

■ CHAMBER UPDATES

Albany Area Chamber

Catherine Glover, President/CEO

The Chamber recently held a Lunch & Learn focusing on taking advantage of the current “best practices” in planning, designing, and sending email campaigns. Included were strategies on how to best blend email marketing and social media to benefit business and build relationships. A bonus session was held and gave a guided tour through the features of the Constant Contact system. Items covered were how to set up account options, add signup boxes to your website and emails, load a list, build a campaign, and brand your email to match websites and logos, text editing and how to work with graphics and colors.

The Chamber announced a new partnership with their institutions of higher learning entitled Young Ambassadors (YA!) at a luncheon/press conference in September. Each institution selected their best and brightest students who will represent their schools at Chamber events. YA! gives these students the opportunity to become more involved in the business community and hopefully upon graduation will elect to stay in the southwest Georgia region. The Chamber’s “seasoned Ambassadors” presented each student with a blue vest to wear at Chamber events. These vests will set the YA! representatives apart from the green jackets that the Chamber Ambassador’s have donned for many years.



Cintas, WSWG, The CW44, WSWG DT2, Albany Museum of Art and Locos Grill & Pub rolled out the red carpet for a premier Business After Hours spotlighting the new CBS and The CW programming for 2011-2012. The grand prize drawing was a \$2,500 advertising package from WSWG.

Augusta Metro Chamber

Sue Parr, President & CEO

In September, members of the Chamber gathered for the Member Economic Luncheon entitled, “Destination Augusta.” Key components of the presentations by guest speakers Samara Anderson, Vice President and Director of Marketing for North Star Destination Strategies and Barry White, President, Augusta Convention Visitors Bureau included how businesses can connect to a community brand and statistics on visitor economic impact in Augusta through travel and tourism, sporting events, arts & culture as well as meetings and conferences. Approximately 150 members attended the luncheon.

"From On The Hill to Capitol Hill" will be the theme of this year's Women In Business Signature Event, set for November 8, 2011. The Keynote speaker this year is Augusta Native, Washington Insider, and Entrepreneur Extraordinaire Gloria Dittus, who specializes in issue advocacy, strategic communications, corporate branding and positioning, and marketing communications in Washington, DC.

Nominations are currently being accepted for the Chamber’s Entrepreneur of the Year award. This award recognizes an entrepreneur who has distinguished themselves by their success in business, but also by their creativity, innovative spirit and community involvement. The Entrepreneur of the Year award will be presented at the December Member Economic Luncheon, which will feature guest speaker Mayor Kasim Reed of Atlanta.

The Chamber is excited to announce that one of their Top 10 in 10 Young Professionals to watch was named to Georgia Trend’s 40 Under 40 list. Shizuo Z Kuwahara, music director of Symphony Orchestra Augusta, was selected after being nominated by the Chamber. This is the second year in a row that a winner of Augusta’s Top 10 in 10 Young Professionals to Watch has been chosen for Georgia Trend’s 40 Under 40.

Catoosa County Chamber

Martha Eaker, President & CEO

The 2011 Chamber Golf Classic took place in August at Battlefield Golf Club. The annual event again proved to be very successful with 27 Teams and 28 Tee Sponsors!

In celebration of our recent successful membership drive and as a thank you to our members, the Chamber hosted “Tailgating at the Chamber” in September.

The Leadership Catoosa Class of 2011 is set to graduate October 13 at the Chamber’s monthly Networking at Lunch. This year we have a graduating class of 14!



Cobb Chamber

David Connell, President & CEO

Kicking off a weeklong community effort to celebrate Public Safety Appreciation Week, the Chamber will honor Cobb County’s most distinguished public safety personnel during its annual Public Safety Appreciation breakfast on October 3. Several awards, including the Public Safety Employee of the Year Award, Award of Merit, Distinguished Achievement Award and Medal of Valor will be presented to officials who go above and beyond the call of duty. Nominations were received from public safety agencies throughout Cobb County, including police, fire, sheriff’s office, campus police and EMS and all nominees will be recognized at the breakfast.

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Cobb Chamber *(continued)*

The Chamber is proud to be celebrating 23 years of Give Our Schools a Hand (GOSH). GOSH is an annual celebration that honors more than 130 Teachers of the Year from Cobb County, Marietta City and post-secondary education systems. This salute to public education is one of the largest in the nation. The purpose of GOSH is not only to show appreciation for teachers in the community, but also to encourage area businesses, parents and civic groups to take an active role in enhancing the quality of education. Events this year include: the Handprint Unveiling Ceremony on October 5 and Teacher of the Year Celebration Breakfast and Pep Rally on October 25.

A group of 30 individuals representing business, government and the non-profit community attended the Chamber's Washington Fly-In held in September. This annual event allows attendees to connect with Georgia's representatives and join the Chamber's leadership team in advocating pro-business and community agendas at the Capitol through face-to-face interaction. Guests attended a Georgia Chamber legislative briefing featuring Rep. Paul Ryan, John Boehner and Charlie Cook, meetings on Capitol Hill with Congressman Phil Gingrey, Senator Johnny Isakson, Senator Saxby Chambliss, Congressman David Scott and Congressman Tom Price. Attendees also attended a private reception and dinner at The Occidental hosted by AT&T, as well as an in-depth tour of the Pentagon.



Columbia County Chamber

Tammy Shepherd, IOM, President/CEO

The Chamber unveiled a new logo and website on September 7. The new look is part of a major branding and buy local campaign. The new logo and tag line establishes a separate identity from the county government and identifies the Chamber as a membership organization. In advocacy news, over 200 people attended the "State of the Community Address" with a panel of 7 speakers including 2 city mayors, Chairman of Commission, Superintendent of Schools, CEOs of the CVB, Development Authority and Chamber.

Douglas County Chamber

Kali Boatright, GCCE, President & CEO

The Chamber held its annual Chamber Golf & Tennis Classic in September at Mirror Lake Golf & Country Club. Over 400 golfers, tennis players, volunteers and sponsored participants in the event presented by GreyStone Power. Participants enjoyed the "Around the World in 18 Holes" theme including hole decorations such as Mexico, USA, Portugal and even the South Pole. Winners of the decorating contest included West Georgia Technical College's Fiesta themed hole and 4 Seasons Storage/ Xzibits Inc.'s "Redneck Beverage Buggy" took the prize for Best Decorated Beverage Cart.



Eatonton-Putnam Chamber

Roddie Anne Blackwell, President

The Chamber's Leadership Putnam Class of 2011 completed their first class project in September. Class members donated their time to make general outdoor repairs to a home in downtown Eatonton, which included cleaning up the property, yard work, installing underpinning and pressure washing. The Leadership members decided on a project that would support the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing Program.



Greater Columbus Chamber

Mike Gaymon, GCCE, President & CEO

The Chamber took its 18th Inter City Leadership Conference to Charlotte, NC recently. One site they visited was the EpiCentre, named for its location near Charlotte's heart, which is a \$275 million mix-use complex where the city's old convention center stood. Its buildings include offices, entertainment, dining and a condominium tower called 210 Trade Street that rises 53 stories. There's also a 12-floor hotel. EpiCentre features are unique to Charlotte, among them a half-acre park five stories up. Opening onto sidewalks from lower levels are dozens of retail venues such as restaurants at various price points, coffee shops, wine bars, sports bars, nightclubs and a multi-screen movie theater.

The Chamber hosted a HealthCare Reform workshop in September. More than 130 people attended, and the event featured Katie (Strong) Hays, Executive Director of Congressional and Public Affairs, U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Vincent L. Frakes, Federal Policy Director, Center for Health Transformation.

The Chamber held their Partners in Education Kick-Off Conference Embracing Technology in September with more than 300 educators and their partners in attendance.

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Greater Dalton Chamber

Brian Anderson, President & CEO

The Leadership Dalton-Whitfield program begins its 27th year with a class of 38 community leaders enrolled.

Prime Time—the new exciting membership retention party was held in September at the NorthWest Georgia Trade & Convention Center. This event served as a welcome party for our recent addition of 241 new Chamber members, during our Membership event.

Chamber Diplomats recently held their year-end celebration. All 12 Diplomats of the Month were recognized. Marlene Jones with Cross Plains Community Partner was recognized as Diplomat of the Year. Thirty-four Diplomats were present at the event.



Greater Hall Chamber

Kit Dunlap, President & CEO

“Customer Service” was the topic of the Chamber’s September Small Business Seminar. 115 participated and learned how to effectively deal with customers and clients. This is a monthly seminar on timely topics for small businesses. A satisfaction survey followed the seminar which verified the seminar was useful.

Road Atlanta hosted the South Hall Business Coalition. The program featured Road Atlanta personnel talking about the 14th Annual Petit Le Mans Race which is 10 hours or 1000 miles of world-class sports car racing with team from North America and Europe. The 4-day event brought in some 135,000 visitors to Hall County. The South Hall Business Coalition is a Chamber sponsored program that meets monthly.

The Chamber hosted the Georgia Chamber Power Luncheon in September. Over 150 members from across the region attended. Chairman of the Georgia Chamber, Doug Carter and President, Chris Clark, talked about the 2012 Transportation Investment Act and Governor Nathan Deal’s Georgia Competitiveness Initiative.

Henry County Chamber

Kay Pippin, President

The Chamber hosted the 4th annual Henry County Intergovernmental Retreat in late August. The two-day planning summit, attended by over 50 local elected and appointed officials and Chamber leadership, was held in Columbus, Georgia. While the summit focused largely on transportation, participants had an opportunity to learn about Columbus-Muscogee’s consolidated government, public-private partnerships, regional approach to economic development, and the city’s investments in tourism.

The E²: Education & Economics Task Force, an initiative of the Chamber and its community partners, has completed over 10 months of study and work and in late August submitted a final set of recommendations. A video about the work of the task force can be seen on the Chamber’s website, www.henrycounty.com.

Scott Condra, Senior Vice President with Jacoby Development, Inc, shared with Chamber members Jacoby’s plans to build an “Aerotropolis” on the old Ford Plant site off I-75, just north of Henry County in Hapeville, Ga. The site is adjacent to Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, the world’s busiest airport and Metro Atlanta’s number one economic engine. Porsche North America has already signed on to be the major tenant in the new development. Condra, speaking during the Chamber’s September Business Boosters Luncheon, said Porsche will bring several hundred new jobs to the location and will build a test track similar to its Porsche Silverstone facility in England. The facility will also be near the new \$1.4 billion terminal dedicated to international travel and scheduled to open in 2012.



Jackson County Area Chamber

Shane Short, President & CEO

The Chamber has launched a new Buy Local Campaign in conjunction with a Shop Chamber Member’s First campaign.

Jackson County also received Camera Ready Certification at the Governor’s Tourism Luncheon in September in Macon.



Liberty County Chamber

Leah Poole, Executive Director

Liberty County was one of 23 Georgia counties designated Camera Ready at the annual Governor’s Tourism Conference.

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Milledgeville-Baldwin County Chamber

April Bragg, President & CEO

The Chamber recently hosted Reality Check at our 3 local high schools: Baldwin High School, John Milledge Academy, and GMC Prep School. This great educational program is offered to high school juniors. It provides students the opportunity to experience real life as if they were 25 years old and the sole or primary support of their household. This hands-on program allows students to interact while gaining a greater understanding and appreciation about financial management on a level students can understand. The Chamber is proud to offer this opportunity to our local schools!

The Education Committee of Partners for Progress hosted an “Educate to Graduate – Stay in School” kick-off encouraging our community to stand strong and be a mentor for young adults as they prepare for graduation. We also awarded Small Business of the Quarter to Cogentes, a business and technology consulting firm that helps organizations realize their business strategy by maximizing their investments in people, process and technology; substantially increasing shareholder value.



Paulding Chamber

Carolyn Delamont, President

The Chamber hosted the 8th Annual Ragsdale Heating and Air Clay Shoot at Blalock Lakes in Newnan, Georgia in August. This two day event kicked off with the Floor IT Beef & Bonfire Dinner on Friday evening where everyone enjoyed live entertainment and grilled steaks on the back lawn of the lodge. Saturday morning Congressman Phil Gingrey, Honorary Chairman, welcomed all the participants and helped kick off the shoot. This sold out event continues to grow each year in popularity and profits and is the largest fundraiser for the Chamber.



Polk County Chamber

Tamaka Hudson, Executive Director

The Chamber will host its 13th Annual Small Business Expo on October 6 at The Purks Building in Cedartown.



Robins Regional Chamber

Ed Rodriguez, GCCE, President & CEO

The Chamber held a kick-off reception at the Chamber in honor of the 28 outstanding high school juniors that were selected by their faculty advisors to participate in the Youth Leadership Robins Region Program. The Youth Leadership Robins Region program exposes young leaders to the key elements that form a strong and dynamic community and thus encourages their input and creativity. It makes students aware of the many opportunities for them to remain in the Robins Region after their post-secondary education by equipping students with the tools needed for future leadership roles in our society. Selection is based on character interest in the community, and the desire to shape idea and attitudes in others.

The Chamber hosted the September edition for the Robins Regional Business Forum, which underscored the *Importance of Shopping Local*. The forum encouraged businesses and consumers to spend their dollars locally to enhance the region's economy as well as unveil the new Shop Local Campaign: “Choose Robins Region.” Cheryl Taylor, new chairman for the campaign, was guest speaker at the forum. Attendees learned how long-time community partner, Warner Robins Supply and other businesses have contributed to the economic growth here in the Robins Region and what consumers can do to further the mission.

The Chamber hosted the 21st Annual Business on the Greens: Chamber PlayDay. This year's 2-day event began with the Super Business After Hours: Robins Regional Food Fest & Silent Auction at the Museum of Aviation, featuring 15 of the area's finest food service providers and culminated with the Business on the Greens Golf Tournament held at The Landings Golf Club. Nearly 300 guests attended the Super Business After Hours event and dined on great food from our member businesses, and over 130 golfers participated in the annual golf event.



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Swainsboro-Emanuel County Chamber

Bill Rogers, Jr., Executive Director

What had East Georgia College President John Black, Swainsboro Mayor Charles Schwabe, Chamber President Bill Rogers, East Georgia College Foundation members Nick Herrington and Carol Youmans carrying boxes, furniture, clothes, and computers on a hot August day? It was "Move-In Day" at East Georgia College! Some 200 students moved into East Georgia College campus housing in August. The historic event marked the College's first foray into student housing. East Georgia College broke ground on the new 200 bed, state-of-the-art complex in August, and each apartment offers four private bedrooms, two baths and a furnished living room and kitchen. Residents will enjoy designer furniture, big screen LCD television, 24/7 security, mail service, utilities, and internet. The building also has a laundry area, study space, a computer lab, a balcony area, and an outdoor recreational area. Nineteen companies and organizations set up tents and tables in an effort to make students aware of local products and services offered.

Community banker and motivational speaker Derek Sills was the keynote speaker for the 2011 Leadership Emanuel Class in September. The kickoff dinner was held at the Sudie A. Fulford Learning Center on the campus of East Georgia College. Sills' inspiring presentation has been made before many statewide organizations including the Georgia Bankers Association and GACCE. This marks the third leadership class initiative in four years sponsored by the Chamber.



Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber

Myrna Ballard, President

It is no secret that our members are faced with more problems than ever before and increased uncertainty has forced everyone to seek ways to do more with less. To help provide relief to area businesses, the Chamber partnered with chambers across the Southeast region to hold the Chamber Small Business Conference. This half-day conference featured four speakers who presented attendees with information on low-cost options for maintaining and growing their business. Sessions focused on knowing your company's financial situation, establishing relationships with your banker and financial team and using social media and websites to optimize your online presence. Jeff Hanson, Executive Vice President of Southwest Georgia Bank, stressed the importance of having a "financial team" at the event.



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