

VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY



**CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

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**January 21, 2010  
Board of Directors  
Meeting  
@  
Country Inn & Suites**



**Board of Directors Meeting  
Thursday, January 21, 2010  
8:00 am – 12:00 Noon  
@ Country Inn & Suites**

**Agenda**

- **Welcome and Introductions – Terri Lupo, Chairman of the Board**
- **Purpose of Retreat – Terri Lupo**
- **“New Year! New Attitude!” – Jay Platt**
- **Overview of Chamber Board Handbook – Myrna Ballard**
  - **Consider By-Laws amendments**
- **“The Perfect Board” - James McGahee**
- **Consider minutes of the November 19, 2009 and December 17, 2009 meetings**
- **Chamber December 2009 Financial Statements – Paul Nichols, Treasurer**
  - **Consider replacement for John Manning**
- **Presentation of Proposed 2010 Business Plans**
  - **BUSINESS EXPANSION DIVISION – Tom Gooding, Vice Chairman/Chairman-Elect(2011)**
  - **MEMBER SERVICES DIVISION – Jay Prince, Vice Chairman**
  - **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION – Tim Jones, Vice Chairman and Chairman-Elect-Elect (2012)**
  - **PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIVISION – James McGahee, Vice Chairman**
  - **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION DIVISION – Greg Justice, Vice Chairman**
- **IMPACT 2012**
- **CUEE**
- **Strategic Planning Task Force**
  - **Consider 2010 Business Plan – Terri Lupo, Chairman of the Board**

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, Jared 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.

**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)

- **Consider Chamber non-dues revenue fund-raiser: J. Broomberg and J. Shelton presented a proposal for an international group trip that would produce non-dues revenue for the Chamber. P. Nichols made a motion to pursue the proposal. S. Fillion seconded. Motion carried.**

- **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. W. Hobgood 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.

## 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, with T. Lupo and T. Gooding abstaining in consideration of their current leadership roles with Valwood School. *(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

➤ **Consider Minutes of December 17, 2009 Board of Directors meeting**



**Minutes of the Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber Board of Directors meeting held Thursday, Dec. 17, 2009, 8:30 a.m. at The Park Avenue Bank**


**Members Present:** Ed Cockman, Tim Coombs, Allan Dear, Stan Fillion, Jeff Hanson, Tim Jones, Terri Lupo, James McGahee, Lee Morgan, David Newbern, Paul Nichols, Giovanni Panizzi, Jay Prince, Jerome Riley, Phyllis Royal, Debra Tann and Myrna Ballard

**Also present:** Timothy Mabe, Melissa Wheeler, Alison Stokes and Karil Brockington

**Members Absent:** Sally Bloom, Jeff Fulp, Walt Gill, Tom Gooding, Walter Hobgood, Greg Justice and John Manning

- **Consider Minutes of the November 19, 2009 Board Meeting.** S. Fillion made a motion to accept the minutes with the corrections to the items concerning CUEE and the statement regarding the Valdosta City Schools. T. Lupo seconded the motion and it passed.
- **Consider November 2009 Financial Statements:** P. Nichols reviewed the Chamber financial statements. **G. Panizzi** made a motion to accept the financial statements as presented. **L. Morgan** seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. (see pgs. 4-28 of hand out)
- **Review Proposed Amendments to Chamber By-Laws:** Chairman J. Hanson reported. (see pgs. 29-31 or hand out) The proposed amendments will be considered at the 2010 Annual Planning Retreat.
- **Consider 2010 Budgets:** P. Nichols reported. **E. Cockman** made a motion to adopt the 2010 budgets. **T. Lupo** seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. (see pgs. 32-42 of handout)
- **Consider Position Statement on Proposed 5 Points Development Project:** **E. Cockman** made a motion to adopt the Position Statement on the Proposed 5 Points Development Project, as amended during the meeting. **J. McGahee** seconded. (see page 30 of hand out) Motioned carried, with T. Lupo abstaining.
- **Government Affairs Council Update:** A. Stokes reported. For the complete report please visit the Chamber's Web Site (<http://www.valdostachamber.com/about/Boardmeeting.html>) click Government Affairs Council Update.
- **Review 2009 Highlights:** Division Vice-Chairmen reported.

➤ Consider Minutes of December 17, 2009 Board of Directors meeting

 **President's Report:** M. Ballard notified the Board that M. Wheeler will be leaving the Chamber at the end of 2009 and thanked her for her outstanding service. Ballard thanked the Board for an outstanding job.

**Chairman's Report:** J. Hanson appointed Marcie Dennard to chair a new committee in 2010, the Membership Committee.

**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, January 21, 2010**

Respectfully submitted,

*Karil Brockington*

Karil Brockington  
**Administrative Director**

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# **Operations & Administration**

VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY



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# **Financial Statements December 31, 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 By-Laws amendments**

# Chamber Activity Reports

VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY



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

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***Highlights!***  
***January - December***  
***2009***

**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**

- **5,083** member referrals have been made (**6,752** 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.



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

### Mail Correspondence:

**Newcomers Packets**            10 (19)

### Miscellaneous Information Requested:

|                              |                         |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Request for BBB:             | <u>13 (15)</u>          |
| Email Information Requested: | <u>6 (0)</u>            |
| Request for Events:          | <u>15 (0)</u>           |
| Civic Club Lists:            | <u>12 (5)</u>           |
| Web site Referrals by Phone: | <u>9 (0)</u>            |
| Manufacturers List:          | <u>6 (1)</u>            |
| Request for Directions:      | <u>23 (5)</u>           |
| Maps:                        | <u>28 (81)</u>          |
| Request for Wild Adventures: | <u>0 (0)</u>            |
| Membership Info. Packets:    | <u>4 (3)</u>            |
| Phone Books:                 | <u>25 (62)</u>          |
| Membership List/Email:       | <u>1 (8)</u>            |
| <b>Total Miscellaneous:</b>  | <b><u>142 (180)</u></b> |



## Member Referrals December 2009

**Total Categories: 260**

### Top 10

|                       |        |
|-----------------------|--------|
| Manufacturers:        | 533    |
| Accountants:          | 763    |
| Associate Member:     | 1,220  |
| Hotels:               | 635    |
| Attorney:             | 626    |
| Building Contractors: | 695    |
| Advertising:          | 995    |
| Restaurants:          | 1,611  |
| Caterers:             | 432    |
| Organizations:        | 456    |
| Other:                | 11,164 |

**Total Member Referrals: 19,130 (301)**



## Year to date 2009 (January-December) Correspondence/Activity Report (2008 Figures in Parentheses)

### Mail Correspondence:

**Newcomers Packets**                 164 (397)

### Miscellaneous Information Requested:

Request for BBB:                                 165 (182)

Email Information Requested:                 125 (284)

Request for Events:                                 124 (162)

Civic Club Lists:                                 79 (71)

Web site Referrals by Phone:                 160 (63)

Manufacturers List:                                 46 (58)

Request for Directions:                                 262 (168)

Maps:   621 (2,102)

Request for Wild Adventures:                 96 (71)

Membership Info. Packets:                                 53 (44)

Phone Books:   392 (727)

Membership List/Email:                                 53 (64)

**Total Miscellaneous:**                                 2,076 (3,996)

**Total Members Referrals:**                                 51,819 (4,914)

# December 2009 Web Site Activity Report

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

Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce

VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Leading Businesses  
Leading Communities.™

Business Directory | Our Chamber | Our Community | Relocation Info | Chamber News & Events | Business Resources | Member Services | Contact Us

Welcome to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce

**Leading** the way in improving economic opportunities for all businesses, large and small

**Creating** a climate of growth and laying a foundation for success that will be strong for years to come

**Keeping** businesses connected to important issues that affect the economy and lifestyle of our community

**Providing** a platform of opportunity where individuals and businesses can make a difference

[Click Here to sign up for Chamber events.](#)

[Click Here to update your Chamber contact information.](#)

## Web Site Hits:

|            |         |
|------------|---------|
| June 2009  | 125,494 |
| July 2009  | 118,902 |
| Aug. 2009  | 124,721 |
| Sept. 2009 | 114,118 |
| Oct. 2009  | 105,550 |
| Nov. 2009  | 96,131  |
| Dec. 2009  | 73,817  |

## Page Views:

|            |        |
|------------|--------|
| June 2009  | 17,232 |
| July 2009  | 16,592 |
| Aug. 2009  | 16,921 |
| Sept. 2009 | 15,856 |
| Oct. 2009  | 16,408 |
| Nov. 2009  | 14,367 |
| Dec. 2009  | 11,486 |

## Web Site Activity Report continued

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

|               | <b>Valdosta</b>                      | <b>Valdosta Chamber</b>             | <b>Valdosta-Lowndes</b>             |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <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 |

### Search Engine Position for Chamber Site as of Jan 11, 2010

|               | <b>Valdosta</b>                      | <b>Valdosta Chamber</b>             | <b>Valdosta-Lowndes</b>             |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <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 2 <sup>nd</sup> place | First page in 1 <sup>st</sup> place | First page in 1 <sup>st</sup> place |
| <b>YAHOO</b>  | Third page in 5 <sup>th</sup> place  | First page in 1 <sup>st</sup> place | First page in 1 <sup>st</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

# Business Expansion Division Reports



**Tom Gooding  
(Vice Chairman)**

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***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 which 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.

# When will we feel recovery occur?



Proudly presents the

## **BUSINESS** **outlook** **2010**

### **BREAKFAST**

**Wednesday, February 17, 2010**

**Valdosta Country Club**

**7:30a.m. - 9:00a.m.**

**Tickets are \$15**  
**Please register online at**  
**[www.valdostachamber.com](http://www.valdostachamber.com)**  
**or contact the**  
**Chamber at 247-8100.**

### Featuring

**Dr. Jeffrey Humphreys**  
University of Georgia  
Terry College of Business

**Dr. Cynthia R. Tori**  
Valdosta State University  
Langdale College of Business

**Dr. Cliff A. Lipscomb**  
Valdosta State University  
Langdale College of Business



# Member Services Division Reports



**Jay Prince  
(Vice Chairman)**

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

**Membership Development & Retention**

- Chamber membership retention rate for 2009 is 83%. Retention rate for 2008 was 87%. (Goal for 2009 was 88%; industry average is 80%)
- 257 write-offs for 2009. (109 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 247. (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 1,536.

- 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”.

**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. Our annual averages are:
  - *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 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.

# 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   | 36,261.41   | (1,269.22)      |
| <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         | 369,697.19         | 9,688.18               |
| <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 December 31, 2009**

**DUES COLLECTED YEAR TO DATE: \$369,697.19**  
**2009 goal for Dues Collection: \$400,000.00**

**NEW MEMBERS YEAR TO DATE: 247**  
**2009 Goal: 100**

**TOTAL MEMBERSHIP: 1,536**  
**2009 Goal: 1,556**

**NET MEMBERSHIP GAIN IN December: 7**  
**NET MEMBERSHIP GAIN IN 2009: (10)**  
**2009 Goal: 10**

**2009 Retention Goal: 88%**  
**Current Retention Rate: 83%**  
**(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>Dec</b>   | 7           | 12          | 9           | 11          | 18          |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>255</b>  | <b>243</b>  | <b>263</b>  | <b>216</b>  | <b>247</b>  |

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**New Members  
December 2009**

**Chick-Fil-A at North Valdosta**

Kenneth White  
3147 Inner Perimeter Road  
Valdosta, GA 31602  
229-245-0144  
RESTAURANT

**Downtown Diner**

Roberta Carmickle  
202 W. Hill Avenue  
Valdosta, GA 31601  
229-244-7144  
RESTAURANT

**Colonial Life Insurance Company**

Don Wright  
2406 Pebblewood East,  
Apt. 1  
Adel, GA 31620  
229-300-1760  
INSURANCE

**Embroid Me Valdosta**

Brian Foskey  
1900 Gornto Road Suite G  
Valdosta, GA 31602  
229-588-3411  
EMBROIDERY/SCREEN  
PRINTING/PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS

**Ditto's Upscale Resale**

Keith Tumlin  
5389 Mill Store Road  
Lake Park, GA 31636  
229-559-8080  
CONSIGNMENT

**ERA Joyner Realty**

J.D. Yeager  
231 Northside Drive  
Valdosta, GA 31602  
229-740-0978  
COMMERCIAL REALTOR

**Exit Realty In Touch**

Scott/Satrina Plyler  
2722 N. Oak Street  
Valdosta, GA 31602  
229-333-5105  
REAL ESTATE

**'more than words' Pediatric Therapy  
Assoc.**

Jan Rowland  
1701 N. Patterson Street  
Valdosta, GA 31602  
229-244-4545  
SPEECH THERAPY/OCCUPATIONAL  
THERAPY

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**New Members  
December 2009**

**Exit Realty In Touch**

Morgan Plyler  
2722 N. Oak Street  
Valdosta, GA 31602  
229-333-5105  
AGENT

**Pammy Cakes**

Pam Kalil  
1917 D Baytree Place  
Remerton, GA 31601  
229-249-9866  
BAKERY

**Home & Property Solutions, Inc.**

W. Grant Nichols  
190 Oak Mountain Pkwy.  
Waverly Hall, GA  
229-563-7942  
HOME IMPROVEMENT

**Photography by Jacquelynn Buck**

Jacquelynn Buck  
4058 Huntley Drive  
Valdosta, GA 31605  
229-699-0585  
PHOTOGRAPHY

**Quality Solutions**

Natalia Huffman  
409 Bryson Circle  
Hahira, GA 31632  
229-251-9984  
SKINCARE

**Stephenson Jewelers & Beautiful Flowers**

Horace (Chip) Stephenson, Jr.  
128-130 N. Patterson St.  
Valdosta, GA 31601  
229-242-1229  
JEWELRY AND FLORIST

**Seed of Faith Christian Center**

Myra Barker  
4333 Bemiss Rd. Suite 5  
Valdosta, GA 31605  
229-247-5564  
CHURCH

**Valdosta Women's Health Center, PC**

Anthony Courson  
3811 Old US Hwy. 41 N  
Valdosta, Ga 31602  
229-333-0277  
PHYSICIANS OFFICE

**Steeda Autosports**

Frank Goddard  
2019 Steeda Way  
Valdosta, GA 31601  
229-249-8151  
MANUFACTURING

**WTWC**

Halley Stinchfield  
8440 Deerlake South  
Tallahassee, FL 32312  
850-893-4140  
MEDIA

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**Dues Account Status  
Report December 2009**

| <u>Billing Period</u>                     | <u>Accounts<br/>Receivable</u> | <u>Collections</u> | <u>Collection<br/>Rate</u> |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Current                                   | \$42,230.16                    | \$1,902.33         | 5%                         |
| Previously Collected<br>for current month |                                | \$17,089.65        | 40%                        |
| <b>Total Current</b>                      | <b>\$42,230.16</b>             | <b>\$18,991.98</b> | <b>45%</b>                 |
| 1-30 Days                                 | 13,991.69                      | 715.00             | 5%                         |
| 31-60 Days                                | 6,057.92                       | 85.00              | 1%                         |
| 61-90 Days                                | 180.00                         | .00                | 0%                         |
| 91-120 Days                               | 4,517.33                       | 296.25             | 7%                         |
| 120+ Days                                 | 37,458.92                      | 249.68             | 1%                         |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                           | <b>\$104,436.02</b>            | <b>\$20,337.91</b> | <b>19%</b>                 |
| New Members                               | \$1,170.00                     | \$1,170.00         |                            |
| <b>Total</b>                              | <b>\$105,606.02</b>            | <b>\$21,507.91</b> | <b>20%</b>                 |

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**Dues Account Status, continued**

**Previously collected for current months:**

|              |                    |
|--------------|--------------------|
| September    | 0.00               |
| October      | 6,980.50           |
| November     | 10,109.15          |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>\$17,089.65</b> |

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

|                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| January          | 8,112.50           |
| February         | 11,009.00          |
| March            | 0.00               |
| Deferred Revenue | <b>\$19,121.50</b> |

**Other Information:**

|                                 |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Direct Debit Accounts to Date   | 49  |
| Online Billing Accounts to Date | 124 |

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## Dues Account Status, yearly report

Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce

January-December 2009

### Dues Account Status Report

| Billing Period                    | Accounts          |                   | Collection |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------|
|                                   | Receivable        | Collections       | Rate       |
| Current                           | 423,294.30        | 255,140.98        | 60%        |
| 1-30 Days                         | 170,124.65        | 26,059.00         | 15%        |
| 31-60 Days                        | 103,538.69        | 10,031.99         | 10%        |
| 61-90 Days                        | 96,303.38         | 8,158.50          | 8%         |
| 91-120 Days                       | 88,739.85         | 6,064.50          | 7%         |
| 120+ Days                         | 364,026.56        | 37,938.54         | 10%        |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                   | <b>423,294.30</b> | <b>343,393.51</b> | <b>81%</b> |
| New Members                       | 26,303.68         | 26,303.68         |            |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>449,597.98</b> | <b>369,697.19</b> | <b>82%</b> |
| <b>Total Dues invoiced:</b>       |                   | 449,597.98        |            |
| <b>Total Dues Collected:</b>      |                   | 369,697.19        |            |
| <b>Overall Collection Rate:</b>   |                   | 82%               |            |
| <b>Members Written Off:</b>       |                   | 257               |            |
| <b>Dollar Amount Written Off:</b> |                   | 54,991.77         |            |



## Write-Offs December 2009

| REASON DROPPED      | NAME                               | JOIN DATE  | AMOUNT            |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| Budget Restrictions | FPC fof Valdosta                   | 8/25/2008  | \$240.00          |
| Budget Restrictions | WHLJ-FM 97.5                       | 6/5/1998   | \$225.00          |
| Member Moved        | Evette Mills                       | 9/17/2002  | \$14.20           |
| Non-Payment of Dues | Silkwood                           | 10/30/2000 | \$300.00          |
| Non-Payment of Dues | Swilley Farms                      | 6/10/2002  | \$250.00          |
| Non-Payment of Dues | Time to Change Redesign            | 1/3/2008   | \$300.00          |
| Out of Business     | Around The House Maintenance       | 3/26/2009  | \$320.00          |
| Out of Business     | Crowders Cozey Cottage             | 7/22/2009  | \$100.00          |
| Out of Business     | Master Builders of the South, Inc. | 4/30/2007  | \$240.00          |
| Out of Business     | Recycle Georgia, Inc.              | 5/22/2008  | \$360.00          |
| Requested Cancel    | Bruce Sumner                       | 11/9/2006  | \$85.00           |
|                     |                                    |            | <b>\$2,434.20</b> |



## Write-Offs December 2009 Summary

| Summary                          | Month #   | Month \$          | YTD #      | YTD \$             |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Budget Restrictions              | 2         | \$465.00          | 36         | \$7,238.50         |
| Business Sold                    |           |                   | 9          | \$2,565.00         |
| Consolidated Business            |           |                   | 3          | \$750.00           |
| No Benefit Seen                  |           |                   | 7          | \$1,810.00         |
| Member Deceased                  |           |                   | 1          | \$0.00             |
| Member Moved                     | 1         | \$14.20           | 8          | \$449.20           |
| Member Retiring                  |           |                   | 3          | \$560.00           |
| Nonpayment of Dues               | 3         | \$850.00          | 33         | \$12,305.00        |
| Out of Business                  | 4         | \$1,020.00        | 109        | \$17,821.57        |
| Other                            |           |                   |            | \$0.00             |
| Requested Cancellation-No Reason | 1         | \$85.00           | 47         | \$11,252.50        |
| Unhappy/Angry                    |           |                   | 1          | \$240.00           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                     | <b>11</b> | <b>\$2,434.20</b> | <b>257</b> | <b>\$54,991.77</b> |

|                 |    |            |     |             |
|-----------------|----|------------|-----|-------------|
| Write-Offs 2008 | 12 | \$2,440.00 | 189 | \$33,602.09 |
|-----------------|----|------------|-----|-------------|

|                                 |           |                 |           |                    |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|--------------------|
| <b>Difference 2008 vs. 2009</b> | <b>-1</b> | <b>(\$5.80)</b> | <b>68</b> | <b>\$21,389.68</b> |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|--------------------|



## Chamber 101:

How to get the most out of your  
Chamber membership

### 2010 Attendance Sheet

| Month        | 1 <sup>st</sup> Invitation | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Invitation | Attended  |
|--------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|
| Jan. 6       | 12                         | 75                         | 11        |
| Feb. 3       |                            |                            |           |
| Mar. 3       |                            |                            |           |
| Apr. 7       |                            |                            |           |
| May 5        |                            |                            |           |
| June 2       |                            |                            |           |
| July 7       |                            |                            |           |
| Aug. 4       |                            |                            |           |
| Sept. 1      |                            |                            |           |
| Oct. 6       |                            |                            |           |
| Nov. 3       |                            |                            |           |
| Dec. 1       |                            |                            |           |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>12</b>                  | <b>75</b>                  | <b>11</b> |

Jan. 6, 2009 invitation list for CHAMBER 101  
consists of members that joined from  
Sept. 21, 2009 – Nov. 21, 2009 (2<sup>nd</sup> time invites) &  
Nov. 22, 2009 – Dec. 20, 2009 (1<sup>st</sup> time invites) **Goal for 42**  
**2010 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, February 3, 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:**

Terri Lupo (1)

## Open Rates of Current Chamber e-publications

**Chamber In Motion** weekly e-newsletter  
Sent every Monday  
Open Rate: 27.9\*

**Events Update** sent Tuesday  
Open rate: 30.5\*

**SPROUTS** newsletter  
Send monthly to S.E.E.D.S. Center Clients and members of the Professional Consultants Program  
Open Rate: 24.7%\*

\* Percentages represent data accumulated between 12/1-12/31/09

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

| Business Type                | Open Rate |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| 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 DECEMBER 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

Radio-Lee Henderson S.E.E.D.S. Center Commercial

### PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIVISION

### MEMBER SERVICES DIVISION

Radio-3 Ribbon Cutting Visits (WAAC)

### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION DIVISION

### MISCELLANEOUS

Radio-Year in Review (Talk 92.1)

Radio-2009 Review; 2010 Preview (News Talk 105.9,  
Kix Country)

# December Ribbon Cuttings



**Shape Designers**



**Nu-Smile Family Dentistry**

# December Ribbon Cuttings



**Confetti & Lace**

# Ambassadors Report

## December 2009

### DECEMBER STATISTICS

Ribbon Cuttings for December: 3  
Groundbreakings for December: 0  
Business After Hours for December: 1  
Early Bird Breakfasts for December: 0

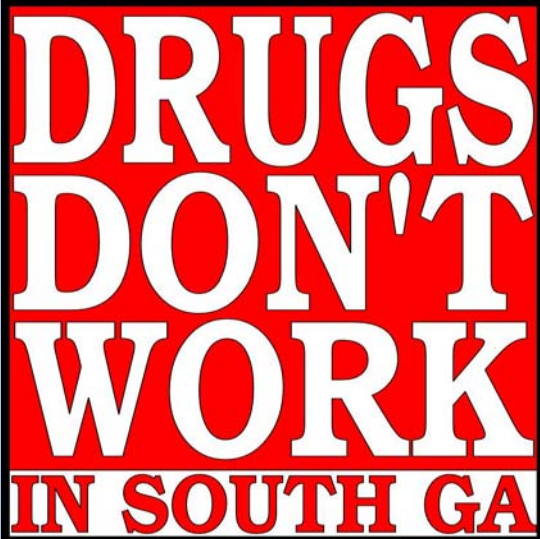
### 2009 STATISTICS

2009 Ribbon Cuttings: 82 (Goal: 75)  
2009 Groundbreakings: 5  
2009 Business After Hours: 12  
2009 Early Bird Breakfasts: 4

### UPCOMING EVENTS

98<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL DINNER  
January 26, 2010  
Rainwater Conference Center  
5:30-8:30 p.m.

OPERATION THANK YOU  
January 28, 2010 Packet Pick-up 5 p.m. at the Chamber  
January 29, 2010 Delivery



**DRUGS DON'T  
WORK Summary  
December 2009**

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| Total # of DDW Partners as of 12/31/08: | <b>266</b> |
| Total # of DDW Partners as of 12/31/09: | <b>257</b> |
| 2009 New Members:                       | <b>16</b>  |
| 2009 Losses:                            | <b>25</b>  |
| YTD Net Gain:                           | <b>(9)</b> |

**Goal for 2009: 271**



| <u>YTD</u> | <u>Nov</u> | <u>Total</u> | <u>Goal</u> | <u>Fav/(Unfav)</u>  |
|------------|------------|--------------|-------------|---------------------|
| \$33,275   | \$1,550.01 | \$34,825.01  | \$40,000    | <b>(\$5,174.99)</b> |

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

# Economic Development Division Reports



**Tim Jones  
(Vice Chairman)**

**VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

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**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** Guides to Starting a Business in Valdosta-Lowndes County 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.
- 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).

### **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).
- 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.
- Held **56** hours of consultations (2009 goal is 80 hours of consultation; (86 consultation hours in 2008).

## **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.



**Monthly Activity Report**  
**Period: December 2009**

|                           | <u>2009</u> | <u>2008</u> | <u>Cum</u>   |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Advertising leads:        | 0           | 0           | 342          |
| Web site hits:            | 10,221      | 10,668      | 1,754,465    |
| Web page requests:        | 1,640       | 2,081       | 28,622       |
| Web site leads:           | 11          | 12          | 1,423        |
| Brochure leads:           | 0           | 0           | 20           |
| Other TCH leads:          | 1           | 1           | 235          |
| Quitman Chamber leads:    | 0           | 0           | 27           |
| Valdosta Chamber leads:   | 0           | 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>3,701</b> |



## RELOCATIONS

- **Relocations (Households): 298**

Lowndes: 264      Brooks: 22      Lanier: 12

- **Dec Relocations: 2**
- **2009 Relocations: 46**
- **States inquiring: 47**
- **Relocations from: FL: 144, GA: 47, 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: 208
  - B-Q Chamber: 6
  - V-L Chamber: 32
  - L-L Chamber 0
  - Advertising: 8
  - Other: 44



## **ECONOMIC IMPACT**

- **Annual Income: \$12,516,000**
- **Annual Spending: \$10,728,000**
- **Liquid Assets: \$1,251,600,000**
- **Indirect Jobs Created: 596**

(average according to industry standards)

# SPROUTS NEWSLETTER

Watering the Seeds of Business Development

## PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANTS CORNER

Michael Jetter  
ActionCOACH



### REHEARSE YOUR MASTER PLAN

You've spent untold number of hours building your business plan. Perhaps it's your first. Perhaps, it's the 15th year you've revised it and are determined this year, not to just leave it on the shelf to collect dust while you put out another "fire". How easy would it be to take all that great planning you worked so hard to accomplish and break it down into manageable chunks? Think of achieving short-term goals as a constant dress-rehearsal for the "big show". Other than the expanded view of what you want to achieve, does your business plan reflect all the check-points you'll need to reach along the way? After all, what successful Broadway play went from choosing a cast, to opening night without a rehearsal? Did you just wake up the morning after you started your business expecting your goals to be achieved? Why not start toward your vision with an intermediate plan?

What difference would it make in your business if every 90 days, once per quarter, you could sit down and develop the goals, strategies, tasks and timelines needed to help you realize those larger goals in measured steps? No one wants to face a 2,000 lb. Gorilla disguised as a business plan. Wouldn't it be more enjoyable and less stressful to train 50 much smaller Chimps? Breaking your plan into manageable parts allows you to see your results sooner, make adjustments as needed and continue toward success. Isn't measuring results along the way, much more desirable than coming to the end of the year and asking "what happened"?

Take a dust buster to your business plan by building your own intermediate 90 day plan or attend one of our ActionCOACH, 90 day planning GrowthCLUB's™. You'll find the difference in your business between playing the strings to a symphony and being the featured soloist with your local symphony orchestra.

Michael Jetter  
Certified Business Coach  
ActionCOACH

### "If You Don't Know Where You Are Going, You Will Wind Up Somewhere Else" Yogi Berra

Yogi Berra has made many comments over the years that serve as inspiration and quite a few laughs for a lot of people. So it seemed appropriate to call upon his deceptively simple, but unnerveingly accurate statement that hits the nail on the head about the need for planning for the future. This is especially true for business owners, that somewhere else might be out in left field when you would rather be heading straight for home plate.

Strategic planning can help your business figure out where it is going and make sure it gets there. It is a change-oriented process that allows businesses to perform a periodic reassessment of where they stand and where they want to be. The planning process will give the owners a formal forward direction, aid in decision-making and provide for an improvement in the overall business performance. I recommend that the strategic planning session be conducted on an annual basis.

Typically, the process goes like this. A firm engages a facilitator (the SBDC can help you with this at no cost) to help conduct a SWOT analysis to assess the current conditions inside and outside the business. Key competencies are identified and analysis follows. Next specific, measurable goals are formulated with the Mission Statement always in mind. Goals should be challenging but realistic and obtainable. Strategies and tactics follow each goal developed. Building in feedback loops to allow for a continuous flow of information as the plan is updated or corrected over time is a good idea as well.

As the new year approaches, I hope you will make a commitment to plan for it and call on the SBDC for assistance if you need it. Because in the immortal words of Yogi Berra, "You've got to be very careful, because if you don't know where you are going, you might not get there."



Suzanne Barnett, Area Director  
Valdosta State University  
Small Business Development Center

### See What Our S.E.E.D.S. Center Partners are Up To!



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



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



### EVENT SPOTLIGHT

#### Marketing With Social Media: Tactics For The New Advertising Age

This full-day seminar will take your business to the next level. The educational courses will strengthen your knowledge of social media. In a world where 83% of people search on the web before making a purchase you cannot afford to miss out on this opportunity to obtain the tools necessary to grow your business using Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Blogs, Podcasts, and much more! You will walk out of the seminar with a social media strategy that you can begin using in your business immediately.

#### Classes For This Program Include:

- \*Marketing Your Business With FaceBook
- \*Better Business Blogging and Tweeting (Twitter)
- \*Future of Social Media
- \*Video Marketing
- \*Search Engine Marketing/Optimization

When:  
February 2, 2010  
8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.  
VSU University Center

Cost:  
Now-Jan.1-\$109.00  
After Jan.1-\$149.00

For More Information:  
<http://marketingwithsocialmedia.org/>  
[www.valdosta.edu/sbdc](http://www.valdosta.edu/sbdc)  
or call (229) 245-3738

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### DECEMBER

15 Business After Hours  
5-7 p.m.  
Guardian Bank

17 GrowthCLUB\*  
8 a.m.-4 p.m.  
LaQuinta Inn & Suites

17 Starting Your Own Business Class  
6-9 p.m.  
VSU Thaxton Hall  
Room 102

#### JANUARY

6 Chamber 101  
8-9 a.m.  
Chamber

14 Business After Hours  
5-7 p.m.  
South Georgia Medical Center

#### 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



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

## CLIENTS

2009 Goal: 600

Lowndes: 22

Region:

YTD Total: 515

Client Types

Start-ups: 13

Existing/Expanding: 1

Developers: 2

Info: 9

Returning: 2

Outcomes

New Members:

Started:

Expanded: 1

## RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION

ABC's: 18

Sales Leads: 14

Demographics: 4

Traffic Counts: 2

Loan Info: 2

## WEB SITE

Total Hits: 5105

Unique Visitors: 210

Total Visits: 448

Page Rank Google: 1st

## PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANTS PROGRAM

Quarter Goal: 19

Hours Provided: 14

2009 Goal: 85

YTD Total: 58

Most Demand

Marketing

## *SPROUTS* NEWSLETTER

Circulation: 469

Average Open Rate: 24.7%

Total Click-throughs: 14



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

The Deadline for entry is  
April 7, 2010

# Public Affairs Division Reports



**James McGahee  
(Vice Chairman)**

**VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

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**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



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



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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.

## 2010 Red Carpet Date:

Saturday, February 27

Saturday, April 10 (45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party)

Saturday, August 21

Saturday, October 2



# Workforce Development & Education Division Reports



**Greg Justice  
(Vice Chairman)**

**VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY  
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***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, [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).
- 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.
- Created MetroOne LinkedIn and Facebook groups to increase social networking opportunities for members.
- Drafted a Strategic Plan to provide vision and benchmarking for 2010-2012.

## **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).

# Boot Camp for Supervisors

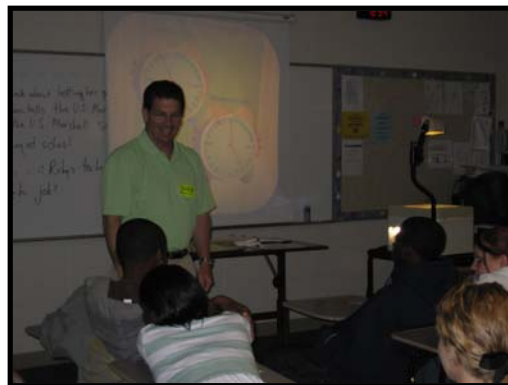
## Boot Camp Report 2009

|                   | 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>        |





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



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

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# **Chairman's Report: Terri Lupo**

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**Next Meeting Date:**

**Thursday, Feb. 18, 2010**

**8:30 – 10 a.m.**

**@ Country Inn & Suites**

**VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

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# Meeting Adjourned