

Chattanooga positively in the news

The aphorism that there's "no such thing as bad publicity" might contain a germ of truth, but its basic premise is debatable. There's no doubt, though, that positive publicity is far more desirable — and often more difficult to obtain. Chattanooga certainly should benefit from favorable articles in a trio of the nation's mass circulation publications and a segment on a major TV network in recent weeks.

The well-respected Christian Science Monitor reported that Chattanooga is among the cities that are expected to shrug off the major effects of the current economic downturn. The reason: a "more diverse economic mix" than the community has had in the past.

Moreover, the article points out that major employers are expanding not contracting. Another positive: BlueCross BlueShield is building a \$299 million corporate headquarters, the largest office construction project in the city's history. That's positive news that is hard for those — individuals or corporations — considering Chattanooga as a future home to ignore.

Forbes magazine touts Chattanooga as a community that has outgrown the dubious distinction as one of the nation's most polluted cities into a community known for a host of attractions that endear it to businesses as well as residents.

The balanced article favorably cites Chattanooga's affordable land and housing, easy access to the Interstate highway system, the computational engineering expertise available at UTC's SimCenter, continuing riverfront and urban development and the community's overall quality of life. Several individual businesses are mentioned, as well. Forbes readers should get a positive impression of Chattanooga and what it has

to offer.

USA Today reported that Chattanooga "has largely avoided much of the mortgage crisis that has struck many other parts of the nation." Indeed, the newspaper reported that 2007 was the city's third-best year ever for home sales. It added that people who move to Chattanooga from other parts of the country are finding that they can get a lot of house for their money, a finding that is bound to stir a positive response in those considering Chattanooga as a place to live and to work.

The "CBS News Early Show" recommended Chattanooga as one of the best environmentally friendly places in the world to visit on vacation. That's got to be music to the ears of the regional tourism industry, which already generates close to \$700 million annually. Chattanooga was called "a walkable and bike-friendly city, very eco-oriented and compared favorably to the Galapagos Islands as a "green" vacation spot.

The report noted that "Memphis loves to sing the blues, but in Chattanooga the tune is "Go Green." The river town has come a long way since being designated America's most polluted city in 1969. Today, 22 miles of once inaccessible riverfront have been reclaimed for public use, and revitalization projects have made the city a model eco town and tourist hotspot."

That's high praise, indeed. The recent spate of articles, coupled with other positive stories — in publications as diverse and as well-read as US Airways magazine and Popular Science — in the last year are proof positive that the message about the Chattanooga renaissance and the attractions the community has to offer are reaching a wide audience. The long-term benefits are sure to be positive.