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Special  
sections  
editor

## Kudos to Village marketing program

The old expression "All it takes is money" remains true today, as businesses, agencies and households cut back where possible to stay afloat.

The new marketing program to promote Hot Springs Village is also operating on a shoestring budget, but as I look at it in the early stages, the property owners are getting the most bang for their buck. Kudos to Dannet Botkin, the new marketing manager, for coming out of the starting gate faster than the horses at Oaklawn, getting a number of promotional materials put together and hitting trade shows in strategic locations in the country to attract new property owners.

Botkin's total energy for the program and her ideas have captured the imagination of the board of directors, fellow staff members, Property Owners' Association Committees and the property owners who want to see their community grow. She has taken a very proactive stance, and I only wish there was a much bigger budget for what she is trying to do.

Her credentials are quite impressive in the marketing arena, and she has gone into the game with gusto to help the community attract not only its share of baby boomers who are retiring, but working-class families as well. She quickly realized that Village demographics have changed in recent years, and she is targeting a more diversified group of people to entice them to make this area their home.

As the Village grows, so does the economy of Hot Springs and Garland County. There is definitely a trickle-down effect as the community contributes heavily to the economic growth of both Garland and Saline counties. I am anxious to hear her reports from the trade shows she has attended up north. She had three scheduled for this month, and she is living by her motto of "Share the Secret," since Hot Springs Village has been known in the past as Arkansas' best-kept secret.

On the home front, the grand opening of the DeSoto Club Event Center is another big plus. Once the marketing efforts bring more groups, individuals and corporate outings to the area, the center will be the staging area to show them what Hot Springs Village, Hot Springs and the surrounding areas have to offer.

The open house was quite impressive, as large numbers of residents came through, visiting the tables of merchants who have a variety of products that can nicely accommodate any number of functions at the club. Formerly a restaurant and entertainment venue, the DeSoto Club Event Center is now much more than that, with the staff being able to transform the interior into a flexible venue for receptions, seminars, conventions, corporate meetings and dinners and an information outlet.

These latest steps are definitely turning the ship into the right direction. It won't be an overnight process, but as a 14-year resident of the community who has seen the highs and the lows, I am glad to see the positive changes being made.