roots</td>
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<td>Stated Apparel</td>
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Save the Date for Glitz & Garland 2020
November 5-7!

Annual Awards Luncheon
Friday, January 17, 2020
12:00pm - Benton Event Center

Presenting Sponsor

Free Admission

Mark Your Calendars for the

Benton Area CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Upcoming Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 17</td>
<td>Awards Luncheon</td>
<td>Benton Event Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 6</td>
<td>Bingo</td>
<td>Benton Event Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 10</td>
<td>Annual Banquet</td>
<td>Benton Event Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2</td>
<td>Saline County Business Expo/Hook, Line &amp; Chicken</td>
<td>Benton Event Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 15</td>
<td>Bingo</td>
<td>Benton Event Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 3</td>
<td>Bingo</td>
<td>Benton Event Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 1</td>
<td>Savor the Flavor / Non-Profit Expo</td>
<td>Benton Event Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 5-7</td>
<td>Glitz &amp; Garland</td>
<td>Benton Event Center</td>
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We Have Local Football Covered!
From Your Chairman

What a fast, fun-filled and fantastic year it has been for your Benton Chamber of Commerce and the business community of Benton. I can’t believe that this year has flown by so quickly. It seems like yesterday that I was writing my first note to you in the role of Board Chairman and suddenly this will be my last.

As I look back over the past 12 months, it is amazing to me how your Chamber has grown but more importantly how our business community has grown. We have seen so many new businesses open and so many existing businesses grow and prosper. What a great time it is to live and to do business in Benton and in Saline County. We are all truly blessed.

It has been my distinct pleasure to serve as your Board Chairman this year. Working closely with Chamber CEO Gary James and all of the Chamber staff (Jerry Beaty, Amy McCormick, Melinda Vergona, Nikki Chumley, Steve Jordan and Shirley Ward) has been fun and informative and I am grateful for their holding my hand and trying really hard to make me look good and sound at least semi intelligent. For that, I will be forever grateful. A big thank you to the 2019 Board of Directors also who really made my job as Chairman very easy. What a great group of talented business professionals and leaders whom I have truly enjoyed getting to know and working closely with. But mostly, I am grateful for all of our Chamber members. I hope 2019 has been a great year for each of you and that you have all found value in your membership.

I am looking forward to seeing our Chamber reach even greater heights under the leadership of your 2020 Board Chairman Rick Bellinger. He will lead a new Board that will include five new members as well as many returning members. Our Chamber will be in great hands.

For the final time, thank you for the opportunity to serve you as your Board Chairman for 2019. It has been an honor and my distinct pleasure. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. May God bless you all.

Steve Brown, CEO
Alcoa Community Federal Credit Union

Ribbon Cuttings for November

Everyone is invited to ribbon cuttings. Come out and welcome our new chamber members.

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