
BUSINESS COURIER

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A reminder of how far city has come

Business Courier of Cincinnati - by [Doug Bolton](#) Publisher

One of the positives of this global economic recession we're in is that the problems facing Greater Cincinnati pale in comparison to the challenges we face in many of our families and companies.

This fact became clearer to me as I reflected this week on about six months of writing this column. And it was put in sharper focus as a result of an e-mail I received from lifelong Cincinnati Nick Vehr, president of growing public relations firm **Vehr Communications** and board chairman of the **Cincinnati USA Convention and Visitors Bureau**.

"I was sitting here today reflecting on some great progress we have made as a city and the attached is the result," wrote Vehr, a former City Council member. "I am not sure if it works for the paper. Regardless, it felt good to write it."

I hope Nick doesn't mind my high-jacking his column – but it's really the fastest way for his thoughts to get in this week's Business Courier.

I've written in this space for most of the nine years I've been publisher. But before I put my name and picture in this space, I wrote anonymously – as the official opinion of the Courier. Throughout those years, I'd be critical or supportive on various news-making items or issues involving a variety of people, organizations and places in the Tri-State.

Since the beginning of this year, I've written more about business psychology than local issues. That's in stark contrast to the unsigned period of this column. It's not because we aren't facing big, local issues in 2009. But, rather, they all appear to be insignificant compared to what's going on in the larger and global economy.

My avoidance of local issues also could be a result of the progress we're making as a region, the point and pride of Vehr's writing. He vividly recalled the anger and confusion he felt in the wake of the downtown violence of 2001, broadcast around the globe.

"For years, before and since, I worked with others to make Cincinnati better. ... Before, such work was fulfilling, exciting, although ploddingly purposeful and Cincinnati-nice," Vehr wrote. "Since, such work has been more focused, more energized and challenging and, yes, many times more frustrating but markedly more fulfilling. The difference for everyone, I think, was the seriousness of it all; that we had to seek to never again be fearful of our differences and to not be confused – to never again see a police line on Central Parkway."

Vehr pointed to our successful hosting of big African-American conventions last summer. He pointed out that Cincinnati was just awarded the 2012 World Choir Games, a very prestigious global competition that

will be the largest event in Cincinnati's history. His column was timely with the **Cincinnati Reds** and the **National Underground Railroad Freedom Center** playing host this weekend to **Major League Baseball's** "Civil Rights Game" and recognition for Bill Cosby, Hank Aaron and Muhammad Ali.

"It is so much easier for me to appreciate 2009 when I think back to 2001," Vehr said. "We must acknowledge real progress. We can never dare to think the job is done. But, we can feel immense pride at the progress we've made."

Thanks, Nick, for assuring me that I haven't gone soft. But as we learn to live with these economic conditions for a lot longer than we'd like, here's my commitment to get back on the stick of having a local point of view where and when it's needed most.

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