

Gallatin is now 'Music City'

By Marjorie Lloyd
mlgallatin@bellsouth.net

"You've made a great city even greater," said Clay Walker, Executive Director of Gallatin's Economic Development Agency, to the corporate officers and employees of Samick Music Corporation at the grand opening of the manufacturing facility and distribution center in the industrial park off Airport Road.

Two years ago, the Monday before Thanksgiving, Walker received input from TVA about Samick locating its headquarters to the area and made the initial contact.

"Within the hour, a person was in my office," said Walker in a later interview. "It was just a whirlwind recruitment effort." Walker credits several people and agencies with coming together to make this significant economic event happen for Gallatin.

"It was a team effort," said Walker. "With the Nashville Chamber of Commerce, the Middle Tennessee Industrial Development Agency, Johnny Hayes of Forward Sumner, Mayor Jo Ann Graves, Governor Phil Bredesen, Mack Kisber-State Commissioner for

Economic Development, the corporate officers of Samick, and many others.

"It's a great fit for our community," said Walker, who noted that for every job Samick creates, more than two others are created within the region.

"We target headquarters and distribution centers, and it's nice to work with our music heritage, so here is a company that has them all."

With a cost of \$7 million in construction, Samick has a 14,000-plus square-foot headquarters and a 200,000 square-foot distribution center for its musical instruments.

And with an option on a parcel behind their current location, the company has plans to build a second facility within three years.

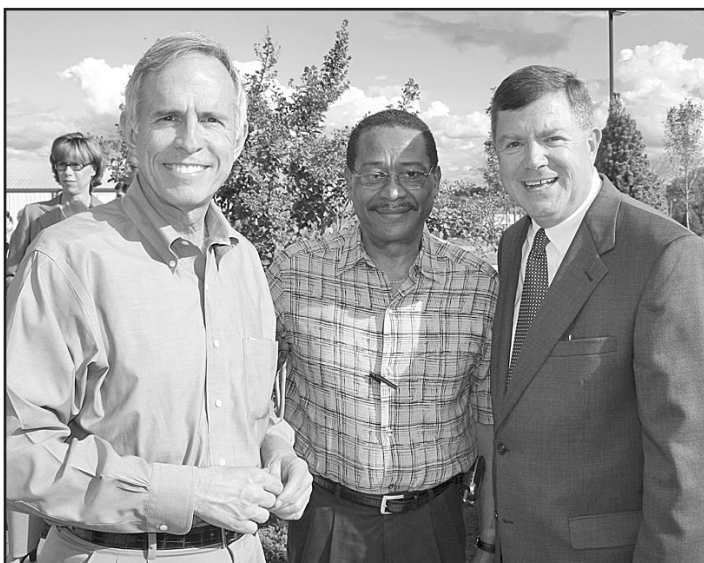
Samick CEO Baik Lee spoke positively about his experience with the city of Gallatin and Tennesseans.

"Gallatin deserves the title 'Music city,'" said Governor Bredesen to a cheering crowd gathered to celebrate.

TVA's Economic Impact Study determined that, in its first year, the company would bring an estimated \$200,00 in industrial taxes; \$138,000 in sales taxes and \$95,000 in residential property taxes.



Governor Phil Bredesen, Mayor Jo Ann Graves, the Gallatin Chamber of Commerce, other dignitaries and Samick's CEO Baik Lee and Samick employees gathered to announce the opening of the new music manufacturing and distribution facility. PHOTO BY MARJORIE LLOYD



U.S. Representative Bart Gordon, Sumner County's James Austin, and State Representative Mike McDonald joined in the grand opening festivities. PHOTO BY MARJORIE LLOYD



Governor Phil Bredesen and Samick CEO Baik Lee were presented sterling silver piano music boxes by Clay Walker, Director of Economic Development for Gallatin, on behalf of the city. Mayor Graves and Walker spoke to those gathered for the event. PHOTO BY MARJORIE LLOYD



Samick's Tony De La Rosa presents Governor Bredesen and Mayor Graves, as well as Gallatin's Economic Development Executive Director Clay Walker and State Commissioner Mack Kisber with "Tennessee Traveler" guitars designed by Greg Bennett. PHOTO BY MARJORIE LLOYD