

GACCE

GEORGIA ASSOCIATION of CHAMBER of COMMERCE EXECUTIVES

■ SEPTEMBER 2009



Chairman's Corner

Chip Cherry, CCE
President
Greater Macon Chamber

What does connecting the dots have to do with being an effective Chamber Executive? In our role as Chamber Executives, we are afforded the opportunity to interact with many different organizations – both public and private. We serve as a sounding board for both concepts and concerns. We serve in roles as leaders and followers. The various roles in which we serve provide us with a unique gift – the ability to develop a perspective that very few in our community have.

The benefit of having this unique perspective is that we can see all the pieces of the puzzle and how they fit together. We can assemble groups who normally do not work together, or in some case do not like each other, to tackle problems facing our community or to exploit opportunities. Sometimes our activity is subtle, such as making a suggestion to a community leader or an elected official and applauding them when the idea surfaces as their own.

I was told a long time ago that luck is defined as when opportunity and preparation meet. We can make our own luck by being a keen observer of what is happening around us. Our role places us in a unique position to spot opportunities and facilitate coalitions. The art lies in spotting the opportunity, articulating it, generating the buy-in, and supporting the implementation. When you can pull this off, you and your Chamber will be key players in your community.



Henry County – Chamber members model the “First Time Under the Lights” commemorative t-shirts the Chamber/CVB is selling for the Labor Day Weekend race at AMS.

Speaking of being key players – two of our very own were recognized as among the best Chambers in the United States. Nine Chambers from across the country were selected as finalists for the Chamber of the Year Award. The Warner Robins Area Chamber of Commerce and the Albany Area Chamber of Commerce were selected as finalists in their respective categories. Congratulations to Ed, Catherine, and their volunteers for a job well done!

■ In This Issue...

➤ Georgia Chamber Updates

The Chamber will be sponsoring an International Business Forum in September / The Education Reform Conference is set for October 2 at Georgia State & College University / Over 1,100 attended the 2009 Congressional Luncheon

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➤ GACCE Membership Council Meeting

The next meeting of the GACCE Membership Council has been set for Friday, September 18 at the Greater Macon Chamber. Please see details to register.

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2009-2010 GACCE Platinum Sponsors

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EVENTS CALENDAR



GACCE Leadership Conference

November 12 & 13, 2009
Cordele, GA

You don't want to miss this great training opportunity for your incoming Board members. Save the date!

September 1 – 17

Chamber Membership Drive
Barrow County Chamber

September 2

New Member Welcome Breakfast
Camden County Chamber

September 3

"Driving Stress Away" Class
Carroll County Chamber

September 8

Eggs & Issues Breakfast
Sylvester-Worth County Chamber

September 9

Small Business Lunch and Learn
Bainbridge-Decatur County Chamber

September 10

Quarterly Luncheon
Camden County Chamber

September 14

Lucky Monday on the River Event
Darien-McIntosh County Chamber

September 15

Building Green to Get Green
Carroll County Chamber

September 22

Social Networking Workshop
Hart County Chamber

September 29

Black Oak Asset Mgmt Classic
Cartersville-Bartow County Chamber

PAST CHAIR ARTICLE

Life After Chamber Work

Jane Fryer, GCCE

*Former President, LaGrange-Troup County Chamber
1987-1988 Chair of GACCE*



Life after surviving chamber work for 35 years ain't so bad! I started my chamber career in 1973 working part time at the LaGrange-Troup County Chamber for \$2.00 an hour. We had 135 members and a budget of \$35,000. I knew nothing about chamber work except from what I saw in the newspapers, which was always people cutting a ribbon or breaking ground for a new business. When I went for my interview with the Executive Director, I was very naïve about the true meaning of a chamber. I just needed a job and part time was great for me since I had young children at that time.

I quickly realized that the chamber was involved in everything in the community and that it played a vital part in the direction that our city and county's vision was headed. The Development Authority had just been formed three months before I came to work, and the chamber served as staff for the Development Authority. I was so intrigued with the vision of the Development Authority to attract non union, environmentally sound light industry to our community that I instantly was thrown into the middle of their prospect activity.

Then, several years later, our Executive Director left and after an exhausting search for the right person, I finally ended up with the job, mainly because they could not afford to pay a "professional chamber executive." We were blessed with excellent leadership on the board who was as eager to grow the chamber as I was. I began to take our leadership to GACCE meetings and they were excited to learn about accreditation, and hear from other chambers on how they were handling the committee structure, breakfasts and Business after Hours. Accreditation helped us get the structure, mission and strategic plan to help us grow.

As years went by, the chamber became so involved with everything that there seemed to be no time in the day or night. There was always something to do that had to be done right now. It seemed that instead of planning ahead and having everything in order, we were reacting to needs that must be met immediately. Electronic communication changed the face of everyone's work load. You could no longer say that the proposal was in the mail, it had to go out that day and people expected instant responses to everything.

I'm proud to have been a part of our chamber and will always be thankful that I applied for the part time job that was just going to be a way to help pay the bills at

home. It quickly became so much more than that. I never wanted to take another job after I got to the chamber. The members are part of your family. You go through their trials and tribulations with them and they are there to help you with your problems. I know I must have had the best chamber job in the world. The board of directors and most of the members have always supported me and helped me though everything. And, they always supported my need to attend Institute, and all of the GACCE programs. I am happy to have served as President of GACCE in the 80's. GACCE membership is family also. I called on so many of you to help me figure out a way to make things work and I hope that I helped some of you along the way.

I would not have traded jobs with anyone and now I have the next best job in the world.

When I announced my retirement from the chamber, I told the board that because of all that was going on with the chamber and the Development Authority, it was way too much for them to expect one person to do it all. That person could no longer be everything to everybody. I asked them to consider looking for a Chamber President and separate the Development Authority duties from it. For the past four years, it was way too much for one person to handle.

I was going to retire, go home and clean up the house and yard, baby sit and enjoy my friends. I am doing that, but I am also working part time for the Development Authority also. My office is still at the Chamber, but I stay out of the way of the new President so that she can set her goals and vision without the influence of an old has been. I am working with the new industries that are locating here, but I still have time for myself and family. I enjoyed most every minute of my career as Chamber President, but I don't miss the early morning meetings, the committee meetings or the board meetings, nor do I miss the pressure of getting everything done, keeping the membership up which also affects the budget.

I have been blessed to work with so many great professionals around the world. I hope you enjoy your career in the chamber as much as I did. Seek the help of your board, learn everything you can, learn to keep your mouth shut but speak when you must, and I wish all of you the very best.

EVENTS CALENDAR

September 29
Social Media Seminar
Douglas County Chamber

September 30 – October 2
Intercity Leadership Conference
Greater Columbus Chamber

CHAMBER FOLKS

Two Georgia Chambers Via for ACCE Chamber of the Year

The American Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE) annually recognizes chambers of commerce from across the U.S. for their work with the “Chamber of the Year” award. The award recognizes excellence in operations, member services, and community leadership, in each of four revenue categories. The **Albany Area Chamber** was honored to be a finalist in the \$900,001 - \$2,000,000 total revenue category, and the **Warner Robins Area Chamber** was honored to be a finalist in the \$450,001 - \$900,000 total revenue category. Congratulations to both chambers!

New Executive Director for Cairo-Grady Chamber

Brian Marlowe has been announced as the new Executive Director for the Chamber.

Dalton Exec Named to Commission

Chamber President & CEO **Brian Anderson** has been appointed to the newly combined Northwest Georgia Regional Commission One by the Lieutenant Governor.

Third Staff Member from Dublin Completes Institute

The Chamber is pleased to announce that a third current staff member is a graduate of the Institute for Organization Management through the US Chamber. **Kimberly Simmons** completed her fourth year of the program at the SE Institute in June.



CHAMBER UPDATES

Albany Area Chamber

Catherine Glover, President/CEO
The bi-monthly Membership Orientation was held in August. Thirty-nine people were in attendance and each one was given the opportunity to introduce themselves and tell a little about their business/organization.

The Chamber hosted a Healthcare Forum with US Senator Saxby Chambliss in August. The forum, originally scheduled to be held at the Albany Welcome Center, sparked so much interest that the venue was moved to Thronateeska Heritage Center’s open-air depot. Over 200 people braved the heat with fans in hand to listen to Sen. Chambliss and ask questions.

It was a pep rally at its finest as Albany State University and Urban Pulse Magazine hosted the August Business After Hours. Over a hundred people were in attendance, and all enjoyed the food, fellowship and networking opportunities.

The Chamber has a Fan Page on Facebook. Please become a fan and see what the Albany Area Chamber has going.

Augusta Metro Chamber

Sue Parr, President & CEO
The Chamber has been ranked in the top 10 nationally for membership retention in 2008. The American Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE) awarded the chamber with a Membership Achievement Award for its accomplishments in the \$900,001 to \$2 million total revenue category.

Bainbridge-Decatur County Chamber

Evelyn Clay, President
The Chamber held an Open House for the community August 25 to showcase the renovations that were recently completed. The Kirbo Foundation and the City of Bainbridge provided a gift that enabled the Chamber to undergo the much needed renovations.

The Small Business Lunch and Learn will take place September 9. Vic Pemberton, owner of Pepi Food Service, will present a course on Leadership and Customer Service at the Charles H Kirbo Regional Center on the Bainbridge College Campus.

The 2009 Small Business of the Year will be announced October 8 at the Membership Mingle event to be held on the deck of the Chamber.

The 2009 Fall Festival and Fair will take place November 3-7 and is set to be bigger and better this year featuring new rides, more kids’ activities, and even some racing pigs!



Albany – Chamber members were treated to a pep rally for the August Business After Hours.

Barrow County Chamber

Thomas Jennings, President
The Chamber will begin its Membership Drive on September 1 at the Chamber Membership Luncheon. The drive will continue until September 17 where it’ll end at the Chamber’s Road Rally Picnic.

Camden County Chamber

Christine Daniel, President
The Chamber will hold a New Member Welcome Breakfast, September 2, at the Citizens State Bank Community Center.

The Chamber’s Quarterly Luncheon will be held September 10 at Borrell Creek. The topic for the meeting will be the Work Ready Certification Process.

Carroll County Chamber

Daniel Jackson, President/CEO
The Chamber’s Women’s Business Alliance is hosting a ‘Driving Stress Away’ Car Maintenance class, September 3.

The Chamber Environmental Projects Committee will host ‘Building Green to Get Green’ on September 15, focusing attention on ‘green’ construction practices and LEED Certification.

Carroll County will host the 2009 Class of Leadership Georgia, September 10-12, highlighting the community’s exceptional educational programming, healthcare advances, agri-business, tourism and sustainable community initiatives.

Cartersville-Bartow County Chamber

Kay Read, President
The Chamber’s golf tournament – the Black Oak Asset Management Classic- will take place September 29 at the Cartersville Country Club.

Catoosa County Chamber

Martha Eaker, President & CEO
The Catoosa Golf Classic was held in July at Battlefield Golf and Country Club in Fort

■ CHAMBER FOLKS

GACCE Names New Director

Brad Day with the Tifton-Tift County Chamber has been named to the GACCE Board of Directors. Brad is taking over the seat of Ken Stoner (Effingham) after his recent resignation.



New Executive for Heard County Chamber

Kathy Knowles has been named the new President of the Chamber.

New Executive Named at Jones County/Gray Chamber

The Chamber has announced that **Doug Redmond** will serve as its Executive Director. His first day with the Chamber was August 17. Doug previously served as the Regional Representative for Region 8 for the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

New Staff Member for Liberty County Chamber

The Chamber is proud to announce **Genese L. Baker**, a native of Liberty County, recently accepted the newly created position of Director of Membership & Programs.



■ CHAMBER UPDATES

Catoosa County Chamber (cont.)

Oglethorpe. There was a full field of players, a wonderful lunch sponsored by AllStar Catering, lots of mulligans and “skirts” sold. The proceeds were \$14,000 net to the Chamber! This was an awesome event and thoroughly enjoyed by the players, sponsors, volunteers and staff.

Cobb Chamber

Bill Cooper, President & CEO
Leadership Cobb, the Chamber’s leadership development program, has selected the participants in the 2009-2010 class. More than 200 people were nominated for the 45 available positions. There are more than 1,000 program alumni, including some of the most prominent business and community leaders in the state. The program, which began in 1983, starts in late summer and runs through spring 2010.

The Chamber’s Chairman’s Club continued its tradition of first-rate speakers at its most recent program featuring Dr. Martin Regalia, Senior Vice President and Chief Economist for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Regalia spoke about economy at the August luncheon

Dalton-Whitfield Chamber

Brian Anderson, President & CEO
U.S. Senator Saxby Chambliss recently spoke about healthcare reform to a crowd of over 250 Chamber Members.

The Chamber recently held a Wake Up...Whitfield breakfast featuring Jason Murphy, who presented a seminar about all things internet. He gave tips and hints about how to use Google search, search engine marketing, social networking and how to see what your competitors are doing online.

Darien-McIntosh County Chamber

Wally Orrel, President
The Chamber’s annual auction, “LUCKY MONDAY ON THE RIVER” will take place

Darien-McIntosh Chamber (cont.)

September 14 at Skipper’s Fish Camp Restaurant. There will be a Silent & Live Auction, great music with Michael Hulett, fresh Skippers food and auction bargains on hundreds of items such as fishing charters, hunts, dinners, and hotels & lodging.

Douglas County Chamber

Kali Boatright, President
The Young Professionals Connection recently held a social media seminar that was such a huge success that they have been asked to hold another session with more in-depth training on creating a social media plan for businesses. Lee Brodgen Culberson with Professional Mojo will be hosting this all day seminar September 29.

Recently, participants in the 2009 Youth Leadership Douglas Program had the opportunity to really get to know one another during their retreat at Banning Mills. Banning Mills facilitators offered the leadership classes fun, safe and very productive team building adventure activities. They included the Low-High Ropes Course, the High Ropes Course and even the Tree Flight Zip Line. These challenging activities helped to promote teamwork and collaboration, work performance, creative communication and did we mention lots of fun?

Dublin-Laurens County Chamber

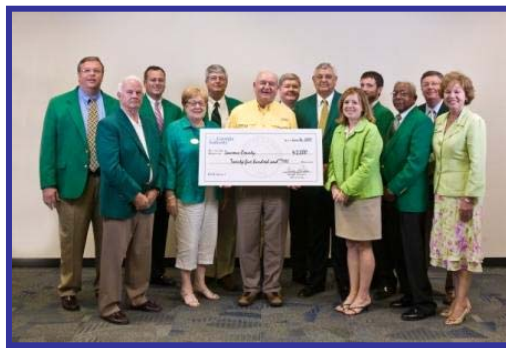
Willie Paulk, GCCE, President
The Chamber held a Board Retreat to welcome new members and discuss the program of work for the 2009-2010 term. The day included a bus tour with stops at local industry sites, the Dublin-Laurens Welcome Center, downtown Dublin, and the new assisted living facility, the Benton House.

The Chamber is currently collecting supplies for the 143 soldiers deployed from the Alpha Co. 148th Brigade. The Chamber has asked members to participate and will continue to collect items at future events throughout the year.

The Chamber and the Dublin-Laurens Co. Development Authority were recently awarded grants from the OneGeorgia Authority at their June meeting in Brunswick. The Chamber received a \$2,500 matching grant for a small business marketing series and the Development Authority was awarded a \$488,000 Equity Grant to assist with a road construction project for the I-16 Industrial Park.

Eatonton-Putnam Chamber

Roddie Anne Blackwell, President
The Chamber is preparing for a Decade of Delectable Eats with their largest fundraiser, the 10th Annual Taste of Eatonton on, October 5.



Dublin – The Chamber was recently awarded a \$2,500 grant from OneGeorgia Authority.

■ OCTOBER 2009 Newsletter

The deadline for the **OCTOBER** GACCE newsletter will be **Friday, September 25, 2009.** Please send updates to Tiffany Fulmer at tfulmer@gacce.org.



Georgia Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives

GACCE exists to provide exceptional services to its members in the areas of professional development, information, and networking opportunities, and to advocate the local chamber’s role in economic and community development.

■ CEO PROFILE



Ralph C. Staffins, III

President
Wilkinson County Chamber

The Wilkinson County Chamber has a staff of two who serve a membership of 100.

How did you get into the Chamber business?

I accepted the position of Economic Development Director of Wilkinson County back in June of 2008. Part of my responsibilities was to lead the chamber of commerce as their president. I soon found out that it is one of the most enjoyable parts of my job.

What do you like best about your job?

My favorite part of the job is being an integral part of the business community in Wilkinson County. I enjoy meeting business owners and employees and helping their businesses to grow and thrive. Specific parts of the job I like are planning events and interacting with the community.

What's the biggest challenge you face in your community?

Since my community is small, there are a small number of commercial and retail businesses. We have a limited number of resources at the Chamber because we only have 100 members. Because of this, I have to be very creative in the way I run things and the goals I set.

Who has helped you the most in becoming a successful Chamber Executive?

All of the veteran chamber executives in Middle Georgia have helped me learn the business of being a chamber executive. To name a few, Willie Paulk of Dublin, Tara Peters of Milledgeville, and Judy Sherling of Twiggs County have all given me great advice. Willie Paulk has really become one of the best mentors that I could possibly ask for. My Chamber board has also played a huge part in our success over the past year.

continued on next page...

■ CHAMBER UPDATES

Greater Columbus Chamber

Mike Gaymon, GCCE, President & CEO
U.S. Senator Saxby Chambliss visited the Chamber in August to talk about healthcare. He also heard from local healthcare providers.

The Chamber's Military Affairs committee briefed U.S. Congressman Nathan Deal in August on the transformation of Fort Benning to the Maneuver Center of Excellence with the move of the Armor School from Fort Knox to Fort Benning. At the same time, U.S. Congressman Lynn Westmoreland met with the Chamber's Transportation committee. Senior staff from both U.S. Senators offices also recently met at the Chamber to discuss Chattahoochee water issues.

The Chamber's Business and Healthcare Expo was held in August. One of the attractions this year was Stryker and HUMV from Fort Benning. The Intercity Leadership Conference is set for September 30-October 2 in Mobile, AL. Chamber Executives and their top volunteer leadership are invited to attend and bring back ideas for consideration into their communities. The total cost including travel, meals, lodging, entertainment and all fees is only \$1,295. The areas of best/worst practices will include areas such as: downtown development, education attainment, economic development, city stats (a measurement tool that the City uses for performance and effectiveness) and planning. The focus is on the process of how changes were made and should be applicable to almost any city regardless of size.

Greater Macon Chamber

Chip Cherry, CCE, President

The Chamber co-hosted the *Annual New Teacher Luncheon* in July with Education First at Ballard Hudson Middle School. Chamber businesses donated many door prizes to welcome all the new teachers, ranging from gift cards, to iPods, to laminating machines.

The Chamber hosted a *Healthcare Reform Update* in August presented by US Senator Saxby Chambliss. The event, held at Central Georgia Technical College and sponsored by Boeing, was a huge success with nearly 200 people in attendance.

Good Morning Macon was also held in August with 150 Chamber Members attending at the Douglass Theatre downtown to eat a continental breakfast and listen to US Congressman Jim Marshall deliver a Federal Update from Washington DC.



Eatonton – The 10th Annual Taste of Eatonton will take place in October – yum!

Greater Macon Chamber (continued)

Glen Gould, with the Metro-Atlanta Chamber and Inspiration Agents, spoke at the *Business to Business Expo Boot Camp* in August in order to prepare Chamber members for the *Business to Business Expo* to be held November 10.

Red Carpet Thursday, formerly Business After Hours, was held in late August. The event took place at Homewood Suites where they featured hors d'oeuvres, drinks, a Baggo Tournament, and live music. They are rolling out the red carpet for Macon Businesses, and they hope this is the first of many successful Red Carpet Thursdays.

Gwinnett Chamber

Jim Maran, President & CEO

National Electronic Attachment, Inc. (NEA), the recognized leader in Internet solutions for the healthcare industry, has announced that it has relocated their corporate headquarters to Gwinnett County. The company, which offers systems designed to make the process of insurance submissions and processing as easy as possible for the Patient, the Dental Office and the Insurance Payor, brings 28 jobs to the County immediately and is expecting to hire at least one person every month for the next two years.

The Chamber's all volunteer-led Total Resource Development Campaign, providing leadership and financial resources to advance the community into the 21st century, kicked off in August to achieve their goal of \$625,000. The racing-themed campaign, *Gwinnett Chamber 625*, will continue through January 2010 generating new members, program and event sponsorships, selling advertising in Chamber publications and raising awareness of the Chamber throughout the region.

The Chamber has partnered with Collette Vacations to offer residents from Gwinnett and Metro Atlanta the opportunity to take the trip of a lifetime to Tuscany on March 18 – March 27, 2010. The Chamber's trip to Tuscany includes 10 days and 13

■ CEO PROFILE

Ralph C. Staffins, III
President
 Wilkinson County Chamber

What piece of advice would you give to a new Chamber Executive?

Most importantly remember, nothing can be accomplished overnight. It takes time and patience to turn a Chamber in the direction you know it needs to go. Make sure you have a vision and set goals in place. Encourage your board to be involved in more than just the meetings.

As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up and why?

I wanted to be many things, including a Judge. I wanted to make sure justice was served and I thought I wanted to be in politics, so a judge was the likely dream .

■ GEORGIA CHAMBER

Chamber to Sponsor International Business Forum

The Chamber, through its International Policy Committee, is sponsoring a half-day forum on **September 24** for members and other interested parties on “Understanding the Challenges and Opportunities for International Business Development.” Held at the **Augusta Marriott** and hosted by the City of Augusta, attendees will be treated to presentations from state legislative leaders, international business representatives, international finance and tax experts, and hear how leaders in Augusta are using sporting events as international economic development vehicles. For more information, visit www.gachamber.com.

Education Forum to be Held in October

Sponsored by GCSU, the Georgia Chamber, the Georgia Public Policy Foundation and the Center for an Educated Georgia, this first-of-its-kind summit will be held **October 2** and will feature national experts on innovations that are giving students across America what they need to succeed in the classroom and the workplace. Tickets are \$25, with lunch included. Visit www.gachamber.com/edreform for more information.

■ CHAMBER UPDATES

Gwinnett Chamber (continued)

meals with trip highlights including Rome, Assisi, Basilica of St. Francis, Montecatini Terme, Florence, a Tuscan feast, San Gimignano, a winery tour, and Siena. Per person rates are \$2,789 for double, \$3,189 for single, and \$2,759 for triple.

Habersham Chamber

Judy Taylor, Ph.D., President
 The Chamber has teamed up with Geocaching Solutions to host “The Lost Treasure of Habersham,” an event that should bring many visitors to the Northeast Georgia area. Running between August 2009 and February 2010, “The Lost Treasure of Habersham” uses the tools and techniques of geocaching to get visitors roaming the county, visiting sponsors, and winning prizes. In geocaching, seekers use a GPS (global positioning system) receiver and coordinates to find boxes of trinkets, either in the woods, on trails or in urban areas. The difference in “The Lost Treasure of Habersham” is that seekers will find clues that take them to the businesses of sponsors, and they will be registered to win real prizes, not the trinkets usually found in geocaches. Simon Los of Geocaching Solutions says the goal in the promotion is to bring geocachers, as well as families looking for a fun weekend activity, into Habersham County. “This is a good old fashioned treasure/scavenger hunt, running around the county to see what Habersham has to offer,” Los says. Los says that even those who don’t own a GPS receiver can participate, using the Web site and Google Maps.

Hart County Chamber

Michele Dipert, President
 The Chamber will be hosting a workshop titled, “Streaming in Revenue: Utilizing Social Networking and the Internet to Increase Profitability,” on September 22 at Catechee Golf Club. The workshop will be presented by Hannah Smith, Communications Manager of the Athens, GA Convention and Visitors Bureau.



Valdosta – Checks were given out at the World Class Recognition Early Bird Breakfast.

Henry County Chamber

Kay Pippin, President
 The Chamber’s Transportation Committee learned just how busy the *World’s Busiest Airport* really is during a presentation by Robert Kennedy, Assistant General Manager of Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, at its August meeting. The airport serves 90 million passengers a year (the next busiest airport is Chicago with 69 million). This award winning airport contributes \$24 billion in business revenue to Metro Atlanta annually, resulting in 393,000 jobs paying over \$15 billion in personal income. Everyone in attendance agreed the airport is another reason to be proud to be in Georgia!

The Chamber’s Education Committee sponsored the Annual Henry County Teacher Induction Program (TIP) luncheon held during a week-long orientation for new teachers. Chamber member volunteers stuffed welcome bags filled to the brim with school supplies, useful promotional items, gift certificates and tickets to a NASCAR Race, donated by Chamber members. Representatives from dozens of Henry County businesses turned out to help serve a delicious lunch and to welcome and present gift bags to approximately 200 new teachers.

The Leadership Henry Board of Directors hosted its annual “Kick-off Dinner” for the 33 new recruits composing the Leadership Henry Class of 2009-10. One of the Chamber’s strongest programs and the community’s greatest assets, Leadership Henry now boasts over 500 graduates.

Henry County is proud to be the home of the Atlanta Motor Speedway and two NASCAR races each year. For the first time, AMS will host a night race over the Labor Day weekend. In honor of this historic occasion, the Chamber/CVB is selling “First Time Under the Lights” commemorative T-shirts and hopes to have hundreds of citizens and employees of hotels, retailers and restaurants wearing the shirts during race week to welcome NASCAR fans.

Peach County Chamber

Perry Swanson, President/CEO
 Missouri-based Redneck Trailer Supplies recently announced that it will locate a new distribution center in Byron, creating 10 jobs and investing \$5 million. The 17,000-square-foot facility in the North Peach Industrial Park will distribute a full line of trailer parts to accommodate customers in the southeastern region.

Swainsboro-Emanuel Chamber

Bill Rogers, Jr. President
 As part of ongoing efforts to assist local businesses and industries during difficult economic times, the Chamber, the Swainsboro/Emanuel County Joint Development Authorities and the Small Business

■ GEORGIA CHAMBER

2009 Congressional Luncheon Draws Over 1,100 Attendees

The Georgia Chamber's annual Congressional Luncheon brought over 1,100 members and community leaders to the Georgia National Fairgrounds and Agricenter in Perry on August 18. Attendees participated in a special salute to Georgia's military, and a panel including Representatives Sanford Bishop, John Barrow, Nathan Deal, and Lynn Westmoreland, answered questions and provided insight on topics such as health care reform, immigration reform, climate change legislation, and EFCA.

Luncheon attendees who are interested in finding out more about the discussion topics were encouraged to join the Georgia Business Action Network (www.gachamber.com/GBAN) to stay informed about issue developments.



■ CHAMBER UPDATES

Swainsboro Chamber (cont.)

Development Center at Georgia Southern University sponsored a breakfast seminar in August entitled "Survival Tips for Tough Economic Times." Some sixty individuals, representing 32 different companies, gained insight into strategies for an economic downturn. The seminar was free to all businesses and industries in the area. Topics included solving cash crisis, managing inventory, managing accounts payable and receivable, adjusting prices, marketing ideas, reducing cost and other valuable tips.

Sylvester-Worth County Chamber

Hollie Jones, President

The Chamber partnered with the Best Friends Humane Society in Worth County to host the first annual Poker Run and Community BBQ in August. It was a fun event for all with over 40 motorcycle participants and over 400 plates sold. All proceeds were split between the two organizations.

The Chamber's Eggs and Issues Breakfast featuring Rep. Austin Scott will be held September 8 at the Margaret Jones Public Library.

Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber

Myrna Ballard, President

The Chamber had a wonderful month of August, with record attendance at the Annual World Class Recognition Early Bird Breakfast. WALB morning news anchor, Karla-Heath Sands, was keynote speaker and presented winners with their \$1,500 checks.

To increase membership, the Chamber will be kicking off its membership campaign this fall. The campaign offers incentives for businesses that join during the campaign, and even involves the Chamber Board helping the membership director get her "foot in the door" by making appointments with prospects.

Warner Robins Area Chamber

Ed Rodriguez, President & CEO

August was another busy month for the Chamber with a Business After Hours, a Robins Regional Business Forum and Sales Leads at Sunrise Speed Networking. Then they were able to celebrate again the victory of the Warner Robins American Little Leagues' Girls Softball team as they won the 2009 World Series!

■ GACCE Membership Council Meeting Date

The next meeting for the GACCE Membership Council has been set for:

Friday, September 18, 2009

The meeting will be held from 10:30am to 2:00pm at the Greater Macon Chamber. Any GACCE member in good standing interested in

Membership topics may attend. All meetings are free of charge and lunch will be provided.

Contact **Beth Morrison** with the Dalton-Whitfield Chamber if you have any questions. You can contact Beth at morrison@daltonchamber.org or at (706) 278-7373. Hope to see you there!



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