

## ■ CHAMBER UPDATES

### Albany Area Chamber

*Catherine Glover, President/CEO*

State Rep. Ed Rynders spoke at the Chamber's "Lunch with Leaders" held in August at the Albany Welcome Center. He addressed the 18.3 percent increase in Georgia's population, but also the decrease in South Georgia's population, including Dougherty County. While Georgia's increase in population has earned it an additional seat in Congress, Southwest Georgia's smaller population may cause the region to lose at least 2 Senate seats and as many as 6 House seats. The new population could possibly cause the House Reapportionment Committee to divide Dougherty County between districts 150 and 151, which would remove district 152 altogether. Rep. Rynders, Sen. Freddie Sims, and Rep. Carol Fullerton also commented on the affects of redistricting and the need to "think and act more like a region."

Deborah Bowie, senior director of public policy and communications, participated in a town hall meeting at Albany Technical College, sponsored by the Governor's Office of Workforce Development. During this meeting, Melvin Everson, the governor's executive director of workforce development, discussed how to best integrate a 'soft skills' certification curriculum into the Dougherty County School System. 'Soft skills' include things such as punctuality, ability to learn, appropriate business attire and ability to work as a team. Everson cited statistics that show 45 percent of terminations that occur during or after probationary periods are not due to the lack of technical skills, but to the lack of soft skills. The new soft skills curriculum will be set up throughout the state in grades K through 12, and is meant to accompany their diplomas as a sign of professionalism, Everson said.

Quail Unlimited hosted the August Business After Hours at their new home on Third Avenue. Hundreds of people gathered after the official ribbon cutting to help Quail Unlimited celebrate the grand opening for their national headquarters in Albany.

Emerge Albany hosted 60 young professionals in August at their Second Friday Luncheon. The American Heart Association spoke to the group, highlighting their Heart Walk in October, which is Emerge Albany's 'Gives Back' project. At the event, Emerge Albany collected school supplies to be distributed to children of the families participating in Strive2Thrive, an initiative led by the Chamber Foundation that seeks to bring community support and resources to people in poverty.



### Augusta Metro Chamber

*Sue Parr, President & CEO*

In order to better support the growth of our area's businesses dedicated to customer care management, the Chamber has started a Customer Care Centers Council (4C) which will meet quarterly to discuss and share information on the needs, conditions and best practices of their business as well as serve as a networking forum. Chamber member companies such as T-Mobile, ADP, Sitel, Knology of Augusta, ERS - A Convergent Company, Teleperformance, AT&T, Delta, and Electrolux have been invited to participate in the 4C meetings. For over three years, the Chamber has successfully grown and managed a similar effort for our members in manufacturing and industry called the Manufacturers Exchange. It is this success that we hope replicate for the benefit of the customer care center business sector and its continued growth in the Augusta region.

In August, the Chamber hosted visiting CEO Linda Heasley from The Limited, who was in town for their grand opening in the Augusta Mall. Ms. Heasley is responsible for 235 stores across the country and has turned The Limited into being profitable for the first time in 17 years.

In our efforts to provide better representation for our members on the principles of taxation and a competitive Georgia tax climate, the Advocacy Committee hosted a Membership Forum in August. Guest presenters and panelists included Kelly McCutchen, President of the Georgia Public Policy Foundation; Skeetter McCorkle, President of McCorkle Nurseries and Member of the 2010 Georgia Tax Reform Council; and Abram Serotta, Partner, SME CPA's.



### Cartersville-Bartow County Chamber

*Joe Frank Harris, Jr., Interim President*

The Chamber has three great events lined up for October. The Chamber will host The Brasfield & Gorrie Cook-out on October 6 at Taylor's Lake. This family friendly event is a great time and perfect opportunity to network. The Chamber will hold The Terry Reid Automotive Group Golf Tournament at Cartersville Country Club on October 17. Finally, the Chamber will hold the Business Showcase presented by The HealthCaring Clinic and H&R Block on October 27 held at the Clarence Brown Conference Center.

### Cobb Chamber

*David Connell, President & CEO*

The Chamber will hold its annual Golf Tournament on September 26 at Indian Hills Country Club in east Cobb. Money raised will go to the Cobb Chamber Foundation to fund leadership training, education programs, building maintenance and equipments needs. The tournament holds a four-person, Ft. Lauderdale scramble with a shotgun start, a chipping/putting contest, and an awards reception

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.

## ■ CHAMBER UPDATES

### **Cobb Chamber (continued)**

with food, drinks and prizes following the tournament. This annual event sells out fast and is enjoyed by nearly 250 members and guests.

Osmotica Pharmaceutical Corporation announced that it will open its first R&D manufacturing facility in North America in Marietta. This is only the latest in a growing number of bioscience industry companies calling Cobb County home. Osmotica will invest \$20 million in its new facility over the next five years and 156 new jobs. While many large corporations locate in Cobb County for its low cost of living, high quality of life and proximity to Atlanta, a key attraction for many bioscience companies is the access to a highly-trained workforce.

Since January 2011, the Chamber has celebrated many great Economic Development accomplishments. Through strong direction and emphasis on these projects from Chairman Rob Garcia and the addition of Brooks Mathis, VP of Economic Development, Cobb has gained valuable companies, jobs and investments. This year to date, the Chamber has located 13 new projects, bringing 2,280 new jobs and over \$218 million in investments to Cobb County.

### **Conyers-Rockdale Chamber**

*Fred Boscarino, GCCE, President*

Now approaching its 8<sup>th</sup> year of existence afforded by the Chamber, the O.P.E.N. (Opportunities for Promoting Entrepreneurship & Networking) program has produced hundreds of graduate entrepreneurs who have gone on, or in some cases continued operating successfully in their private enterprises. The program has proven its metal, so to speak, in living up to the compliments given it by former Georgia Governor Perdue, who said it was the sort of thing Georgia communities need to be doing. The instructors are business men and women who have successfully practiced what they preach. They preach such fundamentals for new businesses as marketing, accounting, legal issues, tax planning, finance and insurance. Ironically, some attendees of the six-week Monday evening program learn that they are not prepared for starting a business for a variety of reasons, and are prevented from losing their life savings and their dreams on a futile venture.

### **DeKalb Chamber**

*Leonardo McClarty, President/CEO*

Effective September 1, 2011, the Chamber will be moving back to Decatur. After four years in Tucker, the Chamber Board of Directors has elected to relocate the 73-year old business organization back to the county seat. The Chamber's new office will be located at Two Decatur Town, 125 Clairemont Avenue, Suite 235, Decatur, GA. The phone number and fax will remain the same. An open house is being planned for October.



### **Douglas County Chamber**

*Kali Boatright, GCCE, President & CEO*

The Chamber's Leadership Douglas held its annual Alumni Social in August at the Downtown Conference Center. Over 70 alumni mingled and enjoyed the island theme! LD currently has 110 active alumni and 25 new students in the Class of 2012.

Youth Leadership Douglas began its Fall Session with a bang as 14 high school Juniors from five Douglas County Schools participated in their Leadership Retreat at Hunter Park. Students participated in team building activities and leadership development skills workshops.



### **Dublin-Laurens County Chamber**

*Willie Paulk, GCCE, President*

The Chamber celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday on Saturday, May 21, 2011. The cocktail celebration was held in the McGrath Keen Sr. Conference Center with music and a "history review" by local historian, Scott Thompson. A photo was taken of the Past Chairs in attendance.

The 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Industry & Business Appreciation Day was also held in May with over 300 participants enjoying golf, bowling, good food and fellowship.

The Seventh Annual Paddle Georgia with more than 300 participants came to Laurens County in June via the Oconee River. This week-long, educational canoe/kayak excursion is on a different Georgia river each year.

The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Redneck Games took place again in Buckeye Park in East Dublin. While the temperatures soared, so did the anticipation of each event such as the Water Melon Seed spitting contest, Bobbling for Pigs Feet, and the all famous Belly Flop. Visitors from all over the world attended the charity event that raised over \$4,000 for projects that are supported by the East Dublin Lions Club.



**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.**

## ■ CHAMBER UPDATES

### Dublin-Laurens County Chamber (*continued*)

The Chamber partnered with Leadership Dublin Laurens County to bring recording Christian and Country Music artist, John Berry, to Dublin in August. The two-hour concert with 350 in attendance was held in Theatre Dublin. The concert was a memorable event!

The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Membership Appreciation Luncheon was held in August with a “picnic style” which was attended by over 200 members.

### Eatonton-Putnam Chamber

*Roddie Anne Blackwell, President*

The Chamber held a Lunch-N-Learn in August titled “Small Business Finance: Are You Ready?” Scott Preston Brown, vice president at Allegiant Business Finance, approached us with the idea to host a panel-based discussion on Small Business Finance for our Chamber members. With Scott’s guidance, all we had to do was invite our local Chamber member commercial bankers and CPAs to serve on a panel, while Scott would serve as the moderator for our panel discussion. As the moderator, Scott engaged the audience by presenting the panel with scenario-based questions to determine whether or not a business is viable for traditional bank lending. If not, then what other options are out there, and what is needed to be prepared and done on the financial reporting side to deliver a proper package to a bank or lender for consideration. Our members thoroughly enjoyed Scott’s style of teaching and eagerly learned from his own personal experiences as a previous small business owner. Feel free to contact us for a referral on the presentation which is offered at no charge for chambers.

### Greater Columbus Chamber

*Mike Gaymon, GCCE, President & CEO*

Congressman Sanford D. Bishop, Jr., and Dan Glasson, Project Manager with the Office of Economic Adjustment in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, recently attended a briefing on the impact of the Fort Benning Training Land Acquisition by the Military and Governmental Affairs Staff in August.

Columbus Community Bank hired a magician to be at their booth during the Business and Healthcare Expo held in August. Several hundred people turned out for the Expo which kicked off with Power Lunch. There were more than 16 workshops scheduled during the event. The Business and Healthcare committee would like to thank all businesses who made this Expo a success with nearly 80 vendors.



Now that healthcare reform is the law of the land, many small business owners and large employers are struggling to understand how the new government mandates and regulations impact their business and the timetable for implementation. For answers to these questions and more, the Chamber is hosting the 2011 Healthcare Symposium in September presented by the Healthcare Committee of the Chamber in partnership with the Society of Human Resource Management-Columbus Area Chapter. Chamber members will enjoy lunch and learn about the impact of Healthcare Reform.

### Greater Dalton Chamber

*Brian Anderson, President & CEO*

The Chamber recently held their 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Chamber Classic Golf Tournament. The day was a big success! The Chamber also hosted a Dog-Gone Member Mixer at Four Paws Pet Resort, and members were encouraged to bring their 4-legged friends. Over 40 attendees and 9 animals attended. A success story to share: a local caterer reported booking a \$12K catering contract as a direct result of our recent Business Expo!



### Greater Hall Chamber

*Kit Dunlap, President & CEO*

Business After Hours in August hosted by McGarity’s Office Furniture & Supplies was best attended of the year. With the kick-off of football season, The Varsity turned out “one through the garden,” “naked dogs walkin’,” fries and rings. The Annual Membership Campaign also kicked-off with teams competing to sign new Chamber members. Special awards for team with most new members: a VIP treat to an Atlanta Falcons game with all the trimmings. Business After Hours always has a cash donation to a local charitable organization – this one went to the NE Georgia Medical Center Foundation.

The 7<sup>th</sup> year of Youth Leadership Hall started with an orientation for the 60 students and parents, school officials and business leaders. All public and private school juniors and seniors are represented in Youth Leadership Hall.

Retail businesses are popping up in Hall County with the assistance of our Economic Development Council including Cheddars, Olive

**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.**

## ■ CHAMBER UPDATES

### Greater Hall Chamber (*continued*)

Garden, and Joanne's Fabric Center.

Senator Johnny Isakson was the featured speaker at the August Chamber Board Meeting and Luncheon. While in Gainesville, he toured Cottrell, a local company that is the world's largest automobile transportation equipment manufacturer.

### Greater Macon Chamber

*Chip Cherry, CCE, President*

The Chamber announced the second phase of the successful Macon NOW! Campaign at the Macon NOW! Campaign Pep Rally. The event was a football themed pep rally to encourage people to contribute to the campaign to help get us to the field goal. Phase One of Macon NOW! created 9,465 jobs with 52 projects, generated \$835,000,000 in capital investment, and created \$358,000,000 in new earnings. Macon NOW! generated a total economic output of \$1.6 billion. To date, the second phase of the Macon NOW! Campaign has raised \$1,368,000 to be used to create Jobs, improve the workforce, strengthen the ties with Robins Air Logistics Center/Air Force Base, and enhance the Community Image of Macon and Bibb County.

The Executive Committee of the Chamber had the chance to meet with military dignitaries from Robins Air Force Base at a Military Affairs Social. The group enjoyed refreshments and had a chance to socialize with military dignitaries including Major General Robert McMahan, Executive Director Deryl Israel and his wife Jeanne Israel, among many others. The Robins AFB/ALC is an important asset to middle Georgia, making it important to be in close contact with these military dignitaries.

### Harris County Chamber

*Lynda Dawson, President*

The Chamber has moved into their new office on Hamilton Square, and they hope to have an Open House in early September.

### Henry County Chamber

*Kay Pippin, President*

Commissioned by the 2010 Henry County Intergovernmental Retreat sponsored by the Chamber, the E<sup>2</sup>: Economics & Education Task Force has completed over nine months of meetings and research and prepared its recommendations. This task force identified objectives under five key goals: (1) Increase Henry County's high school graduation rate; (2) Rank among the top Georgia school systems; (3) Secure a technical school/increase dual enrollment; (4) Become a work-ready certified community; and (5) School readiness. The final task force report has been turned over to the Chamber's Education Foundation to coordinate implementation of the recommendations. If, via the Chamber's leadership, the entire Henry County community embraces this initiative, the Chamber will have helped the Henry County School System make the transformation from a "good" public school system to a "great" one.

With a near \$200 million impact on the Henry County economy, local businesses are encouraged to welcome race fans who travel from near and far for the activities at the speedway. With fans coming from all 50 states and up to 15 foreign countries for the AdvoCare 500 weekend, there is no better opportunity for Henry County businesses to welcome our guests to this beautiful corner of the Peach State. The Chamber encourages member businesses to show support for the event by displaying signs welcoming race fans and in preparation for the event is holding a Tourism Academy to ensure customer support personnel know answers to tourist questions and can highlight countywide events and sites of interest.

### Paulding Chamber

*Carolyn Delamont, President*

The Chamber hosted Mr. Louis Miller, General Manager of Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, at their monthly Georgia Power Luncheon in August. Over 200 guests attended the luncheon to hear Mr. Miller's plans for the airport's future including the possibility of a second major airport in the metro Atlanta area.



### Robins Regional Chamber

*Ed Rodriguez, GCCE, President & CEO*

The Chamber hosted another exciting edition of Speed Networking. Speed Networking, a structured, effective and powerful event included a continental breakfast, followed by structured timed meetings designed to afford participants maximum exposure in a short amount of time. One lucky winner also received \$1,000 worth of free advertising.

The Chamber also hosted the August edition of the Robins Regional Business Forum. *Estate & Succession Planning for Small Business* was the topic and the event was sponsored by BB&T Bank. The forum taught businesses how to plan ahead to ensure a lasting legacy for their small business as well as how to protect assets.

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.

■ CHAMBER UPDATES

**Robins Regional Chamber (continued)**

The Chamber hosted the Virginia College sponsored August Eggs & Issues Breakfast, which featured the Houston County Board of Education. Superintendent Dr. Robins Hines and other members of the BOE discussed issues of educational concern, including the previous and current school years. Members had an opportunity to learn about how our BOE is coping with state budget cuts while still maintaining the high standard of education our region is known for.



**Thomaston-Upson County Chamber**

*Lori Smith, President*

The Chamber is gearing up for its First Annual Business Expo. The Chamber has over 45 businesses participating in the expo, plus we have an awesome line-up of break-out session classes including sessions from Constant Contact, Facebook for business, LinkedIn for Professionals, website management and much more. We are also accepting applications for our Youth and Adult Leadership Upson classes that will begin in October, and our 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner and Awards banquet will be held in November with a Patriotic Theme!

**Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber**

*Myrna Ballard, President*

The Chamber held its 2<sup>nd</sup> Members to be Heard meeting in August. All Chamber members were invited and encouraged to address local, state and/or federal issues that relate to the welfare of their business, organization or to the Valdosta-Lowndes community. Issues are then assigned to appropriate policy committees for further discussion and appropriate action. The previous meeting was held to give business leaders a chance to voice their federal concerns and let the Chamber know what issues to address during its annual trip to Washington D.C. in September.

**White County Chamber**

*Judy Walker, President*

This year's Chamber Annual Banquet took on a different twist and a new location. The event took place at Rivermist Lodge, and this year's theme was "A Caribbean Night." Tiki torches lit the way to the tent-covered tables decorated with island décor. With steel drums keeping rhythm, music by the Island Dreamin' band made you feel just like you were right in the middle of a Caribbean Island. A portion of the banquet paid homage to some very deserving individuals.



**Chair**  
**Past Chair**  
**Chair-Elect**  
**First Vice Chair/Secretary**  
**Second Vice Chair/Treasurer**

Myrna Ballard, Valdosta-Lowndes County  
 Teri Wommack, GCCE, Walton County  
 Kali Boatright, GCCE, Douglas County  
 Candace Boothby, GCCE, Newnan-Coweta  
 Dinah Rowe, GCCE, Chatsworth-Murray County

**Directors:**

Tiffany Andrews, Forsyth-Monroe County  
 Yulonda Beauford, Clayton County  
 Fred Boscarino, GCCE, Conyers-Rockdale  
 Chris Clark, Georgia Chamber  
 Jerry Connell, Adel-Cook County  
 Lil Easterlin, Jefferson County  
 Catherine Glover, Albany Area  
 Tamaka Hudson, Polk County  
 Daniel Jackson, Carroll County  
 Tommy Jennings, Barrow County

Rhonda Lamb-Heath, Dooly County  
 JoAnne Lewis, Douglas-Coffee County  
 Mary Ellen McClanahan, GDEcD  
 Wally Orrel, Darien-McIntosh County  
 Mike Pennington, GEDA  
 Bill Rogers, Jr., Swainsboro-Emanuel County  
 Ralph Staffins, III, Wilkinson County  
 Saralyn Stafford, Georgia DCA  
 Cindy Williams, Blairsville-Union County  
 Tiffany Fulmer Ott, GACCE Executive Director