



## WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

The Young Men's Business League of Beaumont is a non-profit civic organization founded May 4, 1917, by Ed Paggi, a far-sighted visionary and Beaumont business tycoon, along with a group of civic-minded individuals who wanted to do something for their community above and beyond the regular business routine. The outlined mission of the Young Men's Business League is to "strive to improve the general welfare of the city and area; to develop and pursue programs which will maintain and improve the city's educational facilities and opportunities; undertake activities to enhance the agricultural and commercial resources of the area; take part in projects which will benefit the youth as well as the elderly; the YMBL is ever mindful of the needs of the community in fields of health and welfare, public works and civic improvement, governmental leadership and spiritual guidance."

To achieve these goals as outlined in the organization's by-laws and mission, the YMBL must function in a business-like manner. Chartered by the State of Texas as a non-profit organization, the YMBL is a responsible corporate citizen. A twenty-one-member Board of Directors elected annually by the general membership sets governing policies. Officers are President, First, Second, and Third Vice Presidents, Treasurer, and Executive Vice President.

With a membership of more than 700, the YMBL has been a powerful force in Southeast Texas, constantly striving to make this area a better place to live. Thanks to the foresight of Ed Paggi and the founders, and to the civic enthusiasm and just plain hard work of its multitudes of members over the years, the YMBL has made considerable progress in dozens of different fields and ventures.

The YMBL, as President Ronald Reagan was quoted as writing in a congratulatory letter to the organization on its 65th anniversary in 1982, said: "The YMBL is living proof that organizations of good purpose have a vital place in the life of every city."

Most of the organization's operating funds come from the South Texas State Fair Rodeo and Chute-Out Bull Ride. The eleven-day Fair has an annual attendance of more than 200,000 from the S.E. Texas and S.W. Louisiana area. More than 300 YMBL members will work on various phases of this giant event.

Other community activities organized by the YMBL throughout the year are not money-making events, but they provide many hours of family entertainment and enjoyment to residents of the area.

The YMBL has consistently produced activities beneficial to the youth of the area. Among these events are athletic tournaments geared to high school boys and girls: The YMBL Boys' Basketball Tournament has been in existence for more than 70 years and is recognized as one of the premiere tournaments in the area; the YMBL Girls Volleyball Tournament has become one

of the largest such events in Texas and several State championship teams have been winners of the YMBL Tournament; YMBL Junior Golf Tournament held during the summer, that has already gained acceptance by coaches and players in the Beaumont area. Elementary, Middle School, and High School golfers, boys, and girls, are flighted according to age in this two-day meet.

Two additional programs appeal to those youngsters who are not able to take part in many events because of mental and physical handicaps. The Babe Zaharias Relays hosts about 1,500 youngsters yearly in races and field events for these special kids. All entrants are considered winners in every event in which they participate, and ribbons are awarded to everyone in this two-day meet. The YMBL's Rodeo Youth Day will see many of these same youngsters in attendance. This program is held at Ford Park Arena the day before the YMBL Rodeo opens. More than 2,000 special youngsters will see a full-fledged rodeo and be treated to a hot dog lunch with riding and roping furnished by the cowboys and the rodeo's stock contractors and meals and drinks served by YMBL members and volunteers from the community.

Being almost 100% volunteer-operated, the organization stages a few projects for the membership each year, including a Ladies Night Banquet, a Members Welcome, and a Fair Volunteer Appreciation Party. Over 15 standing committees and a half-dozen special panels function under the YMBL's annual Program of Work, and hundreds of YMBLers engage in the activities. Each member is given an opportunity to work on one or more projects, and all committee assignments are handled by the chairmen.

As a not-for-profit organization, the YMBL contributes thousands of dollars yearly to other civic groups and charitable institutions needing financial support. These contributions range from several hundred dollars to thousands of dollars to any organization. Over the past 100-plus years, finding a community organization that has not received financial aid from the YMBL would be difficult.

