

CORDELE-CRISP

Chamber of Commerce

2013 Annual Report

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2014 Program of Action

Mission Statement:

“The mission of the Cordele-Crisp Chamber of Commerce is to support, maintain, and promote members businesses and quality of life in our community.”

Annual Dinner Sponsors

Platinum

Ameris Bank

Cook Industrial Electric

Crisp Regional Health Services

Impact Sports & Fitness

South Georgia Technical College

Woodard Nursery

Gold

Colony Bank

Lake Blackshear Resort

Silver

Cordele Dispatch

Cordelia Manor Independent & Assisted Living

Lawson & Reid, LLC

South Georgia News

Worthit2u.net

WSST-DT51

Special thanks to the following for their contribution to the success
of the Annual Dinner & Report.

Ambassador Corp

Georgia Southwestern State University Jazz Ensemble

Renay Adkins Studio of Photography

The Lake Blackshear Resort

2014 Officers & Directors

Executive Committee

Chair

Bridget Milani – Southwest Ga. Rehab

Chair Elect

Briley Edwards – Ameris Bank

Organizational Improvement Vice-Chair

Brad Westenfeld – Harvey's Supermarket

Community Development Vice-Chair

Kimberly Reid – Lawson & Reid, Attorneys at Law

Economic Development Vice-Chair

Ron Cruz – Pridgen Brothers

Public Affairs Vice-Chair

Jerry Carney

Tourism Division Vice-Chair

Eli Tinsley – PlantersFirst Bank

Past Chairman

Richard Grogg – Sunbelt Ford of Cordele

Treasurer & Crisp County Power Commission

Rusty Slade – PlantersFirst Bank

Cordele City Commission Rep

A.J. Rivers

Crisp County Commission Rep

Larry Felton

Agri-Industrial Development Rep

Bob Evans – Colony Bank

Board of Directors

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|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Hal Carter, Jr. Ag Ga. Farm Credit | Brad Christian South Ga. Banking Co. | Angie Ellis PlantersFirst Bank |
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| William Edwards Edward & Associates | Ben Wright Rainwater & Gibbs | Anna Hurt Crimson & Clover |
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| Mulford Roberson Roberson Barber Shop | Willie Patrick South Ga. News | Josh Pitts Ag Technologies |
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| Katie McWilliams Cordele Intermodal | Meribeth McNeill Chick fil A | Jonathan Sinyard Adams Drug Store |
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| Jeff Whelchel Edward Jones Investments | C.J. Griffin Griffin Lumber & Hardware |
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Retiring Directors:

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|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Jessica Carter Mitchell Gibbs | Mac Cook Sonny Mehta | Jamie Fernandez |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|

Ex-Officio

City of Cordele – Edward Beach

Cordele/Crisp IDC – Bruce Drennan

Cordele Mainstreet - Monica Mitchell

Crisp Academy – Kip Stephens

Crisp Co. Commission – Tom Patton

Crisp Co. Extension – Justin Lanier

Crisp Co. Power Com. – Steve Rentfrow

Crisp Regional Health Services/ Steven Gautney/Jessica Carter

Darton College – Caroline Fielding

Farm Bureau – Don Williford

Georgia Veterans Memorial State Park– Bob Johnson

Mayor of Arabi – Craig Huckaby

School Superintendent – Rhonda Hayes

South Georgia Technical College – John Watford

Southwest Ga. United – Robert Cooke

State Senator District 13 – Dickie Crosby

State Representative District 147 – Buddy Harden

Cordele-Crisp Chamber of Commerce Program of Work 2013

Mission Statement:

“The Mission of the Cordele-Crisp Chamber of Commerce is to advance the economic, industrial, professional, cultural, and civic welfare of Cordele-Crisp County”

The chamber was able to accomplish the following during 2013. Special thanks to all who chaired and served on committees to make this possible.

Organizational Improvement Ron Cruz, Vice Chair

Goal: To support and grow the chamber through activities that enhances and promotes chamber membership.

- **Completed and received Georgia Chamber Accreditation**
- **Expanded social media program – by utilizing FaceBook and Twitter to get the word out on chamber and community events**
- **Held Membership Drive, recruiting 82 new members**
- **Increased membership renewals**
- **Increased attendance at ribbon cuttings and other chamber sponsored events by notifying members via email and newsletter and social media**
- **Continued Young Professionals Networking and offered other networking opportunities through seminars and other events**
- **Continued to sponsor STAR Student/Teacher Program, Annual Dinner, and Professional Administrative Day Luncheon**
- **Expanded non-dues revenues sources – holding event with The Lake Blackshear Resort and planning the 2nd printing of the Lake Blackshear Print**

Community Development Kimberly Reid, Vice Chair

Goal: To generate positive awareness and outreach to sustain excellence in our community.

- **Supported the Darton-Crisp County Center and coordinated groundbreaking**
- **Supported Keep Crisp Beautiful for a cleaner community**
- **Continued to promote a more cohesive community**
- **Continued and enhanced “New Comers” program by expanding committee and outreach to members for items to go in the baskets**
- **Supported Crisp County School System, Crisp Academy, South Georgia Technical College, and Darton College**
- **Exploring a business mentoring program with the local schools and also for entrepreneurs**
- **Supported agricultural community by sponsoring Farmers Appreciation Dinner, coordinated the 64th Annual Watermelon Days Festival and supported the Georgia State Farmers’ Market**
- **Recruited volunteers for chamber and community events**
- **Published list of “volunteer opportunities” for chamber events**
- **Sponsored Leadership Crisp Class 2013-14 with 35 in the class**
- **Supported Gillespie-Selden area redevelopment plan**
- **Supported local civic and community organizations**

**Economic Development
Rusty Slade, Vice Chair**

Goal: To advance industrial, commercial, agricultural and retail business development

- Promoted “same” community strategic mission for city, county, Arabi, chamber, hospital, schools, power commission, and industrial development council
- Supported Foreign Trade Designation, Cordele Intermodal Services and assisted with MOU ceremony between CIS and the Port of Savannah
- Supported Southwest Georgia United
- Supported transportation and other infrastructure needs
- Promoted “Shop Cordele-Crisp County First” campaign year-round
- Assisted local contractors in bidding on large construction contracts
- Sponsored and attended Georgia Quail Hunt
- Supported and promoted workforce development
- Supported “user-friendly” new business and existing business enhancements

**Public Affairs
Jerry Carney, Vice Chair**

Goal: To interact with appropriate levels of government and the private sector to accomplish goals of the chamber and community.

- Facilitated quarterly meetings with all government agencies to discuss common goals and growth opportunities
- Promoted “Get Out & Vote”
- Sponsored Atlanta Legislative Fish Fry and training program for event
- Sponsored Public Safety Appreciation Dinner
- Tracked legislation that has specific impact on our community with city and county leaders throughout legislative session
- Promoted Lake Blackshear and Lake Blackshear Resort through interaction with North Ga. Mountain Authority, Ga. Dept. of Natural Resources and Georgia Veterans Memorial State Park for “joint use” of facilities
- Promoted and supported our local military
- Co-sponsored 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony and honored local public safety personnel during the event
- Promoted benefits of Special Purpose Local Option Sale Taxes on WSST to educate the community



Bridget Milani is shown receiving the Georgia Certified Chamber award



Mark Aultman cuts the ribbon for Aultman Lawn Care & Tractor Service

**Tourism Division
Angie Ellis, Vice Chair**

Goal: To expand and enhance our visitor base.

- **Assisted with planning of the I-75 Gateway Project and coordinated groundbreaking**
- **Researching how to expand Gateway projects community-wide**
- **Began steps toward becoming a “Quiet Community”**
- **Developing Tourism web page and enhanced social media**
- **Expanded and enhanced billboard project by increasing number of boards**
- **Coordinated and sponsored events that expand and enhance our visitor base (ball, fishing, golf, sailplane events)**
- **Participated in co-op ventures for fairs and shows to expand our visitor base**
- **Participated in state and national events that expand visitor base**
- **Supported Farmer’s Market by including local market in 100 Mile Yard Sale and researching others ways to promote and enhance**
- **Continued to support S.A.M. Shortline Excursion Train and Day Out With Thomas event**
- **Sponsored two Hospitality Training seminars with over 75 in attendance**
- **Supported curbside pick-up for a cleaner community**



Angie Ellis makes remarks at ground breaking for the I-75 Gateway Project



Monica Simmons and David Cook take break from their duties at DOWT



Many enjoyed riding and watching the hot air balloons



WALB Show was filmed at Flint River Pottery

PROGRAM OF WORK 2014

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENT

Brad Westenfeld, Vice Chair

Goal: To support and grow the chamber through activities that enhances and promotes chamber membership.

- Expand Social media platform by increasing presence on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. And have members receive mass texts or Face Book message information and reminders on a weekly basis
- Young Professionals Networking with sponsoring two (2) events per year and focus on speakers and topics interesting for young professionals
- Continue to recruit new members, focus on retaining current members by contacting every member via phone or email
- Continue to work on non-dues revenue sources
- Improve attendance at Ribbon Cuttings

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Kimberly Reid, Vice Chair

Goal: To generate positive awareness and outreach to sustain excellence in our community.

- Partner with local schools to offer work-based mentoring or shadowing for students to highlight career opportunities in Crisp County
- Explore how to promote financial literacy for youth
- Explore implementing Jr. Chamber Board
- Support the Darton/Crisp Co. Higher Education Center & South Georgia Technical College
- Support Keep Crisp Beautiful for education of a cleaner community and to enhance community pride
- Continue Newcomers program with “welcome baskets”
- Support Ag Community (Farmers Appreciation Dinner, Watermelon Days Festival, Farmers Market)
- Develop a plan for increasing volunteers and distributing list of “Volunteer Opportunities”
- Partner with local schools to implement B.E.S.T. program
- Continue sponsoring Leadership Crisp
- Support Gillespie-Selden re-development plan



MG Finch facilitates Leadership Crisp retreat



**Dr. Southerland cuts the ribbon for the new
Emergency Department**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ron Cruz, Vice Chair

Goal: To advance industrial, commercial, agricultural and retail business development

- Sponsor chamber member business appreciation event
- Research stream-lining city and county permitting procedures
- Promote and support local vendor preference
- Promote shop local preference
- Research and implement Workforce Development Plan for community
- Sponsor Georgia Quail Hunt with Southwest Georgia Chamber Council
- Research Groupon to promote shop local
- Research Discount cards for “members by members”
- Support Foreign Trade Designation, Inland Port Strategic Plan & Airport Industrial Park projects
- Coordinate infrastructure improvements with city, county and power commission
- Support city and county comprehensive plan
- Support TSPLOST and other local and state transportation improvement plans

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Jerry Carney, Vice Chair

Goal: To interact with appropriate levels of government and the private sector to accomplish goals of the chamber and community.

- Sponsor political forum to educate voters
- Promote Get Out & Vote
- Sponsor legislative forum
- Coordinate 26th Annual Atlanta Legislative Fish Fry
- Support inter-governmental co-op to advance Chamber goals (one step contact)
- Promote and enhance utilization of Lake Blackshear & GA Veterans State Park by developing 4-5 year plan to present to State for funding
- Support and promote Farmers Market
- Sponsor public safety appreciation event
- Sponsor 9/11 recognition



Several citizens and elected officials attended the Listening Session



Public Safety personnel enjoying the Public Safety Dinner

TOURISM

Eli Tinsley, Vice Chair

Goal: To expand and enhance our visitor base.

- Complete Gateway and Quiet Community projects
- Support Recreation Department in recruiting sporting events (State track meet, ball tournaments, etc.)
- Support and promote Farmers Market (Billboards & GDOT Signs)
- Expand gateway project to include upgrading welcome signs
- Research sponsorship of concerts to increase visitors
- Sponsor Triathlon, Watermelon Days Festival, Sail Planes, Railroad Motor Cars, Golfing, Fishing and Hot Air Balloon events
- Participate in the 100 Mile Peanut Pickin' Yard Sale
- Develop tourism mobile application for tourism related businesses
- Update and promote tourism web site to increase number of hits
- Continue to support S.A.M. Shortline Excursion Train and Day Out With Thomas
- Sponsor Hospitality Training seminars



Ron Cruz, Richard Grogg, Cheryl Bolden and Kimberly Reid at the "TNL" Membership Drive



Everyone enjoyed refreshments and fellowship at the "Thursday Night Lights" membership drive party



Gov. Deal makes remarks at the MOU signing between CIS and the Port of Savannah



Students at South Ga. Technical College participated in the National Recycling Day project with Keep Crisp Beautiful

AMBASSADOR CORP

The Ambassadors are the liaison between the Chamber Board of Directors and the 490 members of the chamber. They also sponsor the Professional Administrative Day Luncheon, the Watermelon Days Dance and other activities as needed.

Special thanks to each Ambassador for the great service you provide our chamber!

Dawn Mayo – Adams Drug Store
Ann Leger – Albany Tractor Company
Ricky Hughes – Ambassador Personnel
Abbie Greene – Ameris Bank
Rebecca Coker – Colony Bank
Amber Herrington – Colony Bank
Brittany Leggett – Cook Industrial Electric
Monica Mitchell – Cordele Mainstreet
Miriam Edwards – Crisp Area Arts Alliance
Amy Moore – Crisp Farms
Stephanie Telfair – Crisp Regional Health Services
Rose Bridges – District Attorney's Office
Renee Bodrey – Harris Waste Management Group
Michelle Waldrip – J.S. Pate Elementary School
Jennifer Averill – Sew Obsessed with Monograms
Jordan Carter – Leger & Sons, Inc.
Wendy Lemaster – PlantersFirst Bank
Dana Raines – WellnessWorks (Crisp Regional Health Services)
Marsha Mitchell – Reflections Hospice of Crisp Regional Hospital
Brad Christian – South Georgia Banking Company
Teresa Jolly – South Georgia Technical College
Catherine Whiddon – Whiddon Agency & Crop Insurance



**Cordele-Crisp Chamber of Commerce
Board of Directors**



**Cordele-Crisp Chamber of Commerce
Ambassador Corp**

**Past Board Chairmen of the
Cordele-Crisp Chamber of Commerce**

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|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1950.....Spencer Worthy | 1984.....Susan N Barge |
| 1951.....Spencer Worthy | 1985.....Guy D. Pfeiffer |
| 1951.....Leland Ferguson | 1986.....W.E. Shannon, Jr. |
| 1952.....Leland Ferguson | 1987.....Michael G. Mixon |
| 1953.....W.R. Turner | 1988.....Robert L. Evans |
| 1954-55.....Jake B. Roobin | 1989.....Bobby Shepard |
| 1956.....H.M. Turton, Sr. | 1990.....Ronnie Fuller |
| 1957.....Ben Turner | 1991.....Jeffery W. Johnson |
| 1958-60.....E.W. Mathews | 1992.....David N. Rainwater |
| 1961.....Charles Denning | 1993.....Jerry Crumley |
| 1962.....H.M. Turton, Sr. | 1994.....Jack Hamilton, Jr. |
| 1963.....W.R. Forrester | 1995.....Jan K. Odom |
| 1964.....E.W. Mathews | 1996.....W. Cole Woodroof |
| 1965.....Robert Fleeman | 1997.....Angie S. Ellis |
| 1966.....Charles Denning | 1998.....Randy Cox |
| 1967.....W.E. Pitts | 1999.....Ricky Smith |
| 1968.....Carter McKinney | 2000.....Randy Yawn |
| 1969-70.....B.I. Thornton | 2001.....Troy Pullin |
| 1971.....Robert Fleeman | 2002.....Gene Ford |
| 1972-73.....Ralph West | 2003.....Susan Leger-Boike |
| 1974.....W.E. Pitts | 2004.....Paul Mechler |
| 1975.....C.B. Wilson, Jr. | 2005.....Phil Streetman |
| 1976.....Robert Fleeman | 2006.....Joe Cook |
| 1977.....Aubrey Alford | 2007.....Larry Bullock |
| 1978.....Ralph West | 2008.....Noel Williams, Jr. |
| 1979.....Carol Anne Moore | 2009.....William J. Cannon |
| 1980.....Harry Hurt | 2010.....Phil Berryman |
| 1981.....Jerry Johnson | 2011.....Ed Vaughn |
| 1982.....Robert L. Evans | 2012.....Eli Tinsley |
| 1983.....Charles F. Rumsey | 2013.....Richard Grogg |