

# SHOWCASE

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"But there really is no good time for these kinds of things down here."

When lawmakers did start showing up later, one Blue Springs school official looked on with relief and said, "They're beginning to drift in now, thank goodness."

Many hometown-area legislators lingered at the luncheon, joining the Blue Springs delegation as co-hosts of sorts.

But the delegation members had hoped to use the Jefferson City excursion to meet lawmakers from other parts of the state, people they cannot reach back at home.

They were not disappointed. Legislators who clearly were strangers to Blue Springs began to stop by for brief visits.

Because of the size of the crowd, participants who had hoped to do some one-on-one lobbying appeared forced into the sort of quick 30-second pitches that politicians themselves are known for.

But legislators who were interviewed as they departed the luncheon said they were impressed by the size of the Blue Springs delegation and the civic pride it exuded.

"I'm no impressed with the friendliness of the group," said Rep. J. Dan Woodall, R-Springfield. "The whole group seems very enthusiastic, and I like to see that."

Another legislator agreed but said he hopes the Blue Springs folks understand that a lawmaker's loyalty cannot be bought by a plate of tasty barbecue.

"It works good will," said Rep. Donald L. Gann, R-Ozark. "It doesn't get legislation passed."

A table outside the meeting room, covered with name tags and souvenirs for each member of the legislature, indicated that roughly half the lawmakers had either attended the event or dispatched staff members.

Not missing a trick, however, organizers gathered up those name tags left behind and set out to make in-person deliveries before leaving the Capitol for another bus ride back home.

Back on the bus, participants agreed that the exposure Blue Springs received was well worth the cost of the two-hour blitz.

The Economic Development Commission has agreed to pay all the ex-

penses, including the catering by Zarda Bar-B-Q, the custom-made souvenirs and another \$450 for the chartered bus.

Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Robin Wilcox agreed that the event ought to be repeated, but she pointed out that the true success of Tuesday's effort will not be known for quite a while.

For example, Wilcox said, whether the multitude of secretaries were left with a lasting impression will be evident the next time a Blue Springs official tries to get in to see a legislator.

"Winning and dining the secretaries isn't all bad," she said. "It's all politics. Remember — you just made a trip to the state capital."