

VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY



**CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

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**December 17, 2009  
Board of Directors  
Meeting  
@  
The Park Avenue Bank**



**Board of Directors Meeting  
Thursday, December 17, 2009  
8:30 am – 10:00 am  
@ The Park Avenue Bank**

**Agenda**

Call to order, establish a quorum, and review agenda

- Consider minutes of the November 19, 2009 meeting
- Consider November 30, 2009 Financial Statements
  - Review Proposed Amendments to Chamber By-Laws

**ITEMS TO CONSIDER**

- Consider 2010 Budgets
- Consider Position Statement on Proposed 5 Points Development Project
  - Government Affairs Update
  - Review 2009 Highlights

**President's Report**

**Chairman's Report**

**Meeting adjourn**

To access your PowerPoint on the Web Site (<http://www.valdostachamber.com/about/Boardmeeting.html>) click on the tab Our Chamber. Click Board of Directors Meeting and select the current meeting. To find a specific item click bookmark and scroll down to that item.

➤ **Consider Minutes of November 19, 2009 Board of Directors meeting**



**Minutes of the Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber Board of Directors meeting held Thursday, Nov. 19, 2009, 8:30 a.m. at The Park Avenue Bank**

**Members Present:** Sally Bloom, Ed Cockman, Tim Coombs, Allan Dear, Stan Fillion, Jeff Fulp, Walt Gill, Tom Gooding, Jeff Hanson, Walter Hobgood, Tim Jones, Greg Justice, Terri Lupo, John Manning, David Newbern, Paul Nichols, Giovanni Panizzi, Jay Prince, Debra Tann and Myrna Ballard

**Also present:** Jane Shelton, Jaret Broomberg, Brian Geary, Brian Antoine, Greg Reid, Carl Holley, David Durland, Jud Rackley, Betty Morgan, Alison Stokes and Karil Brockington

**Members Absent:** James McGahee, Lee Morgan, Jerome Riley and Phyllis Royal

- **Consider Minutes of the October 15, 2009 Board Meeting.** S. Bloom made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. J. Fulp seconded the motion and it passed.
- **Consider Chamber October 2009 Financial Statements:** P. Nichols reviewed the Chamber financial statement. T. Lupo made a motion to accept the financial statements as presented. G. Justice seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. (see pgs. 2-25 of hand out)
- **Election 2010 Officers:** T. Lupo, Chairman of the Nominating Committee presented the following slate of 2010 Officers: Chairman (Terri Lupo); Vice Chairman Business Expansion (Tom Gooding, Chairman-Elect 2011); Vice Chairman Economic Development (Tim Jones, Chairman-Elect-Elect 2012), Vice Chairman Workforce Development & Education (Greg Justice), Vice Chairman Member Services (Jay Prince); Vice Chairman Public Affairs (James McGahee) Treasurer, (Paul Nichols); Immediate Past Chairman (Jeff Hanson); Chairman's Choice, (Brian Antoine), President (Myrna Ballard). The proposed slate of the 2010 Officers was elected as presented. (see slide 8 of original PowerPoint)
- **Consider recommendation of B.E.S.T. Board concerning By-Laws:** M. Ballard reported. D. Newbern motioned to accept recommendation of B.E.S.T. Board concerning By-Laws amendments with correction in Article I. , Section I. Name, (Workforce Development Support Team should reflect Workforce Education Support Team) J. Fulp seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. (see slides 9-13 of original PowerPoint)
- **Consider Request from Community Unification for Education Excellence for Chamber Assistance:** J. Rackley reported. T. Gooding motioned to accept the request of Community Unification for Education Excellence for Chamber assistance, and to accept the proposed policies and procedures as presented. E. Cockman seconded motioned. (see page 30 of hand out) Motioned carried, with T. Gooding abstaining.

## Minutes of November 19, 2009 Board of Directors meeting continues

- **Consider statement regarding Valdosta City Schools:** W. Hobgood made a motion to refer the proposed statement to the CUEE Task Force for their consideration and use as appropriate. S. Fillion seconded. Motion carried. (see slide 17 of original PowerPoint)
- **Consider the 2010 State Legislative Agenda for Business:** A. Stokes reported. J. Fulp made motion to accept the 2010 State Legislative Agenda for Business as presented. S. Bloom seconded. Motion carried. (see slide 18-20 of original PowerPoint)
- **Review 2010 Budget:** P. Nichols reported. (see page 37-45 of hand out)
- **Public Affairs Division Update:** Brian Geary reported. For the complete report please visit the Chamber's Web Site (<http://www.valdostachamber.com/about/Boardmeeting.html>) click Public Affairs Division Update.

**Chairman's Report:** J. Hanson reported.

**Division Reports:** (For the complete Board Packet content please visit the Chamber's Web Site (<http://www.valdostachamber.com/about/Boardmeeting.html>). Click Board of Directors Meeting and select the current meeting. To find a specific item click bookmark and scroll down to that item.)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

**Next meeting: Thursday, December 17, 2009**

Respectfully submitted,

*Karil Brockington*

Karil Brockington  
Administrative Director

VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY



**CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

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# **Operations & Administration**

VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY



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# **Financial Statements November 30, 2009**

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**Please refer to your handout.....**

## ▪ Review Proposed Amendments to Chamber By-Laws

**Section 9: Ex Officio Members of the Board** The following shall be *ex officio* members of the Board of Directors. Such members shall have the right to be heard in matters before the Board of Directors but shall not have voting privileges.: The Georgia State Senator and State Representatives representing any or all of Lowndes County, the Commanding Officer of Moody Air Force Base, the President of Valdosta State University, the President of Valdosta Technical College, the CEO of South Georgia Medical Center, the Chairman of the Lowndes County Commission, the Lowndes County Manager, the Mayors of Hahira, Lake Park, Naylor, Remerton, and Valdosta, the City Managers of Valdosta, Remerton, and Hahira, the Superintendent of each of the public school systems, the president of the Lowndes County Black Business Association, the Executive Directors of each of the Valdosta-Lowndes Conference Center and Tourism Board, the Central Valdosta Development Authority, the Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority, and the Valdosta-Lowndes County Industrial Authority, the Lowndes County Extension Director, **and a representative from MetroOne.**

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### ARTICLE V

#### *Officers*

**Section 1: Determination of Officers** The Board of Directors (new and retiring) at its regular November meeting shall reorganize for the coming year. The Nominating Committee for Directors shall also nominate officers each year. At this meeting, the Board shall elect the Chairman of the Board, Vice Chairman - Administration, Vice Chairman-Economic Development, Vice Chairman-Membership & Marketing, Vice Chairman-Community Affairs, and Vice-Chairman-Business Promotions & Services, and the Treasurer. Officers will be elected from members of the new Board. A Chairman-Elect and a Chairman-Elect-Elect will be elected from among the Vice Chairmen and Treasurer. All officers shall take office on the first day of the new fiscal year (January 1) and serve for a term of one (1) year or until their successors assume the duties of office. They shall be voting members of the Board of Directors.

#### **Section 2: Duties of Officers**

**A. Chairman of the Board.** The Chairman shall serve as the chief elected officer of the chamber of commerce and shall preside at all meetings of the membership, Board of Directors and Executive Committee.

The Chairman of the Board shall, with the advice and counsel of the President, assign Vice Chairmen to divisional responsibility, subject to the Board of Directors approval.

The Chairman of the Board shall, with advice and counsel of Vice Chairmen and the President, determine all committees, programs, and task forces, select all chairmen, assist in the selection of committee, program, and task force members, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

**B. Chairman-Elect.** The Chairman-elect shall exercise the powers and authority and perform the duties of the Chairman in the absence or disability of the Chairman.

▪ **Review Proposed Amendments to Chamber By-Laws  
continued**

**C. Chairman Elect-Elect** The Chairman elect-elect shall exercise the powers and authority and perform the duties of the Chairman in the absence or disability of the Chairman and the Chairman-Elect.

**D. Vice Chairmen.** The duties of the Vice Chairmen shall be such as their titles by general usage would indicate, and such as required by law, as well as those that may be assigned by the Chairman and Board of Directors. They will also have under their.....

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**Section 5: Vacancies** Vacancies on the Board of Directors, or among the officers, shall be filled by the Board of Directors by a majority vote. Absence for **five** (5) regularly scheduled meetings in a calendar year will indicate the Board member's resignation from the Board. A Board member who loses his/her standing as a Member in Good Standing (see Article II, Section 5) shall be considered to have resigned from the Board.

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## **ARTICLE X**

### **Amendments**

**Section I: Revisions** These bylaws may be amended or altered by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors, or by a majority of the members at any regular or special meeting, providing the notice for the meeting includes the proposals for amendments. Any proposed amendments or alterations shall be submitted to the Board or the members in writing, at least ten (10) days in advance of the meeting at which they are to be acted upon.

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➤ **Items to Consider**

- **Consider 2010 Budgets**
  
- **Consider Position Statement on Proposed  
5 Points Development Project**

## ➤ Consider Position Statement on Proposed 5 Points Development Project

### POSITION STATEMENT FOR BOARD ACTION

**Position Issue:** New Civic Center Development at 5-Points

**Summary:**

The City of Valdosta proposes to construct a new civic center and regional public library facility on a 20-acre grayfield site at 5-Points.

After review of the process and the professional consultants utilized by the City of Valdosta to select this location for the new Civic Center development, the Executive Committee has confidence that necessary due diligence has been performed to arrive at a sound site selection decision.

1. There are numerous positive aspects associated with this development, at this site:  
The site is currently grossly underutilized and blighted; the proposed development would bring value to this area of the City.
2. Constructing the new civic center as infill rather than construction on greenfield property would help reduce urban sprawl.
3. The proposed development would make possible some transportation improvements in the 5-Points area that might not otherwise be feasible.
4. As a major Gateway to the community, the proposed development would create an inviting and attractive entryway to Valdosta, which is one of the Chamber's top priorities.
5. Relocating the civic center and the regional library to the proposed new development would make the existing facilities available to South Georgia Medical Center.
6. Providing additional building and parking space for SGMC would make it possible for SGMC and Valdosta State University to continue their plans for partnerships in allied health occupations.

The 20-acre site at 5-Points is currently primarily an asphalt parking lot and is in a deteriorating condition. Limited investment in property maintenance and improvements has been made by the owner, which is a company headquartered in another city. The City has made several attempts to purchase the property outright, without a positive outcome.

While the Chamber would not typically recommend the local government's use of eminent domain, in this particular situation the Chamber is convinced that reasonable alternatives for obtaining this site from the current owner have been exhausted. In the best interests of the community, the Chamber supports the City's plan for redevelopment of this site utilizing eminent domain for this particular situation. However, the Chamber would request assurance from the City that the use of eminent domain will continue to be a last resort, as has been the City's record to date.

➤ **Consider Position Statement on Proposed 5 Points Development Project, continued**

**Committee Name:** Executive Committee

**Date of Action:** December 8, 2009

**Committee Chairperson:** Jeff Hanson, Chairman of the Board

**Executive Committee Action:** Adopt

**Board of Directors Action:**

**Date of Action:**

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**Myrna H. Ballard, President**

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# **Government Affairs Council Update**

To access Government Affairs Council Update on the Web Site (<http://www.valdostachamber.com/about/Boardmeeting.html>) click on the tab Our Chamber. Click Board of Directors Meeting and select the current meeting. To find a specific item click bookmark and scroll down to that item.

**Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce  
Operations & Administration  
January - December 2009**

**Highlights!**

**Finance Committee – Paul Nichols (Nexxtep Technology), Chairman**

- Reviewed current service contracts.
- Updated the Chamber's bid policy.
- Prepared BEST and TCH financial statements in-house to reduce costs.
- Developed a courtesy-call plan for largest dues payers.
- Developed a credit card security policy to protect members.
- Monitored budget bi-monthly.

**Chamber Activity**

- **2,981** member referrals have been made (2,674 last year).

**Web Site Activity**

- Averaged 125,494 hits/month (146,785 last year).
- Tracked search engine location monthly.

**IMPACT 2012 Oversight Committee – Bill DeCoudres (Guardian Bank),  
Chairman**

- Met semi-annually to review collections and disbursements, monitor current budget, and set 2010 budget.
- Hosted two shareholders lunches to report to investors; 95 in attendance at mid-year meeting, and 75 in attendance at year-end meeting.

**Organization Task Force, Community Public Education Foundation –  
Leroy Butler (Woodlawn Forest Church of Christ), Chairman**

- Organized the Community Unification for Educational Excellence Task Force.
- Became incorporated, developed Policies & Procedures, and elected officers.
- Interviewed four potential consultants; signed letter of agreement with The Moriah Group to assist with the group's mission of facilitating the unification of our public schools.

**Barber Trust Advisory Board – Al Turner (Al Turner, Attorney),  
Chairman**

- Met in August to inspect the Barber House and to provide oversight to the Barber Trust bank account.

**Business Expansion Division**  
**Terri Lupo (Georgia Power), Vice Chairman**  
**January - December 2009**  
**Highlights!**

**Targeted Business Expansion Committee – Bill DeCoudres (Guardian Bank), Chairman**

- Surveyed 320 local businesses to benchmark long term growth. Fifty-three businesses responded.
- Measured the 1990-2007 employment and wages trends of the Valdosta MSA to benchmark the impact of Targeted Business Expansion initiatives through IMPACT 2012 and presented to the Chamber Board and other key community leaders.
- Hosted the third “Metro In Motion Speaker Series” with Chris Miller with Creative Cities Consulting on March 3 at VSU.

**Information & Environmental Technology**

- Created interactive Web site Directory for IT & ET businesses to advertise services.
- Hosted three quarterly IT Professionals Network meetings averaging 15 members per meeting.
- Co-hosted the annual Technology Association of Georgia Excalibur Awards and highlighted the Valdosta nominees, Valdosta Technical College, Azalea Health Innovations, Inc. and SMITH Northview Hospital.
- Hosted a Cloud Computing Workshop for IT professionals.

**Medical Services & Support**

- Established a MS&S sub-committee to develop a plan to promote MS&S career choices to appropriate grade levels and parents.
- Developed, submitted and was approved through Valdosta Technical College to develop educational videos giving a ‘real world’ view of 4-6 non-traditional medical related careers. The videos are intended to drive interest in non-traditional medical careers.

**VALET – Jodi Doss (Jodi’s Accessories), Chairman**

- Hosted the annual Business Outlook Breakfast with Dr. Jeff Humphries and Dr. Cliff Lipscomb. More than 90 business leaders attended.
- Hosted four VALET meetings bringing together all professionals and organizations in Lowndes County who provide services to businesses, industries, and entrepreneurs.
- Developed a user’s guide for start-up and expanding business to understand the licensing, zoning, permitting and occupational process. The document includes FAQ for licensing, zoning, permitting, and occupying a business in Valdosta-Lowndes County, and a list of ‘must haves’ when establishing a business in Valdosta-Lowndes County.
- Created a “No Wrong Door” graphic and brand for VALET.

**Membership Development Division**  
**David Newbern (U.S. Press), Chairman**  
**January - December 2009**  
**Highlights!**

**Membership Development & Retention**

- Chamber membership retention rate for 2009 is **84%**. Retention rate for 2008 was 87%. (Goal for 2009 was 88%; industry average is 80%).
- **246** write-offs for 2009. (**105** were out of business in 2009; **43%**) Write offs in 2008 was 177 (75 were out of business 2008; 42%).
- New members for 2009 are **229**. (Goal for 2009 is 100.) In 2008 we had 216 new members.
- 105 Members attended Chamber 101 in 2009 compared to 94 last year.
- First year retention rate is **90%** compared to 91% last year.
- Second year retention rate is **83%** which is an increase over last year's 62%.
- Total Chamber membership is **1,529**.
- 55 members participated in the MemberCare Alliance Insurance Discount program covering an estimated 648 employees compared to 72 members and 952 employees that were covered by the program in 2008.

**DRUGS DON'T WORK in South Georgia Program- Katinka Kelly (American Drill Bushings), Chairman**

- Coordinated annual Greenleaf Center breakfast for supervisors with 53 in attendance (65 in 2008).
- Coordinated a supervisor seminar with Doctors Laboratory Inc. with 16 members participating.
- Recruited 16 new members (16 new members in 2008).
- Total of 267 members (last year's total was 266).
- Worked with Regional Chamber Partners (Quitman-Brooks, Moultrie-Colquitt, Adel-Cook, Nashville-Berrien, Douglas-Coffee, Ashburn-Turner, Lakeland-Lanier and Worth County-Sylvester)

**Ambassadors Committee – Jerry Kozuch (South Georgia Vein Center), Chairman**

- 37 served as Ambassadors (23 in 2008).
- Coordinated 81 Ribbon Cuttings and five Ground Breakings (91 and five respectively in 2008).
- Acted as Chamber hosts at 12 Business After Hours and four Early Bird Breakfasts.
- Coordinated "Operation Thank You".
- Created a new member retention program, "Member Crashers"; visited 60 businesses with 17 businesses renewing their memberships.
- Ambassadors represented the Chamber at many Chamber events totaling more than 700 hours of volunteer service in 2009
- Rhonda Miller (Fox 49) was this year's "Ambassador of the Year".

**Membership Development Division**  
**David Newbern (U.S. Press), Chairman**  
**January - December 2009**  
**Highlights!**

**Marketing & Public Relations – Phyllis Royal (Full Circle Marketing and Advertising),  
Chairman**

- 20 television stories (47 in 2008).
- 4 Chamber Commercials:
- THINK B.I.G.
- Guardian Bank Business Plan Competition
- Membership Recruitment
- THINK B.I.G. for the Holidays
- 64 Radio Presentations (89 in 2008):
- Promotion of Chamber programs and events on Talk 92.1 and Black Crow Media stations
- Interviews with members who have hosted a Ribbon Cutting on WAAC
- 52 Print Articles (58 in 2008).
- 35 Chamber presentations made to area clubs and organizations made by Chamber staff/Chamber representatives (26 in 2008).
- Created a weekly e-publication *Events Update*, continued weekly *Chamber In Motion*, and continued special e-blasts for special events:
- The industry standard open rate for a non-profit organization is 24.1 percent.
- Open Rates:
  - *Chamber In Motion*: 27.5%
  - *Events Update*: 27.2%
  - E-blasts for special invitation to events: 30.6%
- *Progress* magazine produced quarterly with a distribution rate of 5,000.
- 2008 Annual Report published to inform members of the highlights and accomplishments for the previous year.
- 2009 Business Plan published to inform members of the goal and plan the Chamber will be working toward in the coming year.

**Economic Development Division**  
**Tom Gooding (Elliott, Blackburn, Barnes & Gooding, P.C.),**  
**Vice Chairman**  
**January - December 2009**  
**Highlights!**

**Triple Crown Hometowns Program**

- Relocated 46 (33 in 2008) new retiree households to Lowndes, Brooks, and Lanier Counties for a total of 296 new retiree households (250 in 2008).
- Web site, [www.georgiaretire.com](http://www.georgiaretire.com) had over 84,602 hits (74,800 in 2008).
- Developed nearly 3,700 retiree prospect leads from 47 states and 3 countries.
- National Advertising on the Golf Channel during the South Georgia Classic.
- Named Top 100 towns in U.S.A. to live by Relocate-America.com.
- Featured in *Forever Young*, a Canadian 50+ publication, April issue.
- Triple Crown Hometowns billboard on I-75 Exit 18, traffic count 46,000 vehicles daily.
- Implemented social networking blog interfacing with Triple Crown Hometowns Newsletter and Web site.
- Published 12 e-newsletters, Hometown Happenings sent to over 1,300 retirees.

**S.E.E.D.S. Center of South Georgia**

- 493 clients have been served within the region, including Berrien, Brooks, Cook, Echols, Lanier, Lowndes and Turner Counties (2009 goal is 600; 633 in 2008).
- 11 businesses established within the region using S.E.E.D.S. Center assistance.
- 146 ABC's of How to Start a Business' have been distributed (222 in 2008).
- 113 demographic reports have been generated (144 in 2008).
- 286 targeted direct mailing lists have been created for clients (275 in 2008).
- 5 commercial property owners used Retail Lease Trac to target prospective retail businesses (8 in 2008).
- Added the 'Tools For Business' Web site portal to the S.E.E.D.S. Center Web site with 4,140 page views.
- Coordinated the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Entrepreneur Resource Fair, Entrepreneurs In Action.
- Co-hosted a Commercial Property Investment Forum.
- Co-hosted the 'Maximum Marketing Series' with the SBDC.
- Delivered S.E.E.D.S. presentations to Valdosta State University Marketing 4900, Alpha Kappa Alpha Alumni Group, Lakeland-Lanier County Chamber Board, and Nashville-Berrien Chamber Board.
- The Web site ([www.seedscenterofsga.com](http://www.seedscenterofsga.com)) had 4,856 visits and 226,626 hits (4,717 visits and 204,234 hits in 2008).
- Distributed 11 editions of the *SPROUTS Newsletter* to the 493 S.E.E.D.S. Clients, our 5 Regional Partners, and the 33 members of the Professional Consultants Group (distribution was 10 in 2008).

**Economic Development Division**  
**Tom Gooding (Elliott, Blackburn, Barnes & Gooding, P.C.),**  
**Vice Chairman**  
**January - December 2009**  
**Highlights!**

**Guardian Bank Business Plan Competition**

- Awarded \$15,000 in start up capital to the fourth annual Guardian Bank Business Plan Competition winner, Robbin Miller, SEGA Medical Research, as well as over \$50,000 of in-kind professional services such as free accounting for one year, free legal services for one year, marketing consulting, and advertising.

**Professional Consultants Program – Greg Reid (Edward Jones Investments), Chairman**

- Added 10 new Professional Consultants (2009 goal is 12; 33 total consultants).
- Held 56 hours of consultations (2009 goal is 80 hours of consultation; (86 consultation hours in 2008).
- Consultants spoke at 3 Valdosta Networking Professionals meetings, at Small Business Owners Network meetings, MetroOne events, the Commercial Property Investment Forum and Lunch-n-Learns.

**Small Business Owners Network – Anne Barnas (SmithBarnas & Associates), Chairman**

- Hosted 5 speaker sessions with industry experts.
- Hosted 6 roundtable discussion sessions for an open forum of communication for small businesses.
- Held 11 SBON Meetings for all Chamber member businesses with 15 or fewer employees.

**Inventors & Innovators**

- Identified all patent and trademark attorneys in South Georgia – Valdosta, Thomasville, Albany, Jekyll Island, Brunswick and Savannah.
- Identified manufacturers with potential for prototyping in the South Georgia region.
- Identified all current patent-holders in Lowndes County.
- Hosted 2 workshops for patent-holders and intellectual property owners to learn how to market, sell, license and develop their inventions.
- Surveyed all patent-holders and intellectual property owners to create a network for them in 2010.

**Valdosta Networking Professionals - Greg Reid (Edward Jones Investments), Chairman**

- The 30 members of Valdosta Networking Professionals met weekly to share sales leads (18 members in 2008).

**Corporate Coaches**

- Paired two business owners with a Corporate Coach and recruited one new Coach.

**South Georgia Partnership for Regional Development**

- Hosted a lunch with Mike Gaymon, President & CEO of Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce, who shared innovative ways to work together by pooling resources, strengths and voices to bring more value and visibility to the region.

**Public Affairs Division**  
**Tim Jones (Citizens Community Bank), Vice Chairman**  
**January - December 2009**  
**Highlights!**

**Government Affairs Council –Paula Goff (SMITH Northview Hospital), Chairman**

- Hosted State Legislative Briefing in Atlanta with Local Delegation, GA Retail Assoc. and South GA Businesses for Econ. Dev. and the GA Chamber.
- Championed the following State business development initiatives in the 2009 Legislative Session:
  - HB 120 - Renewal of Sales Tax Holiday
  - HB 160 - increases fines for “super speeders,” providing an estimated \$23 million annually to address the state’s trauma care needs
  - Regional Water Council was formed and includes two representatives from Lowndes County, Wesley Langdale and Rusty McCall
  - SB 31- Georgia Nuclear Energy Financing Act, provides for a utility to recover from its customers the costs of financing associated with the construction of a nuclear generating plant
- Coordinated Federal Legislative Committee meeting with Representative Jack Kingston.
- Co-hosted the Stimulus or Stymied Seminar: Employee & Labor Law Legislation with SmithBarnas & Assoc. and Moore, Clark, Duvall and Rodgers, PC.
- Coordinated the 2009 Federal Legislative Overview Lunch with U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson as keynote speaker and US Chamber Labor Law Executive Director, Michael Eastman.
- Coordinated meeting with Representative Sanford Bishop regarding Employee & labor Law legislation.
- Coordinated the annual Washington, DC trip with 11 members who met with members of Congress, USAF officials at the Pentagon, and US Chamber staff.
- Participated and promoted AAUW Candidate Forum, convened the following legislative meetings:
  - GA Chamber Listening Session
  - Get Georgia Moving meeting
  - Meeting and reception with GDOT Commissioner Vance Smith
  - State Legislative Lunch (with three local Rotary Clubs; 150 in attendance)
  - Produced Legislative Alert and Update E-Publications (26% open rate).
  - Developed and implemented Gateways Committee.

**Military Affairs Committee – Brian Geary (Ace Electric), Chairman**

- Hosted three Red Carpet Parties to welcome Moody’s leadership to our community.
- Participated in 25 Right Start Programs for all newcomers to MAFB.
- Attended 3 Quarterly Awards Ceremonies, 8 Change of Command Ceremonies and the Airman Appreciation Day.

**Workforce Development & Education Division**  
**Greg Justice (Regal Marine), Vice Chairman**  
**January - December 2009**  
**Highlights!**

**Existing Industry Committee – Marcie Dennard (The Park Avenue Bank), Chairman**

- Revised Business Retention and Expansion Process (BREP) Survey for electronic distribution with 19 respondents (16 in 2008).
- CJB Industries named the 2009 Manufacturer of the Year at Salute to Manufacturer's Early Bird Breakfast with 150 in attendance (115 in 2008).

**Business/Education Support Team – David Newbern (U.S. Press), Chairman**

- Recruited and trained 15 new CHOICES volunteers and presented the workshop to 1,202 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students (1,273 students in 2008).
- Organized Job Shadow Day for 97 Lowndes High School Career and Technical Education students and recruited 25 businesses to host them.
- Coordinated and hosted the STAR Banquet for Region 10 STAR Students and Teachers.
- Organized and co-sponsored the Annual Sam's Club Literacy Fair with 23 vendors and over 4,000 books collected and redistributed to area non-profits.
- Hosted the EAGLE Award celebration to honor the 2009 recipient

**Workforce Development Committee – Greg Justice (Regal Marine), Chairman**

- 364 parents have experienced 'Helping Your Child Succeed'. Since the program's launch in spring 2008, 644 parents in 18 businesses have viewed the presentation.
- 101 participants attended the Boot Camp for Supervisors program; goal for 2009 was 100 (104 attended in 2008).
- Hosted industry specific meetings to promote the Work Ready Program.

**MetroOne – Erika Biddix (MAC Meetings & Events) and Emily Browning (Fowler, Holley, Rambo & Stalvey), Co-Chairmen**

- Coordinated 12 professional development opportunities including a half-day seminar for 55 participants (43 participants in 2008).
- Launched the Metro Valdosta Emerging Leaders program-the area's only recognition program celebrating the success and professional accomplishments of area young professionals – with 4 Emerging Leaders named and 19 applications submitted.
- Launched the MetroOne Mentor Program with 16 mentors and protégés currently paired.
- Significantly grew active membership by 31% (436 members in 2009, compared with 333 in 2008) and increased Web site traffic to [www.MetroOneValdosta.com](http://www.MetroOneValdosta.com) (3,310 visits with 46% new visits in 2009; the site went live in late 2008 so 2009 stats will serve as our benchmark going forward).
- Created MetroOne LinkedIn and Facebook groups to increase social networking opportunities for members.
- Participated in community volunteer activities such as a Habitat Build Day and established partnerships with the Valdosta Early College Academy and Second Harvest Food Bank.
- Drafted a Strategic Plan to provide vision and benchmarking for 2010-2012.

**Workforce Development & Education Division  
Greg Justice (Regal Marine), Vice Chairman  
January - December 2009  
Highlights!**

**World Class Recognition Program – Sherry Zipperer (First State Bank & Trust Company), Chairman**

- Expanded the World Class Recognition Program to include awarding 1<sup>st</sup> America Drugs as a Small Business World Class Employer and South Georgia Medical Center as a Large Business World Class Employer.
- Received 29 total World Class Employee Nominations (22 in 2008).

# Chamber Activity Reports

VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY



**CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

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- **Referrals**
- **Web Site**



## November 2009 Correspondence/Activity Report (2008 Figures in Parentheses)

### Mail Correspondence:

**Newcomers Packets**            13 (29)

### Miscellaneous Information Requested:

Request for BBB:	<u>20 (17)</u>
Email Information Requested:	<u>4 (0)</u>
Request for Events:	<u>20 (11)</u>
Civic Club Lists:	<u>10 (5)</u>
Web site Referrals by Phone:	<u>10 (10)</u>
Manufacturers List:	<u>5 (10)</u>
Request for Directions:	<u>20 (12)</u>
Maps:	<u>30 (72)</u>
Request for Wild Adventures:	<u>33 (2)</u>
Membership Info. Packets:	<u>21 (7)</u>
Phone Books:	<u>38 (46)</u>
Membership List/Email:	<u>1 (5)</u>
<b>Total Miscellaneous:</b>	<b><u>212 (197)</u></b>



## Member Referrals November 2009

**Total Categories: 153**

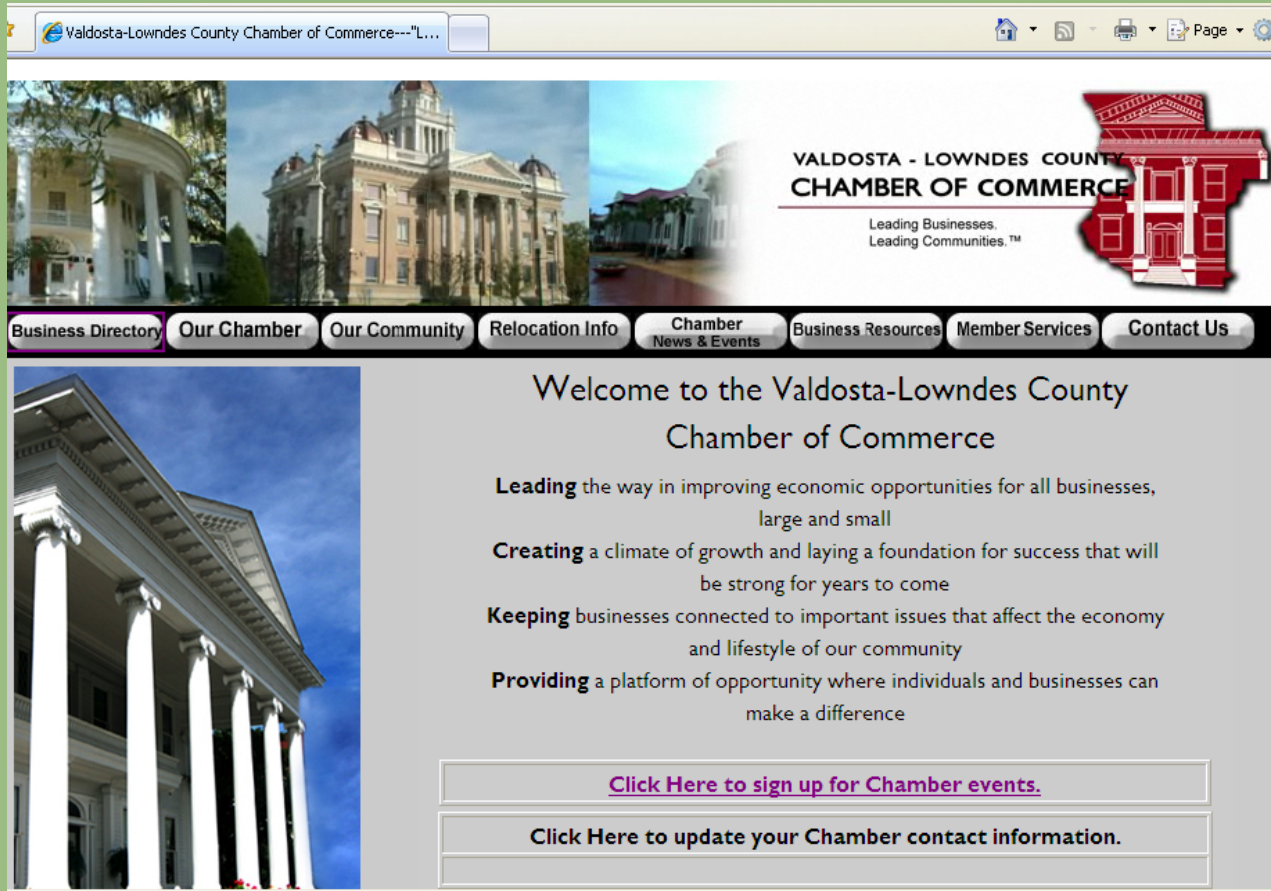
### Top 10

Manufacturers:	<b>411</b>
Air Conditioning Contractors:	<b>186</b>
Electric Contractors:	<b>157</b>
Hotels:	<b>237</b>
Amusement Places:	<b>187</b>
Building Contractors:	<b>459</b>
Advertising:	<b>820</b>
Restaurants:	<b>137</b>
Banks:	<b>184</b>
Automobile Dealers:	<b>115</b>
Other:	<b>3,007</b>

**Total Member Referrals: 5,900 (388)**

# November 2009 Web Site Activity Report

[www.valdostachamber.com](http://www.valdostachamber.com)



## Web Site Hits:

May 2009	113,563
June 2009	125,494
July 2009	118,902
Aug. 2009	124,721
Sept. 2009	114,118
Oct. 2009	105,550
Nov. 2009	96,131

## Page Views:

May 2009	14,977
June 2009	17,232
July 2009	16,592
Aug. 2009	16,921
Sept. 2009	15,856
Oct. 2009	16,408
Nov. 2009	14,367

## Web Site Activity Report continued

### Search Engine Position for Chamber Site as of Nov. 17, 2009

	Valdosta	Valdosta Chamber	Valdosta-Lowndes
<b>Google</b>	Second page in 3 <sup>rd</sup> place	First Page in 1 <sup>st</sup> place	First page in 1 <sup>st</sup> place
<b>bing</b>	Six page in 5 <sup>th</sup> place	First page in 1 <sup>st</sup> place	First page in 1 <sup>st</sup> place
<b>YAHOO</b>	Fifth page in 2 <sup>nd</sup> place	First page in 1 <sup>st</sup> place	First page in 2 <sup>nd</sup> place

### Search Engine Position for Chamber Site as of Dec. 15, 2009

	Valdosta	Valdosta Chamber	Valdosta-Lowndes
<b>Google</b>	Second page in 3 <sup>rd</sup> place	First Page in 1 <sup>st</sup> place	First page in 1 <sup>st</sup> place
<b>bing</b>	Second page in 8 <sup>th</sup> place	First page in 1 <sup>st</sup> place	First page in 1 <sup>st</sup> place
<b>YAHOO</b>	Six page in 4 <sup>th</sup> place	First page in 1 <sup>st</sup> place	First page in 3 <sup>rd</sup> place

## Web Site Button Advertisers

Arthur Herndon Company Real Estate, Inc.

Coombs Heating & Air Conditioning, Inc.

The Park Avenue Bank

South Georgia Medical Center

# Member Services Division Reports



**David Newbern  
(Vice Chairman)**

**VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

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# Dues Collection Report

## Monthly

**2008 & 2009**

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>Variance</u>
<b>Dec.</b>	32,103.00	37,430.63		
<b>Nov.</b>	24,189.45	21,856.85	27,823.82	5,966.97
<b>Oct.</b>	25,788.36	25,698.51	27,591.92	1,893.41
<b>Sep.</b>	33,359.83	29,955.86	25,916.58	(4,039.28)
<b>Aug.</b>	29,994.19	29,645.75	28,135.34	(1,510.41)
<b>July</b>	29,223.75	38,982.60	41,713.49	2,730.89
<b>June</b>	33,757.94	27,454.84	24,681.68	(2,773.16)
<b>May</b>	20,674.42	30,457.34	26,871.88	(3,585.46)
<b>Apr.</b>	23,849.84	31,264.43	31,001.57	(262.86)
<b>Mar.</b>	39,974.04	14,879.68	29,445.03	14,565.35
<b>Feb.</b>	29,199.04	22,314.50	34,192.00	11,877.50
<b>Jan.</b>	45,297.34	49,968.02	36,062.83	(13,905.19)

## Dues Collection Report, Continued

	<b>2007 &amp; 2008</b>			
	<u><b>2007</b></u>	<u><b>2008</b></u>	<u><b>2009</b></u>	<u><b>Variance</b></u>
<b>Dec.</b>	367,411.20	360,009.01		
<b>Nov.</b>	335,308.20	322,478.38	333,435.78	10,957.40
<b>Oct.</b>	311,118.75	300,621.53	305,611.96	4,990.43
<b>Sep.</b>	285,330.39	274,923.02	278,020.04	3,097.02
<b>Aug.</b>	251,970.56	244,967.16	252,103.82	7,136.66
<b>July</b>	221,976.37	215,321.41	223,968.48	8,647.07
<b>June</b>	192,752.62	176,338.81	182,254.99	5,916.18
<b>May</b>	158,994.68	148,883.97	157,573.31	8,689.34
<b>Apr.</b>	138,320.26	118,426.63	130,701.43	12,274.80
<b>Mar.</b>	114,470.42	87,162.20	99,699.86	12,537.66
<b>Feb.</b>	74,496.38	72,282.52	70,254.83	(2,027.69)
<b>Jan.</b>	45,297.34	49,968.02	36,062.83	(13,905.19)



## **Membership Summary Report As of November 30, 2009**

**DUES COLLECTED YEAR TO DATE: \$333,435.78**  
**2009 goal for Dues Collection: \$400,000.00**

**NEW MEMBERS YEAR TO DATE: 229**  
**2009 Goal: 100**

**TOTAL MEMBERSHIP: 1,529**  
**2009 Goal: 1,556**

**NET MEMBERSHIP GAIN IN October: 2**  
**NET MEMBERSHIP GAIN IN 2009: (17)**  
**2009 Goal 10**

**2009 Retention Goal: 88%**  
**Current Retention Rate: 84%**  
**(Industry Average: 80%)**

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# New Members

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Jan</b>	16	16	16	22	9
<b>Feb</b>	22	18	14	16	16
<b>Mar</b>	16	20	20	13	13
<b>April</b>	34	20	16	22	33
<b>May</b>	23	41	26	23	16
<b>June</b>	16	12	29	25	16
<b>July</b>	8	10	13	15	21
<b>Aug</b>	18	16	17	22	24
<b>Sept</b>	75	54	41	19	38
<b>Oct</b>	7	13	48	16	26
<b>Nov</b>	13	11	14	12	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>229</b>
<b>Dec</b>	7	12	9	11	
<b>Total</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>229</b>

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**Dues Account Status  
Report November 2009**

<u>Billing Period</u>	<u>Accounts Receivable</u>	<u>Collections</u>	<u>Collection Rate</u>
Current	\$30,327.45	\$5,052.50	17%
Previously Collected for current month		\$8,375.00	28%
<b>Total Current</b>	<b>\$30,327.45</b>	<b>\$13,427.50</b>	<b>44%</b>
1-30 Days	9,806.70	3105.00	32%
31-60 Days	180.00	0.00	0%
61-90 Days	5,414.62	310.00	6%
91-120 Days	16,280.58	1,285.00	8%
120+ Days	26,363.87	2,209.17	8%
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$88,373.49</b>	<b>\$20,336.67</b>	<b>23%</b>
New Members	\$1,385.00	\$1,385.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$89,758.49</b>	<b>\$21,721.67</b>	<b>24%</b>

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**Dues Account Status, continued**

**Previously collected for current months:**

August	0.00
September	4,885.00
November	3,490.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,375.00</b>

**Pre-Paid Dues for future months:**

December	<b>17,089.65</b>
January	<b>4,368.00</b>
February	<b>0.00</b>
Deferred Revenue	<b>\$21,457.65</b>

**Other Information:**

Direct Debit Accounts to Date	<b>48</b>
Online Billing Accounts to Date	<b>124</b>



## Write-Offs November 2009

REASON DROPPED	NAME	JOIN DATE	AMOUNT
Budget Restrictions	Lee Miller's Auto Service Center	9/28/2005	\$120.00
Budget Restrictions	Harris Surveying & Engineering Co., Inc.	05/01/1982	\$125.00
Budget Restrictions	Quality Flooring by Bailey, Inc.	9/25/2004	\$250.00
Budget Restrictions	Special "K" Landscapes & Irrigation	10/8/2004	\$360.00
Business Sold	Dodge of Valdosta	5/1/1982	\$360.00
Nonpayment of Dues	Anytime Fitness	10/23/2007	\$100.00
Nonpayment of Dues	Sears Holdings Corporation	10/30/2007	\$240.00
Nonpayment of Dues	Southeast Limousine	6/5/2007	\$240.00
Nonpayment of Dues	Southern LINC	6/11/2003	\$240.00
Nonpayment of Dues	Sprint PCS	8/14/2000	\$250.00
Nonpayment of Dues	Micki K Photography	9/26/2005	\$320.00
Nonpayment of Dues	A T & T Authorized Retailer/Direct Communications	6/20/2008	\$360.00
Requested Cancel	Burch, Linda	3/4/1996	\$85.00
Requested Cancel	Onsitefast	8/7/2007	\$240.00
Requested Cancel	Manwell Produce, Inc.	11/28/2007	\$250.00
			\$3,540.00



## Write-Offs November 2009 Summary

Summary	Month #	Month \$	YTD #	YTD \$
Budget Restrictions	4	\$855.00	34	\$6,773.50
Business Sold	1	\$360.00	9	\$2,565.00
Consolidated Business			3	\$750.00
No Benefit Seen			7	\$1,810.00
Member Deceased			1	\$0.00
Member Moved			7	\$435.00
Member Retiring			3	\$560.00
Nonpayment of Dues	7	\$1,750.00	30	\$11,455.00
Out of Business			105	\$16,801.57
Other				\$0.00
Requested Cancellation-No Reason	3	\$575.00	46	\$11,167.50
Unhappy/Angry			1	\$240.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	15	\$3,540.00	246	\$52,557.57

Write-Offs 2008	23	\$3,409.00	177	\$31,162.09
-----------------	----	------------	-----	-------------

<b>Difference 2008 vs. 2009</b>	<b>-8</b>	<b>\$131.00</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>\$21,395.48</b>
---------------------------------	-----------	-----------------	-----------	--------------------



## Chamber 101:

How to get the most out of your  
Chamber membership

### 2009 Attendance Sheet

Month	1 <sup>st</sup> Invitation	2 <sup>nd</sup> Invitation	Attended
Jan. 7	7	31	4
Feb. 4	12	25	10
Mar. 4	8	20	12
Apr. 1	10	27	6
May 6	32	26	19
June 3	35	63	7
July 8	15	32	5
Aug. 5	16	39	9
Sept. 2	34	27	8
Oct. 7	44	30	9
Nov. 4	28	53	7
Dec. 2	27	47	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>105</b>

Dec. 2, 2009 invitation list for CHAMBER 101  
consists of members that joined from  
Sept. 21, 2009 – Oct. 21, 2009 (2<sup>nd</sup> time invites) &  
Oct. 22, 2009 – Nov. 20, 2009 (1<sup>st</sup> time invites) Goal for 36  
2009 is to have 75% of new members to attend.



## Chamber 101:

How to get the most out of your  
Chamber membership

Board Members:

Please join us for an informative CHAMBER 101. Come and help Myrna and staff welcome our new members to the Best Chamber in Georgia.

Wednesday, January 6, 2010

8:00 - 9:00 a.m.

Chamber of Commerce

For more information call 247-8100

I would like to attend:

---

The **CHAMBER 101** is designed for the new members to meet the Chamber staff as well as the Board of Directors and to give new members the opportunity to learn more about what the Chamber has to offer their business.

Board Member are asked to attend at least three (3) **CHAMBER 101** events:

### The following have attended:

David Newbern (11)	James McGahee (1)	Jane Shelton (1)
Jeff Hanson (10)	Terri Lupo (3)	Tim Jones (1)
Tom Gooding (2)	Walter Hobgood (2)	Debra Tann (2)
Stan Fillion (1)		

## Open Rates of Current Chamber e-publications

**Chamber In Motion** weekly e-newsletter  
Sent every Monday  
**Open Rate: 28.4%\***

**Events Update** sent Tuesday  
**Open rate: 29.2%\***

**Legislative Update** e-notices  
Sent as important Legislative Issues arise  
**Open Rate: 22.7%\***

**Chamber Board Insight** newsletter  
Sent weekly to Board members to keep them informed about important Chamber issues  
**Open Rate: 39.1%\***

**SPROUTS** newsletter  
Send monthly to S.E.E.D.S. Center Clients and members of the Professional Consultants Program  
**Open Rate: 21.9%**

*\* Percentages represent data accumulated between 1111-11130109*

## **Average for all businesses that use Constant Contact Categorized by Industry**

<b>Business Type</b>	<b>Open Rate</b>
Accountant	17.5%
Art Gallery	25.8%
Association	22.4%
Communications	14.9%
Consultant	22.1%
Crafts	38.2%
Education and Services	26.9%
Entertainment	18.1%
Event Planning	26.6%
Government Agency	28.4%
Hotel, Inn, B&B	24.4%
Legal Services	21.7%
Manufacturing & Distribution	14.9%
Marketing/PR	15.3%
Medical Services	16.2%
Non-profit	24.1%
Other	20.0%
Personal Services	23.9%
Products & Services	16.9%
Professional Services	22.3%
Publishing	21.6%
Real Estate	20.3%
Religious Organization	15.8%
Restaurant/Bar/Catering	16.7%
Retail	17.9%
Salon/Spa	21.8%
Sports & Recreation	20.2%
Technology	18.7%
Transportation	27.0%
Travel & Tourism	21.5%
Web Developer	17.5%

# MARKETING REPORT NOVEMBER 2009

## YEAR TO DATE

Television Stories: 20 (47 total 2008)

Radio Presentations: 61 (89 total 2008)

Print Articles: 52 (58 total 2008)

Presentations: 35 (26 total 2008)

## BUSINESS EXPANSION

Presentation–Tara– Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIVISION

TV-Census 2010 (Channel 17)

Print-Census 2010 (Channel 17)

Radio-Census 2010 (Talk 92.1)

Radio-Legislative Lunch (Talk 92.1)

Print-Legislative Lunch (VDT)

TV-Legislative Lunch (WCTV)

TV-Legislative Lunch (WALB)

## MEMBER SERVICES DIVISION

Radio-3 Ribbon Cutting Visits (WAAC)

Radio-Moody Appreciation Fun Fair (Black Crow)

Radio-Moody Appreciation Fun Fair (Talk 92.1)

Print-Moody Appreciation Fun Fair (VDT)

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION DIVISION

Print-WCR (Langdale Industries Newsletter)

## MISCELLANEOUS

TV-THINK B.I.G. Jeff Hanson Commercial

# November Ribbon Cuttings



**Girlfriends II Hair Salon**



**X-stream Marketing**



**Shuffle**



**Buffalo Wild Wings**

# November Ribbon Cuttings



**Auto Repair Experts**



**The Image**



**bebe Nails**



**Langdale Place**

# Ambassadors Report

## November 2009

### NOVEMBER STATISTICS

Ribbon Cuttings for November: 7  
Groundbreakings for November: 1  
Business After Hours for November: 1  
Early Bird Breakfasts for November: 1

### 2009 STATISTICS

2009 Ribbon Cuttings: 79 (Goal: 75)  
2009 Groundbreakings: 5  
2009 Business After Hours: 11  
2009 Early Bird Breakfasts: 4

### UPCOMING EVENTS

EAGLE Award Reception

Dec. 17, 2009

Chamber

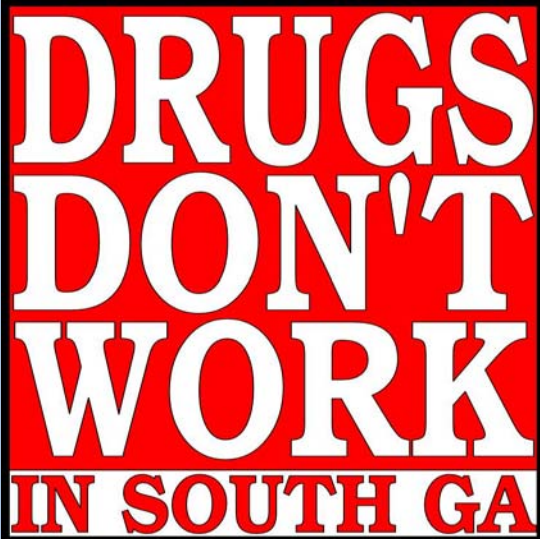
5-6:30 a.m.

Chamber 101

Jan. 6, 2010

Chamber

8-9 a.m.



## DRUGS DON'T WORK Summary November 2009

Total # of DDW Partners as of 12/31/08:	<b>266</b>
Total # of DDW Partners as of 11/30/09:	<b>267</b>
2009 New Members:	<b>16</b>
2009 Losses:	<b>15</b>
YTD Net Gain:	<b>1</b>

**Goal for 2009: 271**

<u>YTD</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Goal</u>	<u>Fav/(Unfav)</u>
\$31,025	\$2,250	\$33,275	\$40,000	<b>(\$6,725)</b>

Post Office Box 790 Valdosta, Georgia 31603-0790  
(229) 242-4624 Fax (229) 245-0071  
[bmorgan@valdostachamber.com](mailto:bmorgan@valdostachamber.com)

# Member Crashers



An outreach program implemented by the Chamber's Ambassadors Committee to play an active role in the retention of Chamber members.

## Members Visited in November

Badcock and More Home  
Furnishing  
Vicki Pridemore  
3406 North Valdosta Road

McDonald's  
Vicki Fender  
2102 North Ashley Street

Mingledorff's  
Scott Merwin  
403 Connell Road

Valdosta Kwik Wash  
David Gray  
1000 North Ashley Street

# Economic Development Division Reports



**Tom Gooding  
(Vice Chairman)**

**VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

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Registration materials for  
the 2010 Competition  
will be available on  
Feb. 4, 2010.

The Deadline for entry is  
April 7, 2010

# SPROUTS NEWSLETTER

## Watering the Seeds of Business Development

PROFESSIONAL  
CONSULTANTS  
CORNER

Amber Tanner, CPA



### 2010 TAX TIPS FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

As year-end approaches, many business owners turn their focus on ways to minimize their tax burden. Here are some tax-saving strategies to consider for 2009.

Project your business's income for this year and next to allow you to plan more effectively. If you anticipate a decrease in your tax rates next year due to lower income, you may want to defer income by delaying billings to customers. You could also accelerate expenses for the current year by ensuring payment of all

bills by year end. If you are experiencing a low income year and anticipate that your tax rates may be higher next year, a reverse strategy of accelerating income this year and delaying expenses would be more beneficial.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 extended the increased Section 179 expensing amount of \$250,000. You can deduct (rather than depreciate) up to \$250,000 of the cost of purchasing new equipment, furniture, etc. for your business. The ARRA also extended the 50% bonus depreciation that allows depreciation of one half the cost for new equipment placed in service in 2009. If you have made or are contemplating a purchase of equipment, these two incentives can offer great benefits. It is important to note, however, that these are federal tax incentives and may not apply to state taxes.

Business owners can also defer taxes by establishing and contributing to a qualified retirement plan. There are a number of types of plans to meet various business scenarios. Not only could this option help reduce your tax burden, but provide a means of savings toward your retirement as well.

If your small business suffered a loss with the current economic downturn, you may be able to carry back a net operating loss for up to five years. This extension of the carry back period from two to five years came with the ARRA for 2008 and, pending approval in Congress, will apply to 2009 losses as well. Carrying back a net operating loss to a prior year that was profitable enables the taxpayer to recoup prior taxes paid.

Business owners should consult a tax professional for additional information and guidance.

Amber Tanner, CPA  
[Henderson & Godbee, LLP](#)

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**twitter**



Follow us for daily updates and events brought to you by the S.E.E.D.S. Center of South Georgia



Find us on  
**Facebook**

Become a fan to receive updates and events brought to you by the S.E.E.D.S. Center of South Georgia!



### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### NOVEMBER

**11** Legal Issues for Small Businesses  
12-1 p.m.  
Valdosta Technical College  
Building 700

**12** Intro to Government Contracting  
9 a.m. - 12 p.m.  
Valdosta City Hall Annex

**12** Business After Hours  
5-7 p.m.  
at Affinity Healthcare  
(Behind Cass Burch)

### EVENT SPOTLIGHT

#### "Starting A Business"

Seminar being held by the Valdosta State University Small Business Development Center

**Where:** VSU Pound Hall (North Campus) Rm 318

**When:** Nov. 19 from 6-9 p.m.

Let us show you the basics of business loans, marketing, advertising, license & tax info, and calculating start-up costs. Pre-registration is required as space is limited. For more information, call the Small Business Development Center Office at 229-245-3738 or visit [www.valdosta.edu/sbdc](http://www.valdosta.edu/sbdc)

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Courtney Ruttinger  
Business Development and Expansion Coordinator  
229-247-8100  
[cruttinger@valdostachamber.com](mailto:cruttinger@valdostachamber.com)

Visit our website  
[www.seedscenterofsga.com](http://www.seedscenterofsga.com)

Visit the S.E.E.D.S. Center at  
416 North Ashley Street  
Valdosta, GA



# November 2009 S.E.E.D.S. Center Report

## CLIENTS

2009 Goal: 600

Lowndes: 493

Region: 2

YTD Total: 495

Client Types

Start-ups: 5

Existing/Expanding: 2

Developers: 1

Info: 3

Outcomes

New Members: 3

Started: 1

Expanded: 0

## RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION

ABC's: 20

Sales Leads: 15

Demographics: 10

Traffic Counts: 3

Loan Info: 4

## WEB SITE

Total Hits: 14,668

Unique Visitors: 252

Total Visits: 397

Page Rank Google: **1st**

## PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANTS PROGRAM

Quarter Goal: 19

Hours Provided: 8/4

2009 Goal: 85

YTD Total: 52

Most Demand

Marketing

## *SPROUTS* NEWSLETTER

Circulation: 450

Average Open Rate: 25%



**Monthly Activity Report**  
**Period: November 2009**

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>Cum</u>
Advertising leads:	0	0	342
Web site hits:	9,032	10,668	1,744,244
Web page requests:	1,526	2,081	26,982
Web site leads:	10	12	1,412
Brochure leads:	0	0	20
Other TCH leads:	1	1	234
Quitman Chamber leads:	0	0	27
Valdosta Chamber leads:	1	1	208
Lakeland Chamber leads:	0	0	1
Other source leads:	0	0	1,490
<b>Total leads active</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>3,689</b> 49



## RELOCATIONS

- **Relocations (Households): 296**

Lowndes: 263      Brooks: 21      Lanier: 12

- **Nov Relocations: 4**
- **2009 Relocations: 46**
- **States inquiring: 47**
- **Relocations from: FL: 143, GA: 46, NY: 18, AL: 3, CA: 8, CO: 4, IL: 8, MI: 14, VA: 3, IN: 1, MD: 3, ME: 1, OR: 1, AZ: 2, UT: 1, NM: 2, MA: 1, TN: 4, NJ: 4, MN: 1, LA: 3, MS: 8, NJ: 1, NC: 2, NH: 1, TX: 3, UN: 10**
- **Newcomers sources:**
  - TCH-Web site/Call in/Brochure: 206
  - B-Q Chamber: 6
  - V-L Chamber: 32
  - L-L Chamber 0
  - Advertising: 8
  - Other: 44



## **ECONOMIC IMPACT**

- **Annual Income:           \$12,432,000**
- **Annual Spending:       \$10,656,000**
- **Liquid Assets:           \$1,243,200,000**
- **Indirect Jobs Created:       592**

(average according to industry standards)



*You're Invited!*

## **Triple Crown Hometowns Reception**

*Come join us for a delightful winter holiday evening social  
in honor of retirees, both recent and long-standing citizens,  
and visitors of our South Georgia communities.  
Enjoy Southern culture and cuisine*

### **Fellowship Home at Brookside**

**470 Fellowship Home Lane, Valdosta GA,**

**Thursday, December 17, 2009**

**4:30– 6:00 p.m.**

*We hope you'll take this opportunity to enjoy  
hors d'oeuvres and cool refreshments, register for door prizes,  
make new friends or catch up with some ole' ones.*

Triple Crown Hometowns is a program of the  
Valdosta-Lowndes, Quitman-Brooks, and Lakeland-Lanier  
Chambers of Commerce

(229) 247-6706

Casual attire

# Public Affairs Division Reports



**Tim Jones  
(Vice Chairman)**

**VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY  
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Chamber Co-Hosts State Legislative Lunch with Rotary Clubs



State Legislative Committee presents 2010 Agenda for Business to Local Delegation on Dec. 2 at the Rainwater Conference Center



**BUSINESS2010**  
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# Census 2010 Kick-off Event Nov. 10



It's  
in



Our  
Hands!

We move forward when you send it back !

# Chamber hosts GDOT Commissioner Vance Smith

GAC presents Transportation Funding issue and Gateways plans to Commissioner Smith on Nov. 30



Reception for GDOT Commissioner Smith, Nov. 30 at the Chamber



**BUSINESS 2009**

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# Military Affairs

Brian Geary, Chairman

## Mission Statement:

To continue a long-standing tradition in our community of cultivating and enhancing a positive relationship between the business community and local military personnel.



**MILITARY AFFAIRS  
COMMITTEE**



# Thank you to Our 2009 Red Carpet Sponsors:

## Three Star Sponsors

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LLC

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Inc.

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Farmers Home Furniture

Greenleaf Center

Guardian Bank

Langdale Vallotton, LLP

Miller Hardware

Moody Law Firm, LLC

Pearl Executive Shuttle

Prudential Financial Company –  
Tim Oliver

Quinn Construction Group

SMITH Northview Hospital

The Herndon Company

The LPA Group Incorporated

The Park Avenue Bank

Valdosta Flying Service

Valdosta Lighting Company

Valdosta-Lowndes County  
Airport Authority

Valdosta-Lowndes County  
Industrial Authority

Wild Adventures Theme Park

# Workforce Development & Education Division Reports



**Greg Justice  
(Vice Chairman)**

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# Boot Camp for Supervisors

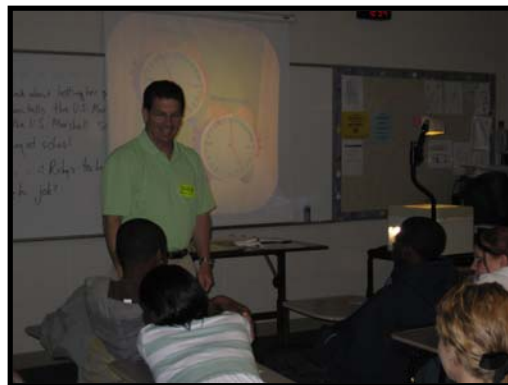
## Boot Camp Report 2009

	Goal Attendance	Actual Attendance
February 5, 2009	25	13
May 7, 2009	25	36
August 6, 2009	25	26
November 5, 2009	25	26
<b>GOAL TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>101</b>





School	Dates	Classes	Number of Students
Southland Christian School	November 3-4, 2008	1	20
Open Bible Christian School	November 11-12, 2008	1	27
Lowndes Alternative School	December 15-16, 2008	1	7
Georgia Christian School	8-9, 2009	1	15
Valwood Middle School	Jan 21 & Jan 29, 2009	1	37
Lowndes Middle School	April 28-29, 2009	12	310
Hahira Middle School	May 11-12, 2009	11	422
Valdosta Middle School	May 14-15, 2009	14	336
VLPRCA-Teen Camp	Summer 09	1	20
<b>Total</b>		<b>43</b>	<b>1194</b>





Name	Business	Name	Business
Alison Stokes	Chamber of Commerce	Greg Justice	Regal Marine
Allan Dear	Allan Dear Real Estate	Iris Brown	Regions Bank
Alyssa Weldon	Valdosta Technical College	Jill Higgins	Jill Higgins Photography
Leigh Broomberg	Colony Bank	Lacey Walker	State Farm Insurance
Bill Tillman	Valdosta Technical College	Lacy Dixon	James H. Rainwater Conference Center
Carrie Reed	Wild Adventures	Margaret Brogdon	Valdosta Technical College
Charmane Thomas	The Paxen Group/WIA	Marty Rodgers	Blanton & Griffin Insurance
Chris Baltrus	New York Life	Richard Ramsey	Department of Labor
Daren Waters	Valdosta Coaching Network	Shannon Vinson	Sam's Club
Anne-Marie Wolff	City of Valdosta	Bill Simmons	ADM
Emily Browning	Fowler, Holley, Rambo and Stalvey	Monica Boyd	Smith Northview Hospital
Evan Butler- Sands	Chamber of Commerce	Michael Anderson	Express Employment Professionals
Maggie Roberts	Valdosta State Univeristy	John Trombetta	Valdosta State Univeristy
Gloria Butler	Senior Volunteer Connection	Jacque Wheeler	Valdosta State Univeristy
Frederick Polkinghorne	Valdosta State Univeristy	Christina Moore	Valdosta Technical College





Helping Your Child Succeed 2009 Presentations

	Company	Business Presenter	School Presenter	Parents
1	Dept. of Family & Children's Services	Carrie Hickman	LaVerne Rome	89
2	Parent University-March 7		LaVerne Rome	19
3	Doctor's Laboratory-May 19	Greg Justice	LaVerne Rome	8
4	SGMC-June 18		LaVerne Rome	65
5	City of Valdosta-Aug 20	Greg Justice	LaVerne Rome	13
6	VECA Parent Orientation-Sept 10	Greg Justice	LaVerne Rome	60
7	SGMC-Sept. 18	Greg Justice	LaVerne Rome	75
8	Valdosta City Schools Parent Summit		LaVerne Rome	15

Parents Reached

344





### Upcoming Events:

**MetroOne Mentor Appreciation Event- Jan. 19**

**MetroOne Task Force Meeting- Jan. 27**

**CEO Unplugged Series-Feb. 1**

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# **President's Report: Myrna Ballard**

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# **Chairman's Report: Jeff Hanson**

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**Next Meeting Date:**

**Thursday, January 15, 2010**

**8:00 – 12 p.m.**

**@ Country Inn & Suites**

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# Meeting Adjourned