

Madison Morgan County Chamber of Commerce

2010-2011 Year in Review

I want to share with you the accomplishments of the Madison-Morgan County Chamber of Commerce over the last fiscal year.

This past year continued to present challenges to all of us in these stressful economic times, but it was especially hard for the Chamber as we mourn the loss of our President, Marguerite Copelan, who had served the Chamber for the past 15 years.

As we move forward into our new fiscal year, your personal involvement and financial support of your Chamber are instrumental in continuing to carry forward our mission.

Please take a moment and review our accomplishments for this past fiscal year.

- Encouraged business location in Morgan County by maintaining an active relationship with the Georgia Department of Economic Development and other statewide developers.
- Provided information about our county to over a thousand people through our distribution of the Madison-Morgan County Quality of Life Magazine.
- Promoted Madison-Morgan County and its tourist attractions and accommodations to over 950,000 people throughout the State and Nation through our participation in the Georgia Travel Guide and Calendar of Events.
- Graduated nine (9) people from the Leadership Morgan County program. Exposure gained from the program allowed class members the opportunity to begin serving in leadership positions on various community organizations' boards.
- Responded to over 18 business and industry location inquiries, providing information related to Morgan County and gave professional, commercial and industrial real estate referrals.
- Assisted business start-ups through the distribution of 36 copies of the "How to Start a Business" electronic booklet on our website.
- Promoted and held the annual Taste of Madison showcasing area restaurants, including a silent auction fund raiser. More than 300 people enjoyed this affair.
- Promoted and held the biennial Kitchen Tour bringing over 500 people to tour local houses and kitchens with area chefs demonstrating their skills.

- Promoted member's businesses through the printing and distribution of our member directory and providing links through our website to our members.
- Maintained the "Entrepreneur Friendly" designation with the Georgia Department of Economic Development's Entrepreneur and Small Business Office- an official designation indicating the community is maintaining an environment conducive to small businesses and entrepreneurs.
- Maintained a strong working relationship with the City of Madison, Morgan County Board of Commissioners, Morgan County School Board, Madison Main Street and the Development Authority of Morgan County.
- Continued to work towards certification as a "Georgia Certified Work Ready Community". That initiative is a vehicle to help Morgan County validate that we have the workforce ready to fill the hiring needs of business and industry.
- Continued to work with the Morgan County Board of Education to promote the "Partners in Education" program.
- Continued to maintain and improve the Chamber website designed to keep members, the community and visitors alike up to date with Chamber and community news, events and other helpful information. Throughout the course of the year the website had over 280,000 unique visitors.
- Hosted a meeting with City and County officials from Habersham County with the County Manager and the City Manager to discuss intergovernmental cooperation.
- Hosted a familiarization tour for 24 international and state representatives of the Georgia Department of Economic Development.
- Hosted two tours for visiting Chinese city managers through the Fanning Institute at the University of Georgia.
- Coordinated activities related to two movies filmed in Morgan County.
- Hosted eight (8), 12 at 12 luncheons, where Chamber members met with Chamber leadership for an informal lunch to express their community and business concerns. There were 94 attendees at these luncheons throughout the year.
- Honored Rev. Martin Luther King through a workday at the African American Museum.
- Provided business contacts by promoting member-to-member networking at eight (8) Business After Hours with an annual attendance of over 250.
- Promoted two (2) meetings of "Women In Business" with over 40 people in attendance.

- Assisted Camp Twin Lakes with their annual fund raiser “Spin for Kids”.
- Maintained communication with other area Chambers through our participation in Georgia’s Lake Country, the Antebellum Trail, The Historic Heartland and the Treasures along I-20. This is in addition to our continued involvement with the statewide organization of Georgia Chamber of Commerce Executives Association.
- Maintained communication and relationships with other statewide Economic Developers through our participation with the professional organization GEDA.
- Provided information about Morgan County to statewide project managers with Georgia Power, Georgia EMC and Georgia Department of Economic Development.
- Received award designation for the Stanton Springs project as a Georgia Ready for Accelerated Development (G.R.A.D.) site by the Georgia Allies.
- Offered member-to-member discounts.
- Honored the following at the annual meeting: Mayor Bruce Gilbert, Business Legend; Ruth Bracewell, Arts and Tourism; Linda Gantt, Volunteer of the Year; the Morgan County High School Equestrian Team, Agribusiness Award; and the Antebellum Trail, Tourism Partner of the Year. Over 135 members and spouses attended this annual meeting.
- Assisted and promoted the Bike Ride Across Georgia (B.R.A.G.) Spring tune up. This three day event brought over 800 cyclists and their families to Morgan County.
- Continued to provide professional information to tourists through the Visitors’ Center even on days when the Chamber of Commerce was closed. Over 17,800 visitors came into the Visitors Center while over 65,000 visitors came to Madison.
- Reached over 100,000 people through the distribution of the Antebellum Trail and Georgia Lake Country brochures.

Remember that your Chamber of Commerce offers an excellent way to network with other business people, County leadership and our members. Programs at the Chamber are designed to garner your input and that input helps shape our program of work for the future. Maintaining your involvement is critical to the continued success of the Chamber.

Respectfully,

Scott Webb

Chair