

# THE CHAMBER CORNER

Volume 12, Issue 1

January 2012



## 2012 Sponsorships

Remember to sign up for 2012 Sponsorships! Business After Hours and Networking @ Noon are going fast! If you need a copy of the 2012 Sponsorship Brochure, please let us know. We're happy to meet with you to find a sponsorship package that serves your marketing needs too!

## Leadership Putnam

We're so excited that Leadership Putnam 2012 starts next week on Jan. 12! We have a great group of students, and we look forward to getting to know each and everyone of them as they develop into the future leaders of our community! We will keep you posted with photos throughout their journey! Save the date for their graduation on Thursday, March 15.

FOLLOW US:



/epchamber

Thank you to everyone who has already renewed your 2012 Chamber Membership. Your 2012 Membership Packet will be going out this week, which includes your 2012 decal for your plaque. If you have not renewed at this time, please remember your renewal investment was due on Jan. 1. If you have any questions regarding your investment, please call (706) 485-7701 or e-mail [becky@eatonton.com](mailto:becky@eatonton.com).

## A note from Chairman Rowland:

As we begin another Chamber year, I would like to take the opportunity, on behalf of the Chamber staff and Board of Directors, to thank you for your membership and continued support of the Eatonton-Putnam Chamber of Commerce. In spite of a volatile economy, your Chamber is strong and thriving as we plan for another year of promoting our local business community.



Looking back at our income and expenses over the past few years reinforces what we all know to be true; disposable income for families and businesses is harder to come by than it was a few years ago. Consequently, you have to make tough decisions about how to spend your investment dollars. The Chamber Board recognizes the choice you make to be a Chamber member, and we take very seriously your commitment to the work of growing and supporting Eatonton and Putnam County. Although

See Chairman continued on page 2...



## HHTA announces new brochure and board

The Historic Heartland Travel Association has recently launched a brand new designed brochure. These brochures are displayed in welcome centers around the state and are used to fulfill leads from [georgia.org](http://georgia.org) and cooperative advertising.

Effective Jan. 1, 2012, the HHTA installed a new board of directors making the Chamber's Tourism &

See HHTA continued on page 2...

## Murder Mystery 2012 HO, HO HOMICIDE!



Even though the holiday season is over, don't pack up all of your favorite tacky sweaters, elf ears and Santa hats just yet, as the Chamber announces our wildly popular annual murder mystery dinner theatre, Ho, Ho, Homicide! On March 2 and 3, The Plaza Arts Center will transform into the bustling North Pole just before Christmas. Everyone at the North Pole has been working hard to make this a holiday season to remember, so Santa has planned a Holly, Jolly Christmas party to celebrate the season and spread Christmas cheer. Santa promises this will be an unforgettable evening complete with all the trimmings! Tickets go on sale February 1 at the Chamber office.

Despite the efforts of the arctic inhabitants, productivity is at an all-time low causing much frustration around the pole while putting Santa's legacy at stake. Desperate for a change, there are many who are willing to do almost anything to increase efficiency and restore peace at the North Pole. But only one will go too far and commit a murderous act in this winter wonderland. Will it be the audacious elf who believes he could run the workshop better? Perhaps the remorseful reindeer, anxious to hide his secret, has one more to add to the naughty list? Or could it be the unwavering queen of Christmas, Mrs. Clause, who will do anything to protect her family through this ordeal?

## New Member = Bunny \$

In order to have the loudest voice for business possible in our community, our Chamber needs to continue to grow! As a member, you know first hand the importance of being a Chamber member. If you have any businesses in your network that are potential Chamber members, simply refer them to join and if they become a member, you will receive \$10 in Bunny Money (our shop local program) per new member as a thank you gift. You'll earn a little extra spending money while together we put the dollars back into our community; resulting in a louder voice for business. As your 2012 decal sticker says, "Together We Prosper!"

## Chairman *Continued from page 1*

actual revenues from 2008 to 2010 fell by nearly 20 percent, your Chamber has worked diligently to stretch the dollars in order to maintain the level of service you have come to value and expect. In doing so, we have created and continued quality programs to meet our business community's changing and growing needs.

We also recognize that the interdependence of government, education and business has never been more important for growing and sustaining our local way of life. That is why we remain committed to these relationships as a Chamber core value. In spite of our political, social and cultural differences, our love for our community unites us in the common goal of a strong, viable city and county.

Finally, your involvement in Chamber programs and events is vital to the continued success of our organization. I encourage you to seek ways in which you can contribute to the good work being done to promote business and tourism in our community. It is through working together that we will ensure that Eatonton and Putnam County remain "Close to Everything and Next to Perfect." - Mike Rowland, Board Chairman

## HHTA *Continued from page 1*

Special Events Coordinator Bonnie Simmons the new President-Elect. Simmons served on the Board as Vice President of Membership throughout 2011.



The HHTA consists of 19 counties, including Putnam, in the central part of the state creating a comprehensive network among representatives. Businesses within these communities, state tourism officials and members from the other nine travel regions all work together toward a common goal — promoting tourism in Georgia.

# RSVP For Events!

## Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

*Sinclair-Oconee Mortgage*

Thursday, Jan. 5 at 4 p.m.  
Located at 995 Lake Oconee Parkway  
Eatonton, GA 31024

*Help us celebrate the new location!*



## Networking @Noon

Sponsored by Gatewood School

**Correction:** The Jan. 18 Networking @ Noon will be at The Plaza Arts Center. The December Newsletter listed the Lodge on Lake Oconee, which is the March location.

Wednesday, Jan. 18  
11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
\$10, Includes Lunch  
Located at The Plaza Arts Center  
305 N. Madison Ave.  
Eatonton, GA 31024



*Agenda includes lunch, Chamber updates, sponsor presentation, table introductions, commercials and general networking!*



Tuesday, Jan. 31, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.  
Located at Farmers & Merchants Bank  
Lake Oconee Branch-Harmony Crossing  
1011 Lake Oconee Parkway  
Eatonton, GA 31024

*Connect over coffee with a representative of the Chamber board and staff along with fellow members. This month meet with: Board Chairman Mike Rowland & Membership Manager Becky Needham.*



Sponsored by Lake Oconee  
Urgent & Specialty Care Center

*Mark your calendar, Business After Hours is early in February!*

Thursday, Feb. 2, 5 to 7 p.m.  
105 Harmony Crossing  
Suite 3 / Eatonton, GA 31024



*Enjoy networking, refreshments and a 50/50 cash raffle!*

## Chamber welcomes Mark & Becky Little as new owners of Harmony Crossing Foods



Harmony Crossing Foods celebrated a ribbon cutting ceremony with the Eatonton-Putnam Chamber of Commerce on Friday, Dec. 9. Harmony Crossing Foods offers a wide variety of products including fuel, automotive, tobacco, grocery, snacks and beverages including fountain drinks and coffee. Mark and Becky Little purchased the business on Aug. 8. Harmony Crossing Foods is open Monday through Saturday from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. and on Sunday from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. The store is located at 1001 Lake Oconee Parkway, Eatonton, GA 31024 (connected to McDonald's). For more information, call (706) 923-0342.

## Habitat for Humanity of Putnam County hosts December Business After Hours



On Thursday, Dec. 8, Habitat for Humanity of Putnam County hosted Business After Hours at the Home Store. Members enjoyed networking while shopping! Thad Clark of Sycamore Oconee Real Estate was the winner of the 50/50 cash raffle. Visit the Home Store at 1027 Lake Oconee Parkway, Suites 4-7. For more information, call (706) 991-1600.

## Chamber promotes "Shopping Local" by participating in the Christmas Parade



On Saturday, Dec. 3, Chamber staff, Ambassadors and family participated in the Eatonton Mainstreet Christmas parade by promoting Shopping Local with decorated shopping bags.

## Chamber hosts Antebellum Trail Familiarization Tour



The Chamber hosted members of the Antebellum Trail on Dec. 13 for a familiarization tour to assist in promoting travel along the Trail to the neighboring communities. The Antebellum Trail is a 90 mile Trail consisting of seven communities, including Putnam County, for the purpose of promotion, networking and marketing the Antebellum Era. A FAM tour is an organized trip arranged for professionals in the travel industry to familiarize them with an attraction or destination. The Chamber would like to say a special thank you to The Old School Museum and the Uncle Remus Museum for their assistance.



www.facebook.com/epchamber



*Happy New Year!*

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Visit www.EatontonChamber.com!

**Advertise in this newsletter:**

Reach over 600 contacts with a newsletter insert for only \$50. Submission deadline is the 20th of each month. Supply 250 copies and an electronic file.

**Chamber Staff**

**Roddie Anne Blackwell**, President  
**Becky Needham**, Membership Manager  
**Bonnie Simmons**, Tourism Manager

*Chairman:*

**Mike Rowland**

*Vice Chair:*

**Laura Gailey**, The Gailey Law Firm, LLC

*Treasurer:*

**Jon Butler**, The Peoples Bank

**Terri Camp**, Rock Eagle 4-H Center

**Rita Daniel**, Eatonton Chiropractic Center

**Bernard Holston**, Bernard's Family Funeral Care

**Joe Hudson**, Farmers & Merchants Bank

**Wes Lewis**, Georgia Power Company Land Department

**Marty Phillips**, Techknow Gurus

**Gene Thurston**, Neighborhood Cleaners

**Cynthia Wallace**, Sycamore Oconee Real Estate

**Lowell White, III**, Calvert & White Custom Homes

Currently Accepting 2012

*Chamber Champions!*





# Member News & Events

## - 'M2M' News -

**ViziTech USA**, Stewart Rodeheaver, was named winner of the "Coolest Technology Company in Georgia" and "Technology Entrepreneur of the Year" Category at the 2011 Spirit of Endeavor Awards. For more information, call (404) 725-5104 or email [csr@vizitechusa.com](mailto:csr@vizitechusa.com).

**Crowe Marine's** Julie Crowe was named the 2011 Darlene Briggs Award Winner during a luncheon Nov. 9 at the Marine Dealer Conference & Expo. The honor is given annually to an outstanding woman in the marine industry. For more information, call (706) 485-9600 or email [jcrowe@crowemarine.com](mailto:jcrowe@crowemarine.com).

**Lights of Oconee**, located in Harmony Crossing, is open for business (please don't be confused with another lighting company that is closing). For more information, call (706) 923-5483 or visit 113 Harmony Crossing, Suite 1, Eatonton, GA 31024.

**SunTrust Bank** is pleased to announce that Vince Ray has joined the team at the Lake Oconee branch as a Licensed Banker. Vince has extensive experience in the financial services field, and he holds FINRA Series 7 and 66 brokerage licenses along with Georgia Life and Property & Casualty insurance licenses. For more information, call (706) 485-4500 or email [Anthony.v.Ray@SunTrust.com](mailto:Anthony.v.Ray@SunTrust.com).

**Crooked Pines Farm's** Web site has a new look and a Google calendar full of 2012 events with the option to add the events to your calendar! Visit [www.crookedpinesfarm.com](http://www.crookedpinesfarm.com).

## - 'M2M' Events -

Jan. 10: **American Cancer Society** - Relay For Life of Putnam County Kickoff Celebration at Eatonton First United Methodist Church, 6 to 7 p.m. Enjoy light refreshments as we honor our survivors, celebrate our past accomplishments, save lives, create more birthdays and Kickoff 2012 Relay For Life! For more information, call (706) 549-4893 or email [libby.fennell@cancer.org](mailto:libby.fennell@cancer.org).

Jan. 14: **Steffen Thomas Museum of Art** Family Workshop "Baby It's Cold Outside," 10 a.m. to Noon. Make a useful and artistic soup and cracker set from clay, taught by Elizabeth Collins of Sparkle Plenty Art. Adults \$10, children \$8. Limited seating, call (706) 342-7557 or visit [www.steffenthomas.org](http://www.steffenthomas.org).

Jan. 16: **Crooked Pines Farm** Day Camp for children 5-12 who are out of school celebrating Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Includes petting farm, hayride, activities, games and snacks (bring a lunch). Drop-off begins at 7:30 a.m. and pick up will be no later than 5:30 p.m. \$35, limited space, call (706) 347-0274 or visit [www.crookedpinesfarm.com](http://www.crookedpinesfarm.com).

Jan. 21: **The Plaza Arts Center** - the Harlem Gospel Live Revue, 7:30 p.m. Take an amazing journey through the evolution of African American Gospel Music in this high-energy, stylized performance with the authentic flavor of Harlem. For more information, call (706) 923-1655 or visit [www.ThePlazaArtsCenter.com](http://www.ThePlazaArtsCenter.com).

Jan. 23: **Putnam General Hospital** - Look Good Feel Better session sponsored by the American Cancer Society from 3 to 5 p.m. in the Conference Room on Monday. Free for women currently undergoing treatment for cancer. For more information, call (706) 485-2711 or email [hthrift@putnamgeneral.com](mailto:hthrift@putnamgeneral.com).

Jan. 27: **Putnam General Hospital** Soup Luncheon at First United Methodist Church, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. \$6. All proceeds to benefit the Hospital. For more information, call (706) 485-2711 or buy tickets at the door.

Feb. 7: **OPAS** - Neil Berg's 100 Years of Broadway at The Plaza Arts Center, 7:30 p.m. Tickets on sale at [www.opas.org](http://www.opas.org).

Feb. 10 and Feb. 11: **Crooked Pines Farm** Little Cupids Camp, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. While the parents are dining, children ages 5 to 12 are invited to join us for dinner and fun including hayrides, crafts and games. \$25 for the first child per family and \$15 for each additional sibling. Limited space, call (706) 347-0274 or visit [www.crookedpinesfarm.com](http://www.crookedpinesfarm.com).

Feb. 11: **Steffen Thomas Museum of Art** Family Workshop "Making a Memory Box," 10 a.m. to Noon. Create a family treasure by making a Memory Box covered and filled with your personal memorabilia from your family, taught by Yvonne Studevan. Adults \$10, children \$8. Limited seating, call (706) 342-7557 or visit [www.steffenthomas.org](http://www.steffenthomas.org).

*Please remember to submit your Member to Member News & Events formatted to 50 words or less to [becky@eatonton.com](mailto:becky@eatonton.com) by the 20th of each month to be included in the following month's newsletter. Visit [eatonton.com](http://eatonton.com) for a full calendar of community events.*