

2011 Annual Report

A Year in Review

Richmond Hill-Bryan County
Chamber of Commerce



Our Mission Statement: To be a leader in our community that promotes and stimulates a successful business environment.

New in 2011

- ❖ **Web sites** – Both the Chamber and Great Ogeechee Seafood Festival web sites were re-designed this year. Check out the new look at: www.RHBCchamber.org & www.goseafoodfestival.com
- ❖ **Remarkable Living, Every Day** – the Chamber produced a six-minute, professional DVD promoting the business climate, excellent public schools and quality of life in Richmond Hill/Bryan County.
- ❖ **Taste of Richmond Hill** – a Business After Hours Networking event that featured local restaurants and caterers. Over 200 people enjoyed a wonderful evening at the RH City Center.



A Year In Review

- ❖ Incorporated in September of 1985, The Richmond Hill/Bryan County Chamber, a 501-(C)6, operates as the **pro-business organization for the area**. The Chamber **relies solely on membership dues and sponsorship of events for its funding**.
- ❖ As the voice of the business community, the RHBC Chamber of Commerce works to accomplish what businesses can't do alone. The **strength of the organization is its members** and the RHBC Chamber is proud to boast **a retention rate of 90%** of its current members **which far exceeds the 78% average retention rate** for Chambers in the United States.
- ❖ The Chamber **closed out 2011 with 291 members** that represent the best of Richmond Hill/Bryan County in a cross section of business sectors from corporations, to restaurants, retailers, professionals, industry/manufacturers, non-profit organizations and home-based businesses.



A Year In Review

- ❖ Even with the national and local economic difficulties of the past couple of years, **the Chamber's long term financial health is excellent.** Through strict budget management during the past years, the Chamber currently retains, **financial reserves (fund balances) approaching \$90,000.** The reserves are restricted and held to protect the organization in case of a major, unexpected business interruption.
- ❖ As we begin a New Year, **we encourage you to become an involved member of the RHBC Chamber.** You have invested yourself in an active network of resources that allows you to share ideas, learn better business practices and improve the business climate in our community.
- ❖ Your Chamber staff and Board of Directors look forward to another exciting year and encourage you and your staff to take advantage of the programs and services offered by the RHBC Chamber. **Your Chamber Works!**



Events & Program Highlights

Community Affairs Committee

Jerry DeLoach, Chair

- ❖ **Leadership Bryan:** Graduated 12 people from the 2011 Leadership Bryan program. Sessions included Leadership, Communication/Team Building, History & Government, Economic Development, Education and Environment.
- ❖ **Chamber Golf Tournament:** Members enjoy a day of golf while networking with fellow members, clients, friends and sponsors. A captain's choice format at Sterling Links was capped off with the dramatic ball drop. Golfers were treated to a delicious barbeque after a great day on the course.
- ❖ **Quarterly Business Forums:** Chamber Business Forums feature different topics designed to give members tools to take their business to the next level. 2011 forums featured: **"There's An App For That"**, **"Social Media Marketing"** and a **Political Forum/SPLOST** presentation.



Events & Program Highlights

- ❖ **Christmas Stroll & Holiday Farmers Market:** In the spirit of the Shop Local campaign, the Chamber hosted the **3rd Annual Christmas Stroll & Holiday Market** which featured **28 local merchants/restaurants and 32 holiday market vendors**. Despite some very chilly and damp weather there was still a strong turnout of “strollers” for this annual event. Special thanks to the City of Richmond Hill Parks and Recreation, the merchants and vendors and of course to all the “strollers” for spending their dollars locally.
- ❖ **Community Profile Magazine:** The Chamber partnered with Village Profile to produce **a high-quality, comprehensive Community Profile magazine** on Richmond Hill and Bryan County. This publication is available at no cost to Chamber members and is included in Relocation Packets mailed out by the Chamber.



Events & Program Highlights

Governmental Affairs Committee

Linda Barker, Chair

- ❖ **The Legislative Affairs Committee** works to promote and inform the business community on local issues and interests that may impact their business. This committee also reviews and may take a position on an issue(s) and present recommendations to respective organizations.
- ❖ **Meet the Candidates Forum** the Chamber hosted this event prior to the RH City Council elections which gave voters an opportunity to hear from the candidates and learn more about where they stand on important issues affecting the city. A SPLOST update was also presented and Bryan County voters overwhelmingly voted to **“Keep the Penny Rolling!”**



Events & Program Highlights

Member Services Robbie King, Chair

- ❖ **Annual Meeting & Banquet:** In January, 2011 the Chamber hosted its Annual Meeting & Banquet at the Richmond Hill City Center. **Business of the Year accolades went to Richmond Hill Reflections magazine.**
- ❖ **Ambassador Program:** The Ambassadors were hard at work this year visiting new and current members, attending ribbon-cutting ceremonies and Business After Hours. **Shirley Heagerty was recognized as the 2010 Ambassador of the Year.**
- ❖ **Business After Hours:** Provide members the perfect networking opportunity. Usually hosted monthly, these after hour events provide a relaxed atmosphere to meet other members and prospects, community leaders and friends. Members catch up with old friends, learn tips from other business people and casually network with attendees.
- ❖ **Taste of Richmond Hill:** This inaugural event in November was **a huge success with 15 area restaurants/caterers participating and 200 guests in attendance.** This will be a signature annual event for the RHBC Chamber.
- ❖ **Ribbon-Cuttings and Grand Openings:** A very popular member benefit as the Chamber coordinates these events; complete with large ceremonial scissors and ribbon to boot.



Events & Program Highlights

13th Annual Great Ogeechee Seafood Festival Jerry DeLoach & Mike Sisco - co-chairs

- ❖ The GOSF was on October 14, 15, & 16, 2011 (Always the 3rd weekend in October) at J.F. Gregory Park.
- ❖ An estimated 38,000+ people enjoyed fantastic food, great weather and awesome entertainment highlighted by two head-lining bands: **Orleans** and **.38 Special**.
- ❖ Membership dues in the Chamber remain affordable due to the financial success of the GOSF.
- ❖ Many thanks to the GOSF Committee and the hundreds of volunteers that help make this annual event such a huge success.



2011 RHBC Chamber Board of Directors

***Robbie King, 2011 Chair**

Comcast

***Brad Brookshire, Past-Chair**

Bryan Bank & Trust

***John Reynolds, 1st Vice-Chair**

RPI

***Michele Henderson, 2nd Vice-Chair**

Henderson Law Firm

***Linda Barker, Secretary**

Magnolia Coastal Properties

***Chris Fettes, Treasurer**

Coastal EMC

Angus McLeod

RE/MAX Accent

Billy Albritton

Associate Member

Bonnie Proctor

THA Group

Doug Martin

Martin Tax Service

Jim Gardner

James Gardner, LLC

Jerry DeLoach

CenturyLink

Mark Griffin

Bryan County News

Mike Sisco

RH Presbyterian
Church

Ray Pittman

Thomas & Hutton

Shirley Heagerty

S & J Bookkeeping

*Executive Board Member



2011 Committee Members

❖ **Community Affairs:** *Leadership Bryan, Marketing, Christmas Stroll*

Jerry DeLoach (Chair), Bonnie Proctor, Mark Griffin, Chris Fettes, Doug Martin, Brad Brookshire, Billy Albritton & Angus McLeod

❖ **Governmental Affairs:** *Community Meetings, Legislative Meet & Greet, SPLOST, Impact Fees*

Linda Barker (Chair), Billy Albritton, Brad Brookshire, Ray Pittman, John Reynolds, Angus McLeod, Michele Henderson & Jim Gardner

❖ **Internal Affairs:** *Audit Committee, Bylaws Review & Recommendations, DOT Signs, Facility Plans/Maintenance*

Robbie King (Chair), John Reynolds, Michele Henderson, Jim Gardner, Brad Brookshire, Chris Fettes & Linda Barker

❖ **Member Services:** *Ambassador Program, Annual Dinner/Banquet, Ribbon Cuttings & Groundbreakings, Quarterly Business Forums*

John Reynolds (Chair), Brad Brookshire, Michele Henderson & Linda Barker



2011 Ambassador Program Members

Sandra Davis, Chair

ERA Southeast Coastal Real Estate

Naomi Havens

Usbourne Books

Jan Bass

Goodwill Industries

Noah Yaughn

Arc Media Group

Carolyn Thompson

American Solutions for Business

Nikki Palmer

Palmer Chiropractic

Chris Sheppard

RH Convention & Visitors Bureau



Build Your Business in 2012

Upcoming Chamber events:

Oyster Roast Business After Hours

Thursday, Feb. 2 Heathrow Subdivision – 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Hosted and Sponsored by Homes of Integrity Construction

Business to Business Expo

Friday, Feb. 24 @ RH City Center – 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Presented by Women's Business Alliance



For more events and information log on to:
www.RHBCchamber.org

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