



The Chamber Comment

Official Newsletter For The
THOMASTON-UPSON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

"Proud To Represent America's Hometown™ - Thomaston, Upson County"

110 West Main Street - P.O. Box 827

Telephone 706-647-9686 - Fax: 706-647-1703

www.thomastonchamber.com

WAKE UP WITH THE A.M. AMBASSADORS!

Rise and shine Upson County, the Thomaston-Upson Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors may soon be knocking at your door!

Each month, the Chamber Ambassadors visit randomly selected Chamber members on a designated morning. *The visit includes goodies sponsored in January by Hoppy Hopkins, a gift basket from Upson Regional Medical Center and a big "thank you" from the Chamber Ambassadors.*

Through the A.M. Ambassador program, the Chamber of Commerce hopes to recognize those businesses and individuals who through their membership and dedication to the community make the work of the Thomaston-Upson Chamber of Commerce possible.

On January 20, 2011, the A.M. Ambassadors will deliver baskets to the following businesses between 10-11 am:

Upson-Lee Pre-K, Upson-Lee South, Tasty Shoppe, Grand Oak Salon & Spa, Amedisys Home Health Care, South Pork BBQ, Malcolm Williams Edward Jones, Dan Brown Insurance, Hughston Clinic, Thomaston Hospice and Advanced Accounting Solutions.



SAVE THE DATE!

**The Thomaston-Upson
 Chamber of Commerce**

**9th Annual Business Open
 Golf Tournament**

Wednesday, March 23, 2011

**A GOLF COMMITTEE MEMBER WILL BE IN CONTACT
 WITH YOU SOON!**

**Kim Tyson, V-P Special Projects
 Adam Pugh, Chair Golf Committee
 Greg Boyt, Vice-Chair Golf Committee
 Lori Smith, Chamber of Commerce**

“MOVERS, SHAKERS, NEWS MAKERS”

Upson-Lee Middle School was re-designated as a



Georgia Lighthouse School to Watch. ULMS is one of only fifteen middle schools in the state to receive

this esteemed designation. The school received its original designation as a Lighthouse School to Watch in 2005.



ULSE teacher Jeff Wheelless received the Georgia Power New Teacher Assistance Grant for \$1000. Grant nominees must be first year teachers who were in the top 25% of their college graduating classes academically and who exhibited a high aptitude for teaching. Macon State College nominated Mr. Wheelless for this award.



ULMS teacher Michele Daniel received her Educational Specialist Degree from Georgia Southwestern in December. The Educational Specialist degree advances educators in their instructional and leadership skills beyond the master's level of competence.



Upson County Farm Bureau has changed locations. The new address for the business is 622 North Church Street, next to Hardees. Patty Hallowed is the new secretary at Upson County Farm Bureau. Be sure to stop by and say hello to her!

Georgia Farm Bureau President Zippy Duvall presented Upson County Farm Bureau (UCFB) members Bob and Betty Nash with the Georgia Farm Bureau Distinguished Service Award during the organization's 72nd annual convention on Dec. 5.



This award is the highest honor Georgia Farm Bureau gives its volunteer leaders and is designed to recognize volunteer Farm Bureau leaders who have made outstanding contributions to Farm Bureau and agriculture over a long period of time.



For the second consecutive year, Kay Robinson of Kay Robinson State Farm Insurance presented each third grade student at ULSE with his or her personal copy of *A Student's Dictionary* to use at school and at home. Kay, a Partner In

Education with ULSE, sponsors this program through The Dictionary Project. By putting a dictionary in the hands of every third grade public school student in T-U Schools, Kay is essentially equipping all of their homes with a valuable educational resource.



On December 31, 2010, West Central Georgia Bank said a sad farewell to a longtime banker, fellow employee and friend. After 41 years in banking, Jim Robinson has decided to leave the banking world and spend more time with his family. We

wish him many years of enjoyable retirement. There will be a retirement reception on February 18, 2011 to honor his many years of service. All of Jim's customers and friends are invited to drop by and wish him well.

Ryan Tucker joins United Bank

Scott Swafford, President of United Bank, announced recently the addition of Ryan Tucker as Senior Vice President and Senior Lending Officer to the Thomaston division of United Bank.



Mr. Tucker has previously held positions as Executive Vice President and Senior Lending Officer with CreekSide Bank, Group Vice President of Construction and Development Lending and Chief Credit Officer for Community Bank of the South, Investment Accountant with Bankers Bank and Examiner with the Federal Reserve Bank in Atlanta. As senior lender for United Bank, Mr. Tucker's responsibilities will include reviewing new loan requests, managing existing loan relationships and providing support to other lenders in United Bank's Thomaston operations.

Originally from Mobile, Alabama, Mr. Tucker and his wife, Elisabeth, currently reside in Smyrna with their two children, Ansley and Barrett.

"I am very excited to have Ryan join our United Bank team in Thomaston. His banking and leadership experience will be invaluable as our organization continues to grow and assist customers within the Thomaston community."

Gas South honored for workplace policies, industry partnerships

Gas South, which has been the fastest-growing natural gas provider in Georgia for the past two years, recently received two awards that highlight the company's internal organizational strengths as well as its strong business relationships.

For the second year in a row, Gas South received an Alfred P. Sloan Award for Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility. The award recognizes employers that are successfully using flexibility as part of an effective workplace strategy to achieve business goals and benefit employees by helping them meet their responsibilities, both on and off the job. As a recipient of this award, Atlanta-based Gas South ranks in the top 20 percent of employers nationwide based on national data from Families and Work Institute's *National Study of Employers*.



On the heels of the Sloan Award, Gas South was honored by the Georgia Restaurant Association as the 2010 Industry Partner of the Year. The award recognizes an industry supplier who has contributed greatly to the advancement and prestige of the foodservice industry in Georgia. Gas South has been an active partner and sponsor of the GRA and provides natural gas service to hundreds of restaurants, food service providers and caterers throughout Georgia. Gas South also is a member of the GRA's Green Foodservice Alliance.

Upson EMC news, pages 18A-18D

Celebrating the Georgia lifestyle

GEMC **Georgia**
MAGAZINE
December 2010

The 2010
Washington Youth
Tour delegate from
Upson EMC
page 18A

www.georgiamagazine.org

Congratulations to Youth Leadership Upson Graduate and Hubert Hancock winner Elisabeth Fletcher who graced the cover of the December 2010 Georgia EMC magazine.

Did you know that the Georgia EMC magazine is printed locally at the Quad/Graphics Rock Plant?

Santa Tim:
Claus with a cause
page 16

Alvin Townley,
Eagle Scout
page 19

Mark your calendars for the next After Hours events

February 10, 2011 Business After Hours:

[Hosted by Rotary Club of Thomaston](#)

March 10, 2011 Business After Hours:

[Joint After Hours with Pike County Chamber](#)

May 24, 2011 Business After Hours:

[Hosted by StillMeadows](#)

September Business After Hours: Date TBA

[Hosted by Sertoma Women of Upson](#)

News from Westwood Christian Academy

On Tuesday, January 4th at 6:30 p.m. in the WCA cafeteria, the public is invited to attend an informational meeting on the Golden Dome Scholarship Fund which offers a tax credit to all Georgia citizens and scholarship opportunities for prospective Westwood students. Mr. Sky Hardin, president of this organization will be speaking. We will also be discussing Westwood's plans for adding ninth grade for the 2011-2012 school year. Please call the school at 706-647-8131 if you have any questions.

On Monday, January 10th beginning at 6:00 p.m., Westwood Christian Academy invites everyone to attend its Homecoming Bonfire and Pep Rally. All basketball players will be recognized, and Mr. and Miss WCA will be announced. In addition, any alumni and former faculty/staff who sign in at the gym that night will be recognized during the pep rally. On Tuesday, January 11th, Westwood basketball teams will host St. George's Episcopal School in its final home games of the season. Fifth and sixth grade girls and boys and Junior Varsity girls and boys will play games at 5, 6, 7, and 8 p.m. Please call the school at 706-647-8131 if you have any questions.



Every third Thursday of the month is Westwood Spirit Night at American Pie. When you place your order, just tell them it is for Westwood. A portion of the proceeds from all sales is donated to WCA. Come join us on Thursday, January 20th. Thanks for your support!

5 Star Tire & Auto Oil Change Offer

5 Star Tire & Auto customers will receive a free pizza coupon from Domino's Pizza with every oil change. 5 Star Tire & Auto is located at 2122 Hwy 19 North, Thomaston, Ga. If you would like more information on this promotion, please call Mike @ 706-647-2300.

Youth Leadership Upson tours local industry, will tour City/County on January 13

On Jan 13, the Youth Leadership Upson Class will tour Upson County's City/County Government and Upson Regional Medical Center. The group will begin by meeting with Clerk of Court Teresa Harper and touring the tax and tag offices. Afterwards, they will meet with Mayor Hays Arnold, City Manager Patrick Comiskey, County Commissioner Chairman Maurice Raines and County Manager Kyle Hood. The students will then tour Upson Regional Medical Center, have lunch at the Upson County Sheriff's Department and will then be given a tour of the Sheriff's Department and the tour will conclude with the students touring the Thomaston-Upson County Airport. Youth Leadership Upson meets every month throughout the school year to learn more about the various industries, local city, county, state government, healthcare and recreation located in Thomaston and how it all works together.

The Youth Leadership Upson program is sponsored by the Thomaston-Upson Chamber of Commerce, Upson EMC, Ten Cate' Camp Thunder, Upson-Lee Middle School and American Pie Pizzeria.

Students involved in the 2011 Youth Leadership Upson Program are: Cole Allen, Lindsey Allen, David Baxter, Payton Bosworth, Stephanie Hankinson Raley Holloway, Chris Moroz, Tessa Patterson, Rachel Smith, Jonathon Williams, Lauren Williams, Nicole Williams and Kenni Zellner.

Shelley Daniel of Century 21 Adams-Harvey is the Chair of the youth program and Travis Weed of United Bank is Vice-Chair.

Youth Leadership Upson Class tours local Industries



YLU Industry Photos continued:



Shown in the photos above and at left are:

- YLU touring Ten Cate Protective Fabrics. Ten Cate is a sponsor of the YLU program and provided breakfast for our group.
- YLU touring Quad/Graphics, the students were able to see for themselves magazines that are printed right here in Upson County that are shipped throughout the United States.
- YLU before touring Solo Cup. The students were required to wear safety eyewear, hard hats and hair nets. They loved it!

- The students are pictured with Mike Morro plant manager of Southern Power West Georgia Plant in Upson County. The students were unaware that we had this type of power plant in our community.

- YLU after touring Criterion Technology and learning about security domes. The students are holding domes that are made at Criterion.

- A special thanks to American Pie Pizzeria for sponsoring lunch for the Youth Leadership Upson Industry tour.



Adult Leadership graduation to be held January 20

The Thomaston-Upson Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce that the Adult Leadership Upson Class of 2010 will be held on Thursday, January 20, 2011 at the Thomaston-Upson Arts Council.

The graduation will begin at 6 pm with heavy hors d'oeuvres and remarks and plaques will be presented at 7 pm. The 2010 Adult Leadership Upson graduating class members are: Leigh Barfoot, United Bank Downtown Branch; Alisha Elder, Upson-Lee South Elementary; Tommy Johnson, Georgia Greenhouses/Nectar and Company; Jana Marks, Upson-Lee Pre-K; Matthew Mallory, Mallory & Trice Attorneys at Law; Katie McClain, Advance Accounting Solutions; Chris Pettis, Colony Bank; Jeff Stribling, Quad/Graphics; Kim Tyson, Amedisys Home Health Care; Angela Weatherford, Southern Crescent Technical College; Kay Williamson, Southern Crescent Technical College and Malcolm Williams, Edward Jones Investments.

EVENTS CALENDAR**Weds. January 5**

Chamber Exec Board Meeting –
7:30 am at the Chamber Office

Tues. January 11

Chamber Board Meeting – 7:30 am
at the Chamber Office – Guest
Speaker Bob Alexander

Thurs. January 13

YLU to tour with local City and
County officials, Sheriff's Dept,
URMC and local airport

Mon. January 17

Chamber office closed in observance
of Martin Luther King Day

Thurs. January 20

Industry Roundtable 7:30 am at the
Chamber office and hosted by
Keadle Lumber Company

Thurs. January 20

A.M. Ambassadors to deliver goody
baskets to local Chamber Members

Thurs. January 20

2010 Adult Leadership Upson
graduation, 6 to 8 pm at the TUAC
Gallery

Tues. February 1

Youth Leadership Upson Capitol
Tour, leave from ULMS by 8 am

Weds. February 2

Chamber Executive Board Meeting
7:30 am at the Chamber office

Mon. February 7

Govt Roundtable Meeting, noon,
location TBA

Tues. February 8

Chamber Board Meeting – 7:30 am
at the Chamber Office

Thurs. February 10

Rotary Club of Thomaston to host
the February Business After Hours!
Two cash pot drawings will be given
away! 5 pm to 6:30 pm, location
TBA at a later date.

The Brag Rag

New Members for Dec/Jan

Edward Jones Investments

Wynn Trice
706-648-4393

St. Michael and All Angles CEC Church

Jim Aaron
706-647-2579

The Alexander Resource Group

Bob Alexander
478-476-9081

Renewals for Dec/Jan

Bank of Upson

Lauri Irvin
706-647-5426

Bell, Ed

Retired Member

Brantley, Harris

Retired Member

Cadenhead, Jane V.

Individual Member

Driver & Adams, CPA

Reshann Adams
706-647-1924

Driver & Adams, CPA

Wayne Driver
706-647-1924

Speedi Lube

Deirdre Lawrence
706-648-6644

Renewals for Dec. 2010 & January 2011

Asmussen, Ken

Retired Member

Avianos

Peter Tsamolias

706-646-3939

Fallin State Farm Ins.

Robert Fallin

706-648-2185

Bishoff, Richard

Attorney at Law

706-647-9611

Brannon, Al

Retired Member

M*R*S Homecare

Dusty Fordham

706-648-6001

Bridges, Dan MD

Linda Doggett

706-647-9412

Brown Insurance Agency

Dan Brown

706-647-4048

Zaxby's

Kay McDaniel

706-647-1800

Cadenhead, Jane V.

Individual Member

Cherokee Pharmacy

Lisa Caldwell

706-646-3100

Coggins Funeral Home

Kenny Coggins

706-647-9681

Commercial Finance

David Short

706-647-3422

Connell & Wheeler

Alan Connell

Attorney at Law

706-647-8180

Day Realty Company

Jerry Slaughter

706-647-7167

Emancipation Committee

Lankston Johnson

770-584-0064

Thomaston Ford, Inc

Jane Harness

706-648-2191

West Village Retirement

Charlotte Bickley

706-647-5168

Flint River Surgical Assoc.

Tina Smith

706-647-9433

FYCA

Wendy Chambley

706-646-3727

Georgia Duplicating

Leon Strickland

800-521-8005

Gilmore Center, Inc.

Jimmy Aaron

706-647-5020

Gleaton Concrete

Byron Gleaton

770-550-1305

Holloway Bookkeeping

Karen Daniel

706-647-6212

H Gary Johnson Insurance

H. Gary Johnson

706-647-5485

Hannah's Mill Animal Hospital

Becky Crawford

706-647-4164

Hatchett, Kenneth

Retired Member

Keadle Lumber Enterprises

Tommy McInvale

706-647-8982

LaFiesta Restaurant

Salvador Pena

706-648-2138

Renewals for Dec. 2010 & January 2011

Logans Senior Village

Sabrina Reid
706-647-1847

McDonalds-Joysach, Inc

Starla Reddick
706-648-6050

Michael's Dalton Carpet

Joan Michael
706-648-6011

Personnel Options

James Huling
706-647-1983

Rhodes, Wallace

Retired Member

River Bridge Boat Rental

Margie McDaniel
706-647-2633

Servpro Of Thomaston

Michael Curington
706-648-0030

Dr. Al Simmons

Retired Member

StillMeadows

Rick & Mary Jones
706-646-4908

The Rock Ranch

Jeff Manley
706-647-6374

Thomaston Chiropractic

Mark Cotney, DC
706-647-2225

Trice, Bettisue

Retired Member

Thomaston Family Practice

Ralph P. Warnock, MD
706-647-8901

Thomaston Family Practice

Dan J. Bramlet, MD
706-647-8901

Whitaker Forestry

Fred Whitaker
706-656-6902

Thomaston Pest Control

Aaron Adams
706-648-2998

WCG Workforce

Shane Driver
706-648-9178

Tyler, David

Architect
706-647-4692

United Bank-Thomaston

Ryan Tucker
706-646-7211

Upson County Farm Bureau

Ken Brown
706-648-6668

Upson-Lee High School

Cleve Hendrix
706-647-8171

Upson Regional Medical Center

David Castleberry
706-647-8111

Family Medical Center

Tanya Long
706-647-2641

Robinson State Farm Insurance

Kay Robinson
706-647-5353

Pediatric Associates

Shannon Bradley
706-646-4543

Express Employment Professionals

Marcia Watts
706-646-2131

Thomaston Internal Medicine

Benjamin Williams, MD
706-647-3200

The Alexander Resource Group Presents ... *Success Seminar 2011*

Seize the Future...NOW!

Business Strategies to Lead, Sell and Serve in a Customer Driven Global Economy

Presented by Bob Alexander on January 26, 2011

As the former general sales manager, speaker, and author with Zig Ziglar, and now the President of The Alexander Resource Group, **Bob Alexander** has been recognized as one of the most knowledgeable, exciting and inspired business and educational leaders in America. In his high energy, fun filled seminars, Bob shares peak performance principles embraced by the top 100 CEO's and companies in the world.

You will Learn...

LEADERSHIP – The Power of Servant Leadership

SALES – Why Selling is a PROCESS...not an EVENT

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION – Why the customer's experience MUST measure up to their expectations

What People Say...

“Your fasted-paced, humorous and inspirational message to our health care employees was outstanding...and desperately needed. I didn't realize we could learn so much more about serving our internal and external customers.”

Mendee Rock – Director - Georgia Health Care Association

“To say you met our expectations would be an understatement. Anyone who left your seminar unmotivated was either dead or in the final stages of hardening of the attitude or stinkin' thinking.”

Mark Frank – Training Manager – McDonald's

“If I had known this was going to be this great, I would have closed down my entire operation of 200 people and let them all attend.”

Adam Clatsoff – Blue Cross Blue Shield.

REGISTRATION: \$149.00 - (Deeply Discounted Group Rates Available)

Call 478-476-9081 or email bob@yesican.net to reserve your seat.

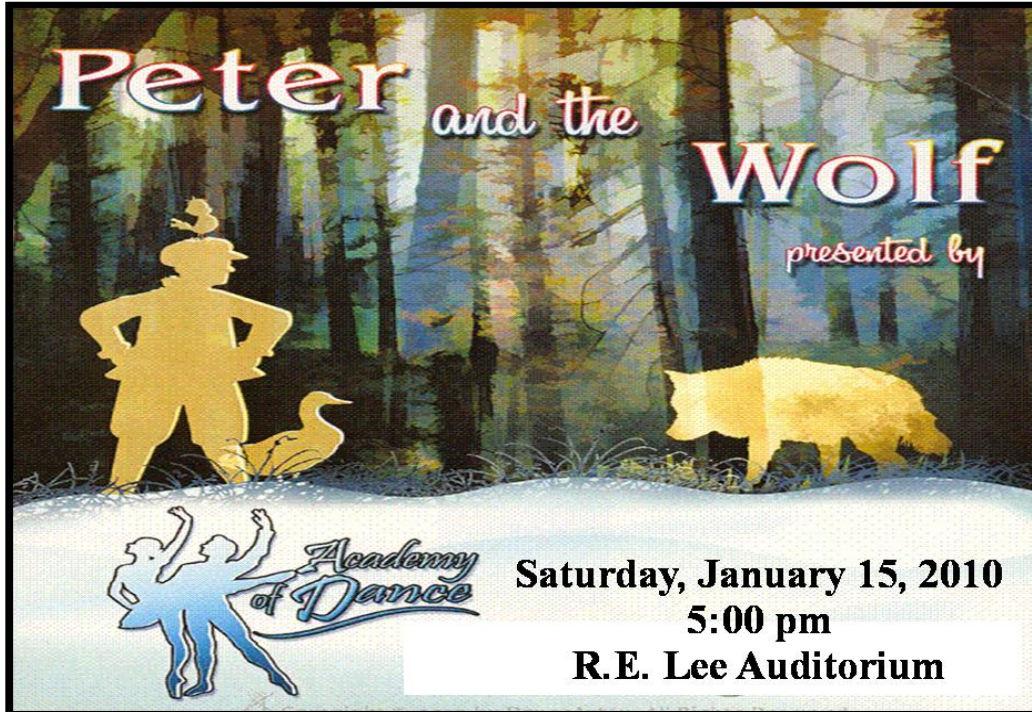
METHOD OF PAYMENT - Mastercard, Visa, PO's, or checks made payable to:

The Alexander Resource Group, 1577 Pate Rd. Juliette, GA 31046

DATES/TIMES – Wednesday, January 26, 2011 - 8:15 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (Repeat session 12:45 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.)


LOCATION – Thomaston-Upson County Civic Center

The Thomaston-Upson Arts Council's
 Second Annual FREE Family Matinees




Peter and the Wolf
 presented by
 Academy of Dance

Saturday, January 15, 2010
 5:00 pm
 R. E. Lee Auditorium



You'll Get Hooked!

Join Captain Tater Tot, the Pirate Captain and Ringmaster, who loses all his circus cargo in a mighty storm at sea. This aquatic adventure features puppets made from **recycled plastic bottles**. Circus acts include: a tap dancing Octopus, a unicyclist Seahorse, and a tightrope walking Starfish. But did Seymore the Shark come to join the circus... or just eat it?



Saturday, February 12, 2010
 5pm - R. E. Lee Auditorium

These **FREE** programs are made possible through corporate support by **THE BANK OF UPSON**

The Thomaston-Upson Arts Council Performing Arts Series

“Too Marvelous for Words”

R.E. Lee Auditorium

January 22nd, 2011 - 7:00pm

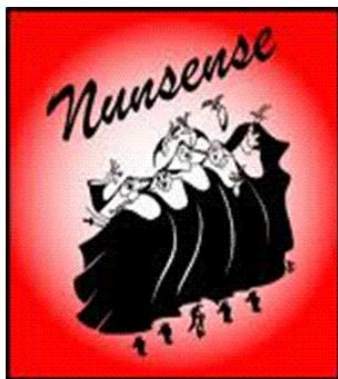
Former Broadway performer and Award Winning New York Cabaret Artist, Robert Ray will pay tribute to fellow Georgian Johnny Mercer in this Broadway-style musical revue. The show will feature a 5-piece band and 2 of Atlanta's top female vocalists. Savannah native, Johnny Mercer enjoyed a long and prolific career that culminated in 18 Academy Award nominations and 4 wins.

“Too Marvelous for Words” will feature many of his best loved songs including “Moon River”, “In the Cool, Cool, Cool of the Evening” and “Jeepers Creepers”.



TICKETS: \$15.00 Adults and \$8.00 Children/Students

Corporate Sponsor : QUAD/Graphics



“Dinner and a Show”

First Methodist Church

April 30th, 2011 - 6:00pm

You'll enjoy a night of great food and entertainment as **NUNSENSE** takes the stage for a fun and exciting evening. Back by popular demand the Sisters of Hoboken are forced to hold a fundraiser after their cook, Sister Julia, accidentally poisoned 52 of the nuns from their convent. The harmonious sisters of **NUNSENSE** will sing and dance their way into your heart! **(Reservations are required)**

TICKETS: \$22.00 Adults and \$12.00 Children/Students

**TICKETS ON SALE NOW
AT THE TUAC GALLERY ON THE SQUARE!
For more information call 706-647-1605**

A.M. Ambassadors visit Chamber Members

Sponsors of the A.M. Ambassador program for the month of November were: The Thomaston-Upson Chamber of Commerce A.M. Ambassadors, Upson Regional Medical Center, Moore Buick and Kenneth Hatchett. Shown in the photos are Chamber Members, West Village Retirement, Home Depot of Thomaston, First Franklin Financial, Thomaston Chiropractic Clinic, Reems Jewelers, Thomaston-Upson Arts Council, Holloway Tire & Auto and Thomaston Hardware that received gifts from Chamber A.M. Ambassadors Laurie Holmes, Colony Bank; Lucy Chaney, The Thomaston Times; Jennifer Greathouse, The Upson Beacon and Carol Gravitt, representing Sertoma Women of Upson.



Each month, the Chamber Ambassadors visit randomly selected Chamber members on a designated morning. The visit includes goodies sponsored by a different Chamber member each month, a gift basket from Upson Regional Medical Center and a big "thank you" from the Chamber Ambassadors.



Through the A.M. Ambassador program, the Chamber of Commerce hopes to recognize those businesses and individuals who through their membership and dedication to the community make the work of the Thomaston-Upson Chamber of Commerce possible.

SERTOMA WOMEN DONATE \$2,000



Shannon Spraggins presents \$500 to Maria Salter, Linda Best, Betty McLeod, Ruth Hatchett and Ralph Best of the Thomaston-Upson Christmas Kitchen. Lane Coggins presents \$500 to Chief Larry Dawson of the Georgia National Guard Family Support Foundation. Kim Tyson presents \$500 to Elizabeth DeLoach of First Baptist Church House of Care. Sherry Holley presents \$500 to Heather McCarthy and Sheila Cain of the Women of Faith Food Pantry of Mt. View Baptist Church.

Made possible by proceeds raised from Sertoma Women of Upson's (SWU) Christmas Tour of Homes, club members presented four close-to-heart, Thomaston charities with \$500 checks each on Thursday, December 9th.

The Georgia National Guard Family Support Foundation provides emergency relief assistance during times of financial crisis to the members and families of the Georgia National Guard, our State's reservists and qualified active duty service members in the State of Georgia. This donation will assist local coordinator and guardsman, Chief Larry Dawson of Thomaston, with Christmas assistance requested by some of Upson County's brave and well-deserving servicemen and women.

The Thomaston-Upson Christmas Kitchen's primary goal is to provide a warm Christmas meal for shut-ins, elderly and Empty Stocking Fund families. Delivered door-to-door by volunteers, they fed 2,021 people last year on the Saturday before Christmas. This year, meals will be cooked and delivered on Saturday, December 18th. Board member Ruth Hatchett stated "Food donations have been down this year, so this contribution could not be more appreciated."

The Women of Faith Ministry at Mountain View Baptist Church initially set out to assist church members who have lost their jobs, homes and incomes due to the downturn in the economy. Today, they have expanded to meet families' needs commu-

nity-wide. Coordinator Heather McCarthy reported that after only seven days into December their shelves were already bare. "SWU's donation was an answered prayer" she commented.

The House of Care accepts donations of most anything that can be used by needy families - food, clothes, furniture and toys. Counselors are onsite offering advice and guidance if requested. House of Care workers Vicki Huckaby and Elizabeth DeLoach included that donations in any form, monetary or otherwise, are accepted with great joy and placed in gracious hands.

"Our girls put so much time and effort in sponsoring a successful Christmas Tour of Homes. It was so good to hear all of the positive comments and praises from those who attended. The best part of it all is being able to pay it forward by donating some of our proceeds to these worthwhile organizations serving Thomaston and Upson County. Sertoma Women are committed to making a difference in our community," added SWU President Shannon Spraggins.

The Thomaston-Upson Chamber of Commerce 2011 Business Plan



We're Proud to Represent

America's Hometown™

Chamber Board of Directors for 2010-2011

| | |
|---|--|
| Debbie Gignilliat , Specialties Flower Shop..... | Chairman |
| Bob Fletcher , Pasley-Fletcher Funeral Home..... | Chair-Elect |
| Shelley Daniel , Century 21 Adams-Harvey..... | Vice-Chair |
| Neal Trice , Upson EMC..... | Treasurer |
| Kris Thomas , Quad/Graphics..... | Past Chair |
| Kim Tyson , Amedisys Home Health Care..... | Special Projects Division |
| Carson Gleaton , Thomaston Prescription Shop | Membership Division |
| Janice Bennett , Retired Member | Greg Boyt , Triumph Packaging |
| David Castleberry , Upson Regional Medical Center | Lucy Chaney , The Thomaston Times |
| Penny Cliff , Thomaston-Upson Archives | Barbara Jo Cook , Southern Crescent Technical College |
| Bob Eagle , E-7 Technologies | Mitch Ellerbee , Thomaston-Upson County Airport |
| Ben Ellington , United Bank | Lisa Ellington , Bank of Upson |
| Ruth Hatchett , Retired Member | Hoppy Hopkins , Upson Regional Medical Center |
| Matthew Mallory , Mallory & Trice Attorneys at Law | Chris Pettis , Colony Bank |
| Joan Michael , Michael's Dalton Carpet & Home Center | Anthony South , South-Tel |
| Adam Pugh , The Rock Ranch | Karen Truesdale , Thomaston-Upson Board of Education |
| Mike Streetman , West Central Georgia Bank | |

2010-2011 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

Neal Trice, Upson EMC, Division Vice President

COMMITTEE: LEADERSHIP UPSON

Hoppy Hopkins (URMC Foundation), Chair _____, **Vice-Chair**

- Revamp Adult Leadership Upson Program including Fanning Institute
- Plan for 2011 Fall Class

COMMITTEE: GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Karen Truesdale (Thomaston-Upson Board of Education), Chair

Janice Bennett (Retired Member), Vice-Chair

- Rely on the active support and participation of members to identify issues of key importance to both individuals and businesses and seek to influence policy decisions by being the voice of Thomaston-Upson Chamber, advocating on behalf of members regarding issues that further the economic and business climate of Thomaston and Upson County, (Members should contact Chair or Vice-Chair of government affairs committee to inform them of any upcoming legislation/etc. affecting local members.)
- Continue to host Government Roundtable once a quarter and solicit input from members regarding issues of importance to be discussed with this group.

- Try to have one meeting combined with the Industry Roundtable and Maintenance Roundtable

COMMITTEE: ECONOMIC & SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Chris Pettis (Colony Bank), Chair

Ruth Hatchett (Retired Member), Vice Chair

Mission Statement: "To promote and support entrepreneur development opportunities in order to create and retain high quality jobs and investment in our local area."

- Actively recruit new businesses while strengthening existing businesses
- Strengthen relationships with IDA and elected officials
- Unify community marketing efforts between all community stakeholders
- Explore adding one more value-added program or service to the small business members

2010-2011 EDUCATION DIVISION

Shelley Daniel, Century 21 Adams-Harvey, Division Vice President

COMMITTEE: WORKFORCE & EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

Mia Collier (Southern Crescent Technical College), Chair

Kay Williamson (Southern Crescent Technical College), Vice-Chair

Mission Statement: "The Purpose of Workforce and Education Development Alliance is to promote and develop through communication and action a well-prepared workforce."

- Support the high school and middle school graduation specialists, along with the volunteer community coach and the development of their programs
- Promote continuation of work-based learning programs and identify and promote local student-to employee successes (those students who have gone through work-based learning programs at the high school, the technical college and then into the workplace)
- Maintain awareness of issues and engage in active appropriate response when necessary
- Collaborate with the Chamber's Industry and Maintenance Roundtables to meet at least once during the school year at the high school
- Utilize Data Collection. For example: conduct the high school graduate exit survey in May and report findings in September
- Broaden communication of WEDA efforts with the Chamber Board and the boards of Technical College and the Thomaston-Upson School System
- Certified Work Ready Community – sustain CWRC initiative
- Support the role of the Upson-Lee High School Southern Crescent Technical College Career Coordinator and the CTAE Career pathways Coordinator and the seamless transition for students between high school and post secondary education

COMMITTEE: YOUTH LEADERSHIP UPSON

Shelley Daniel (Century 21 Adams-Harvey), Chair

Travis Weed (United Bank), Vice-Chair

Mission Statement: "To expose selected high school students exhibiting leadership traits to the business, political and civic working of our community."

- Have out of town judges choose 12 students to represent the Chamber through the YLU Program
- Implement current year's program, maintaining partnership with Upson EMC as program co-sponsor and continue working relationship with Thomaston-Upson School System

2010-2011 MEMBERSHIP DIVISION**Carson Gleaton, Thomaston Prescription Shop, Division Vice President**

COMMITTEE: MEMBERSHIP RETENTION & SERVICES

Laurie Holmes (Colony Bank), Chair**Mitch Ellerbee (T-U County Airport), Vice-Chair**

- Send membership renewals out to board members three months prior to each members renewal month
- Continue with the “Thomaston: A Great Place to Shop” gift certificate program, marketing this as a Member Benefit
- Continue to sponsor and attend ribbon cuttings for members
- Continue working to get more Chamber involvement from employees of Chamber members, especially larger companies
- Continue to highlight renewals and current members in the newsletter with full contact information
- Continue with A.M. Ambassadors Program get sponsors for the 2011 program year
- If a member is featured in the newsletter, they will receive a hard copy of the spotlight
- Send personal thank you note to current members

COMMITTEE: MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT

Mike Streetman (West Central Georgia Bank), Chair**Janice Bennett (Retired), Vice-Chair**

- Have a meaningful Membership Drive, form membership drive teams with prizes to be rewarded, focusing on new business but former members as well
- Continue having a package for potential new members, including advertising, discount Sun's Up Breakfast tickets, free Chamber Buck gift certificates, Ribbon Cuttings, etc.
- Continue with Ambassador Meetings each month
- Form welcoming committee from the Ambassador program
- Utilize Business After Hours as a focus on new members, allowing them to introduce themselves and make a statement about their business
- Continue to recognize new members at Sun's Up on Upson Business Breakfast
- Have board members go to building and zoning office for a list of new businesses each month, the City of Thomaston delivers a copy each month to the Chamber

COMMITTEE: PROMOTIONS

Lisa Ellington (Bank of Upson), Chair**Debra Daniel (Bank of Upson), Vice-Chair**

- Secure sponsors for and hold Business After Hours once a quarter
- Need to establish an agenda for each Business After Hours that includes networking and recognizing members, including themes into the Business After Hours and chances to win \$
- Secure programs for quarterly Sun's Up on Upson Business Breakfast
- Plan and implement Annual Meeting in November
- Plan and implement Board Retreat in September 2011

COMMITTEE: MARKETING & P.R.

David Castleberry (URMC), Chair**Penny Cliff (Thomaston-Upson County Archives), Vice-Chair**

- Promote Chamber services and members through local media
- Re-Organize Chamber website
- Monthly Newsletter, Weekly Monday Minutes
- Enhance Chamber brochures and prospective member kits
- Chamber member information displays
- Chamber Speakers' Bureau

2010-2011 SPECIAL PROJECTS DIVISION**Kim Tyson, Amedisys Home Health, Division Vice President**

PROJECT: GOLF TOURNAMENT**Adam Pugh (The Rock Ranch), Chair****Greg Boyt (Triumph Packaging), Vice-Chair**

- Schedule and implement ninth annual Business Open Golf Tournament on March 23, 2011
- Form a Golf Committee – Sponsorship, door prizes and registration committees
- Integration of more sponsors into the event, such as tents with sponsors information
- Include more skills event sales: putting, chipping, bunter, drive, add a pro-golfer or athlete
- Include Public Involvement, ball drop contest/raffle
- New Goal of \$20,000

PROJECT: CANOE POKER RUN**Ben Ellington (United Bank), Chair****Matthew Mallory (Mallory & Trice Attys at Law), Vice Chair****Ryan Tucker (United Bank), Vice-Chair**

- Need to contact State of Georgia about holding event at Spirewell Bluff State Park
- Need to meet with Flint River Outdoor Center to see if they would like to partner
- Need to find sponsors for the event
- Need to add line item to budget with expenses and income for the event
- Hold event in May

PROJECT: TURTLE RACE**Barbara Jo Cook (Southern Crescent Technical College), Chair****Chris Pettis (Colony Bank), Vice Chair**

- Find Sponsors for event
- Find location for the event, possibly The Rock Ranch during an October event

PROJECT: BUSINESS EXPO**Lori Smith, Chair****Lucy Chaney (The Thomaston Times), Vice Chair**

- Find two sponsors for event
- Form a committee that will discuss the time, date, location of the event and cost
- Produce a flyer that will be mailed out to all membership promoting the Business Expo
- Contact all local and surrounding media and promote the event
- Business expo should take place second week in September

PROJECT: BIG GREEN EGG**Lori Smith & Mary Strouss**

- Have Big Green Egg donated for 2011
- Have tickets printed for raffle in January
- Have each board member sell 20 raffle tickets
- Contact Smoke on the Water about selling tickets at their event in April, will need volunteers
- Give Green Egg away the second week in April

2010-2011 ORGANIZATION MANAGEMENT**Kris Thomas, Quad/Graphics, Division Vice President**

The Executive Board and Past Chair will work on projects to support continued financial sustainability of the Chamber