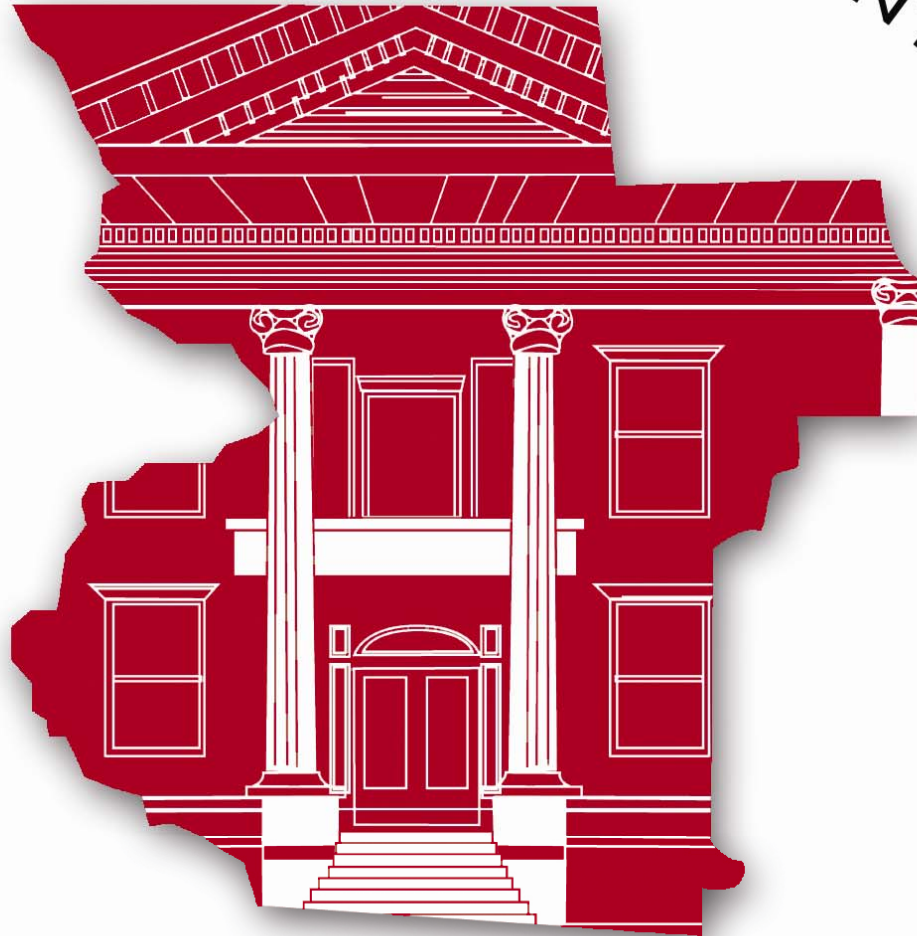


VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Leading Businesses.
Leading Communities.™

2007 ANNUAL REPORT

2 2007 Board of Directors

<p>Chairman Nick Valenti <i>Valenti, Rackley & Associates</i></p>	<p>Vice Chair, Administration Leggett Lovan <i>Southeastern Freight Lines</i></p>	<p>Vice Chair, Community Affairs Tom Gooding <i>Elliott, Blackburn, Barnes, & Gooding, P.C.</i></p>
<p>Vice Chair, Economic Development & Chairman-Elect Walter Hobgood <i>Express Personnel Services</i></p>	<p>Vice Chair, Business Promotions & Services Jodi Doss <i>Jodi's Accessories</i></p>	<p>Immediate Past Chairman Tim Carroll <i>Farmers Home Furniture</i></p>
<p>Vice Chair, Membership & Marketing David Newbern <i>U.S. Press Direct</i></p>	<p>Treasurer Paul Nichols <i>Nexxtep Technology Services</i></p>	<p>Chairman's Choice Tim Jones <i>Ameris Bank</i></p>
<p>President Myrna Ballard <i>Chamber of Commerce</i></p>		
<p>Sally Bloom <i>Mediacom</i></p>	<p>Stan Fillion <i>South Georgia Classic</i></p>	<p>Sheldon Presser <i>Fox's Pizza @ Funstreet</i></p>
<p>Ed Cockman <i>Family Health Care</i></p>	<p>Jeff Hanson <i>Park Avenue Bank</i></p>	<p>Jerome Riley <i>Riley Church Pews</i></p>
<p>Tim Coombs <i>Coombs Heating & Air Conditioning</i></p>	<p>Terri Lupo <i>Georgia Power Company</i></p>	<p>Phyllis Royal <i>Full Circle Marketing</i></p>
<p>Allan Dear <i>Allan Dear Real Estate</i></p>	<p>Lee Morgan <i>Southeastern Federal Credit Union</i></p>	<p>Jane Shelton <i>South Georgia Travel</i></p>
<p>Trey Fausett <i>Regulatory Compliance Service</i></p>	<p>Giovanni Panizzi <i>Cypress Lakes Subdivision Development</i></p>	<p>Debra Tann <i>Genesis Christian School</i></p>

Committee Chairmen

<p>Ralph Allen <i>Valdosta State University</i></p>	<p>Marshall Conner <i>Georgia Power Company</i></p>	<p>Rusty Griffin <i>Griffin Corp.</i></p>	<p>Jud Rackley <i>Brandon, Rackley & Dukes</i></p>
<p>Dean Blevins <i>Century 21 Winnersville Realty</i></p>	<p>Andy Deal <i>Prudential ACS Real Estate</i></p>	<p>Jim Hickman <i>Langdale Industries</i></p>	<p>Phyllis Royal <i>Full Circle Marketing</i></p>
<p>James Bridges <i>Associate Member</i></p>	<p>Jack Edwards <i>South Georgia Medical Center</i></p>	<p>Carol Kimbrough <i>Bill Kimbrough New York Life</i></p>	<p>Jane Shelton <i>South Georgia Travel</i></p>
<p>Bob Burns <i>CMC Tire</i></p>	<p>Ken Ellington <i>Shaw Industries</i></p>	<p>Terri Lupo <i>Georgia Power Company</i></p>	<p>Darrell Wilder <i>Georgia Power Company</i></p>
<p>Stacy Bush <i>Bush Investment Group</i></p>	<p>Trey Fausett <i>Regulatory Compliance Service</i></p>	<p>Bernie Napier <i>Doctors Lab</i></p>	<p>Mark Wilson <i>Langdale Industries</i></p>
<p>Tim Carroll <i>Farmers Home Furniture</i></p>	<p>Stan Fillion <i>South Georgia Classic</i></p>	<p>Paul Nichols <i>Nexxtep Technology Services</i></p>	<p>Anne-Marie Wolff <i>City of Valdosta</i></p>
<p>Ed Cockman <i>Family Health Care</i></p>		<p>Sheldon Presser <i>Fox's Pizza @ Funstreet</i></p>	

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To Our Members:

Years from now, when we look back on 2007, we are confident that we will be able to say, "That was a very good year – for our Chamber, and for our community."

2007 was the start of a new era for the Chamber, due to the overwhelming success of IMPACT 2012. When we set the ambitious goal of \$1.75 million for the five-year Business Action Plan, we were determined to reach it. Knowing the importance of each initiative included in the plan, our community could ill afford to exclude even one due to lack of financial resources. Thanks to the tremendous support of our business community, individuals and local governments, we exceeded our goal, generating more than \$2.3 million to fund every single initiative identified by the 72 business and community leaders who developed the Business Action Plan.

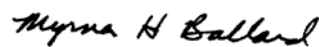
We think 2007 was the beginning of a new era for our community, too. Perhaps the single most important accomplishment of IMPACT 2012 is that it has drawn our community's leaders together. That is, after all, the Chamber's mission – "...to serve as a unifying force and focal point for enhancing the economic, social and cultural well-being of the regional community it serves."

Thanks to our courageous Board of Directors, our dedicated and hard-working staff, and to our 1,500-plus members for your support in 2007.

Sincerely,



Nick Valenti
2007 Chairman of the Board



Myrna Ballard
President

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4 Economic Development

Investing in the future with IMPACT 2012



“IMPACT 2012.” That’s what it’s called, and that’s exactly what it will do – have a powerful impact on this community. IMPACT 2012 is a five-year business development action plan initiated and spearheaded by the Chamber. A \$2.3 million investment committed by local businesses, individuals and local governments, the major initiatives of IMPACT 2012 are:

- ✓ Workforce Development and Education
- ✓ Expansion of Targeted Businesses
- ✓ Entrepreneurial and Small Business Development
- ✓ Enhancement of Pro-Business Environment
- ✓ Attraction of Amenity-Seeking Retirees

Developed by 72 business and community leaders over a six-month series of 11 meetings, IMPACT 2012 is an unprecedented opportunity for this community to work together to advance toward its full economic potential. An independent analysis by economist Dr. Cynthia Tori estimates an annual economic impact of \$95 million, and the creation of 1,350 new jobs.

Providing assistance to “home-grown” entrepreneurs

The S.E.E.D.S (Sowing Entrepreneur and Economic Development Success) Center continues to be recognized throughout Georgia for our entrepreneur and economic development best practices. In 2007, 465 clients throughout the region took advantage of the free resources and services that the S.E.E.D.S. Center has to offer. Because the S.E.E.D.S. Center has become a model for “economic gardening” in Georgia, Valdosta was selected to host the 5th annual Economic Gardening Conference in May. This year, 13 states and Japan were represented at the conference, as well as representatives from all over Georgia. The conference was filled with seminars, tours, and networking opportunities. The Chamber continues its efforts in economic gardening by providing programs such as Professional Consultants, Corporate Coaches, free customized demographics and market research, competitor intelligence, and targeted mailing lists. All of these high tech tools are free to anyone, regardless of Chamber membership, and are in place with one thing in mind: to generate entrepreneurial success from within the Valdosta-Lowndes Metro Area.



Chamber Chairman of the Board Nick Valenti (Valenti, Rackley & Associates, LLC), Jodi Doss (Jodi’s Accessories), Dr. Greg Martin, M.D. (South Georgia Vein Centers), Dr. Debra Tann (Genesis Christian School), Gerald Scott (Chamber), and Tim Carroll (Farmers Home Furniture Company)



State Representative Jay Shaw, Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle, State Senator Tim Golden, State Reps. Amy Carter and Ellis Black



TBEC chairman Jud Rackley (Brandon, Rackley & Dukes), Don Poor (Conference Center & Tourism Authority), and Chris Miller, executive director of Savannah’s The Creative Coast Initiative

Economic Development 5

Creating jobs for college & university graduates

The Targeted Business Expansion Committee, made up of approximately 90 community and business leaders from a 6-county area, is dedicated to growing jobs for technical college and university graduates in three targeted business clusters:

- ✓ **Information Technology**
- ✓ **Environmental Technology**
- ✓ **Medical Services & Support**

The group is also committed to building a community that is attractive to young professionals. MetroOne was created by the Chamber to provide a solution to one of Valdosta's biggest economic hurdles: retention of college and university graduates.

Attracting amenity-seeking retirees



Established as a regional economic development program in 2000, Triple Crown Hometowns created a partnership among the chambers of commerce in Quitman-Brooks, Lakeland-Lanier, and Valdosta-Lowndes to attract amenity-seeking retirees to South Georgia. To date, the program can identify 212 retiree households that have located in our region, 82 households in 2007 alone. We successfully nominated our region as one of 2007's 'Top Ten Best

Places to Retire in Georgia' by "Retire in Georgia" magazine, and 'Top 11 Southern Retirement Towns' in "Retirement Lifestyles" magazine.

Forming partnerships to create drug-free workplaces

The DRUGS DON'T WORK in South Georgia program continues to be one of the largest in the state with 260 members. DDW in South Georgia is also the only regional program in the state. In 2007, the program recruited Worth County-Sylvester Chamber as our 7th DDW Regional Partner, along with the chambers of commerce in Adel-Cook, Ashburn-Turner, Quitman-Brooks, Lakeland-Lanier, Douglas-Coffee, and Moultrie-Colquitt. DDW provides companies with the tools and assistance needed to implement and maintain a certified drug-free workplace program, thereby saving 7.5% on their Workers Comp insurance premiums.



Barbara Fender (Code 3 Response Security Services), winner of the Guardian Bank Business Plan Competition



Doug Marchand, Executive Director of the Georgia Ports Authority, and Rusty Griffin (Griffin Corp.)



Mark Wilson (Langdale Industries), Dr. Dennis Marks (Associate Member), Chuck Roberts (SMITH Northview Hospital), U.S. Congressman Jack Kingston, and Tom Gooding (Elliot, Blackburn, Barnes, & Gooding, P.C.)

6 Government Affairs

Working to pass pro-business legislation

The Chamber championed the following business development initiatives in the 2007 Legislative Session:

- ✓ HB 272 – Sales tax exemption on energy used in manufacturing
- ✓ HB 128 – Sales Tax Holiday
- ✓ HB 186 - Sales and use tax exemption for certain alternative fuel facilities

Carrying the Chamber's voice to Capitol Hill

The Chamber Board adopted the 2007 Federal Legislative Agenda for Business which encompassed what the Chamber membership views as most important to the Valdosta-Lowndes County business community: Affordable Health Insurance, Federal Immigration, Alternative Energy, and Federal Minimum Wage. In May, 13 Chamber members traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with members of Congress, USAF officials, and U.S. Chamber staff to share the concerns of the Valdosta-Lowndes County business community.



Chamber's Washington delegation with staff of Federal elected officials in Washington, D.C.

Discussing issues with top leaders



Mayor John Fretti, Commission Chairman Rod Casey, Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle, Tom Gooding (Elliott, Blackburn, Barnes, & Gooding, P.C.), and Tim Carroll (Farmers Home Furniture Company)

- ✓ Coordinated two meetings between U.S. Rep. Kingston and Moody AFB Housing subcontractors, providing Rep. Kingston an opportunity to hear concerns and strengthen his understanding of their situation and perspective.
- ✓ Convened a Georgia Chamber Listening Session, presenting legislative issues and receiving feedback from the Georgia Chamber and those in attendance.
- ✓ Arranged a visit by State Insurance Commissioner John Oxendine to allow the Commissioner to present state insurance issues/concerns to local business leaders in preparation for the 2008 General Assembly.
- ✓ Persuaded the State Water Commission to schedule a second Public Hearing in Valdosta on the State Water Plan.
- ✓ Hosted the 2007 State Legislative Wrap-Up with Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle as keynote speaker.

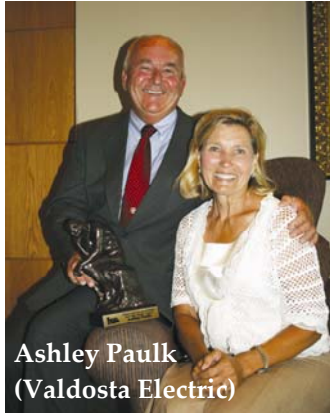
Planning for the 2008 Legislative Session

Developed the 2008 State Legislative Agenda for Business with the following issues identified:

- ✓ Affordable Health Insurance
- ✓ Tax Reform
- ✓ Alternative Energy
- ✓ State Tax Exemption on Energy for Manufacturing
- ✓ Water
- ✓ State Sales Tax Holiday
- ✓ State Tax Exemption on Passive Retirement Income
- ✓ Protection of Business Owner's Property Rights

Membership Awards 7

B.I.G. Thinker



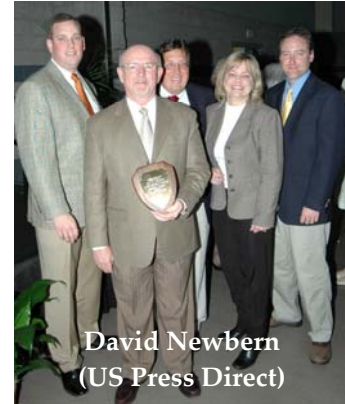
Ashley Paulk
(Valdosta Electric)

Small Business of the Year



Nexstep Technology Services

A.L. Girardin Award



David Newbern
(US Press Direct)

World Class Employee Recognition

*Front Line
Supervisory Winner:*
**Charles Allen
(Langdale Forest
Products, Co.)**



*Non-Supervisory
Winner:*
**Michelle Reynolds
(1st America Drugs)**

Ambassador of the Year



Carol Kimbrough
(Bill Kimbrough
New York Life)

Minority- Owned Business
of the Year



Las Banderas
Mexican Restaurant

DDW Partner of the Year



Langdale Place

TCH Silver Star



Jeanette
Coody

Champion of Business



Parrish Clark
(Guardian Bank)

Manufacturer of the Year



American Drill Bushing



2007 Board of Directors



2007 Committee Chairmen



Chamber Staff

- Myrna Ballard, President
- Karil Brockington, Administrative Director
- Alison Stokes, Triple Crown Hometowns Director
- Mike Stalvey, Operations Director
- Sokanya Lanh, Information Technology Director
- Derrick Carter, Business Development Associate
- Tara Nichols, Business Development Director
- Evan Butler-Sands, Marketing & Business Services Director
- Diana McAlroy, Workforce Development & Education Director
- Betty Morgan, Membership Director
- Brian Stadsvold, Government Affairs & Business Expansion Director
- Johnette Snyder, Administrative Assistant
- Sandy Prentiss, Administrative Assistant

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