

# Heard...The News



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## H E A R D   C O U N T Y   C H A M B E R   & D E V E L O P M E N T   A U T H O R I T Y   T O   H O S T A N N U A L   D I N N E R



The Heard County Chamber of Commerce will be hosting it's 42nd Annual Dinner on January 25, 2008 at the Heard County High School cafeteria. Registration will begin at 6:30 pm. This years Annual Dinner will not only be a celebration of the past years events and a look into the plans of next year but also a time to reflect on the Chamber's 50th birthday. We will have the opportunity to see the changes that our community has went through in the last 50 years, since the Chamber was first established. We hope to have an attendance to rival last years 220 Chamber members. Attendees will enjoy entertainment, an exceptional meal provided by S & R Catering of Carrollton, and presentations from the Chamber and Development Authority.

The evening's entertainment will be an interesting selection, The Cross Ties Band based out of Waco, Georgia. The Cross Ties Band is an acoustic, stringed instrument band. Covering a Broad spectrum of musical tasted, the versatile five-man ensemble enjoys playing and singing bluegrass, gospel, a cappella spirituals, Sacred Harp hymns, and traditional Irish music. With "something for everybody", the group is seen regularly at churches, festivals, and private social events throughout Georgia and the southeast.

We hope that you will choose to attend the evening's events and we hope to make it a night that will not soon be forgotten.

### C H A M B E R C A L E N D A R

- Annual Dinner  
Jan. 25
- West Georgia Small Business Expo  
Feb. 12
- March for Babies Kick-Off  
Feb. 22
- Chamber Spring Luncheon  
March 25
- Old Town Chattahoochee Festival  
May 17
- Educator's & Public Safety Appreciation  
May 27 & 28

### I N S I D E   T H I S I S S U E :

- Georgia "Entrepreneur Friendly" Initiative
- West Georgia Small Business Expo      2
- Heard County Chamber Spring Luncheon
- Welcome New Members
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- Tools of the Trade: Is Your Site Ready to Rock?

# UPCOMING CHAMBER EVENTS

## GEORGIA "ENTREPRENEUR FRIENDLY" INITIATIVE

The Georgia Department of Economic Development's (GDECD) Small Business & Innovation Division provides a community-based program that helps create an entrepreneur environment, building entrepreneur and small business strategy into the community's overall economic development strategies.

The key steps to become "Entrepreneur Friendly" include:

1. Identifying the local organization & champion who will lead the community in their entrepreneur and small business development strategy. Form the committee that will support the initiative.
2. Increasing community awareness of and support for strategies, needs and resources. Educate the community about the benefits of "homegrown" business development and fast-growth companies.
3. Enhancing relationships with state and federal resource providers, including SBDC and others in educational sessions that help local leadership learn how entrepreneurs can be supported.
4. Identifying local entrepreneurs (potential, existing, growth) and identifying unique local resources.
5. Visiting and interviewing local entrepreneurs; reviewing and compiling results to determine appropriate strategies.
6. Scheduling the Review Team visit.
7. Assistance and facilitation from the RPM-ESB in planning and implementation of ESB strategies that result from the EF process and designation

The Heard County Chamber of Commerce and Development Authority are working on becoming a Georgia "Entrepreneur Friendly" community. That is why we will be helping host the West Georgia Small Business Expo.

## WEST GEORGIA SMALL BUSINESS

All entrepreneurs and small business owners are invited to attend a Regional Small Business Resource Expo that will be held on Tuesday, February 12, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., at The Burson Center for Business Development, 500 Old Bremen Rd. Carrollton, GA.

The Resource Expo is being co-sponsored by the Carroll, Haralson and Heard County Chambers of Commerce, the Small Business Development Center and the Georgia Tech Procurement Assistance Center. This event will feature business, financial and technical assistance

programs serving the West Georgia area, as well as peer-to-peer networking. We hope to see many of our small businesses and entrepreneurs there to represent the constant and booming growth of Heard County.

## Membership News

If you haven't taken the opportunity to check out our newly updated website, now would be a great time to do just that. The Chamber's new website includes some great new information and is constantly being updated and has more options for our members and visitors. The quarterly "Heard...the News" newsletter will be offered through our updated website in April, 2008. If you would like to continue to receive a paper copy you may request that through the Chamber office at 706-675-0560. Otherwise, the online version will be the only way to access the newsletter.



Once again the Heard County Chamber of Commerce is planning on celebrating education

## Heard County Chamber Spring Luncheon

and small business at the Chamber's Annual Spring Membership Luncheon which will be held at Captain Billy's Fish House on March 25, 2008. At this year's luncheon we plan on honoring the 2008 Star student and Star Teacher as well as

this year's Small Business of the Year.

We hope that many of the chamber membership will come join us for a great lunch and wonderful opportunity to network with other chamber members.

## W E L C O M E   N E W   M E M B E R S !

### GOLD

TC Electric  
1469 Upper Caldwell Rd.  
Bowdon, GA 30108  
770-854-8113

### SILVER

Franklin Cruise and Travel  
P.O. Box 443  
Franklin, GA 30217  
706-675-8000

### BRONZE

Ra-Lin & Associates, Inc.  
101 Parkwood Circle  
Carrollton, GA 30117  
770-834-4884

Walt's Loader Service, Inc.  
925 Centralhatchee Parkway  
Franklin, GA 30217  
770-854-4872

### PATRON

Mary Kay Cosmetics—  
Brenda Ethridge  
994 Redland Rd.  
Franklin, GA 30217  
706-302-5469

### *Interested In Growing Your Sales To International Markets?*

The International Trade team of the Georgia Department of Economic Development can help you expand your export sales with the help of five International Trade specialists in Atlanta and 10 overseas offices in the major markets of the world.

In March, Georgia's international representatives from Canada, Mexico, Chile, Brazil, Japan, Korea, Israel, Germany and the United Kingdom will travel to Georgia, and you'll have an opportunity to work with them one-on-one to explore international markets for your products. You'll learn more about market trends for your industry sector and how to search for potential buyers, distributors, agents or partners.

Time slots are limited, so don't wait to take advantage of this outstanding opportunity to grow your company. To schedule an appointment, call your GDECD Atlanta trade specialist or Alicja Drolet (404) 962-4036 or [adrolet@georgia.org](mailto:adrolet@georgia.org). Appointment will be held at GDECD's office in Midtown Atlanta.

### ***Tools of the Trade: Is Your Site Ready to Rock?***

Because Internet technologies, techniques and standards change so rapidly, even a website that seems cutting-edge when originally designed can look obsolete a year or two later. Or maybe your company started out with a simple, cost efficient website, but now you have the resources to take it to the next level. Here is a website checklist to see if your website is where it needs to be.

- **Compatibility:** Will your website display correctly for most people regardless of their hardware, operating system, browser or monitor resolution? Also, if any features required certain browser plug-ins, provide a download link.
- **Completeness:** None of your website should be "under construction". If you must include pages that aren't complete, include some informative content on the page to motivate people to check back later.
- **Content:** is your content current and accurate? Could it be written more clearly or succinctly? Could your site be more informative or interesting? Also check your content for incorrect grammar, spelling errors and typos.
- **Graphics:** Do your graphics contribute to or detract from your site? Also, use animations sparingly, especially those that play over and over.
- **Interactivity:** Consider making your site interactive by adding items such as a mailing list, message board or e-zine. Don't add everything just because you can, but consider if additional features might give your site an edge.
- **Links:** Are all the links on your site working including the links between the pages of your site as well as links to other sites?
- **Speed:** Does your site load quickly enough in the viewer's browser? The "Eight Second Rule" is a good rule of thumb—no visitor should wait longer than eight seconds to view the home page of your site.
- **Navigation:** Is it easy to find information on your site? The home page should tell visitors who you are and what you do and visitors should be able to follow a logical path to learn more about your business.
- **Search engine optimization:** Is your site optimized to rank for important keywords in the most popular search engines? Double check your page titles, keywords and descriptions to ensure they are accurate and descriptive.
- **Style:** Is your website's style consistent with your business goals? Decide what you want your business image to be, and make sure your site reflects and enhances that image.
- **Usability:** Usability refers to how easily visitors can use your site. If you have received complaints, comments, or suggestions from visitors, change your site accordingly. A well-designed website leads visitors deeper into the site without frustrating or confusing them and doesn't lose them along the way

*Excerpted from an online article by Jane McLain.*



WE'RE ON THE WEB  
WWW.HEARDGEORGIA.ORG

H E A R D   C O U N T Y  
C H A M B E R   O F  
C O M M E R C E

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***Mark your Calendars for the  
Heard County Chamber of  
Commerce  
42nd Annual Dinner  
January 25, 2008***

The Heard County Chamber of Commerce is a volunteer organization representing and advancing the economic interests of the commercial, industrial and civic community of Heard County, Georgia. The Chamber was founded on October 16, 1957 and has been a large part of the community since that time. The Chamber offers free marketing of your business and many discounted services when you join, but we also touch the community by offering many activities, such as the Independence Day Celebration and Taste of Chattahoochee; and we support the community youth in many ways. We serve the West Georgia and East Alabama area.

For more information you can contact the Heard County Chamber of Commerce office at 706-675-0560 .