



## Meriwether County Chamber of Commerce

May 8, 2008

### Meriwether Receives Entrepreneur Friendly Designation

#### Chamber Officers:

- President: [Greg Schmieg](#)
- President-Elect: [Bruce Maloy](#)
- Past-President: [Lori Quinlan](#)
- Secretary: [William Moran](#)
- Treasurer: [Allen Parham](#)

Meriwether County has officially been designated as an Entrepreneur Friendly Community. This designation reflects the commitment the county has made to work towards attracting more small businesses into the county and to work with them to ensure their success. We are reminded that our county has over 500 small businesses, representing 90% of the businesses in our county. In addition, these businesses are a key economic driver, providing 75% of the new jobs added to our economy. It is in our county's best interest to do everything we can to make them successful.

The site review team included Kristen Miller, Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD); Kathy Oxford, International Trade Representative (GDEcD); Ed Murphy, Georgia Tech Entrepreneur Outreach; Corinne Blenco, Department of Community Affairs; Maggie Potter, Tourism Division (GDEcD) and Laura Gower, Staff Representative U. S. Senator Johnny Isakson's office. Participating in our site review were several local businesses who "told their story" to the site review team including Jeff Cain, Sticks & Stones Builders; Linda Seymour, Southern Belles Soap; Virginia Hill, Hill's Funeral Home; Victor Tuskynski, JT's Signs; Quarterius Willis, Perfect Cuts, Inc.; and Ellen McEwen, Cotton Pickin' Fair.



These folks did such a nice job and really made the day very special. Watch for more information on next steps.

#### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Cane Creek Metal Works, Inc.  
104 Reynolds Road  
Woodbury, GA 30293  
Calvin McGraw, Owner  
706-553-9995  
770-550-9980  
[calvinmcgraw@starband.net](mailto:calvinmcgraw@starband.net)  
[calvinmcgraw.mystarband.net](http://calvinmcgraw.mystarband.net)

1st Franklin Financial Corp.  
P.O. Box 667  
1002 Warm Springs Highway  
Manchester, GA 31816  
Greta Strickland, Manager  
706-846-8491  
[ggs0661@wffc.com](mailto:ggs0661@wffc.com)  
[www.1ffc.com](http://www.1ffc.com)

Chip Medders, Principal  
Manchester High School  
405 5th Avenue  
Manchester, GA 31816  
[dmedders@meriwether.k12.ga.us](mailto:dmedders@meriwether.k12.ga.us)

Shenandoah Electrical Services, Inc.  
P.O. Box 842  
Newnan, GA 30264  
Jimmy McGuffey, President  
770-304-8381  
[jimmy@sesiec.com](mailto:jimmy@sesiec.com)  
[www.sesiec.com](http://www.sesiec.com)



## FLINT RIVER ACADEMY

### Hosts Chamber Board

The Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors held its May meeting at the Flint River Academy in Woodbury, GA. Joining the Board for its meeting were member businesses in the area, including Calvin McGraw, Cane Creek Metal Works, Inc; Mike Mills, Mills Insurance and Real Estate; Bob Oxford; Steve James, Crown Technology, LLC; and Howard Ayers, Paragon Consulting. The Board was welcomed by Woodbury Mayor Ron Garrett who provided a review of some of the issues the city of Woodbury is addressing. Also welcoming the Board was Flint River Academy Headmaster, Marlowe Hinson. Marlowe reviewed some of the exciting plans underway at Flint River, including the strategic planning process; feasibility analysis and future capital campaign. Arthur Pearson, representing the Meriwether County Development Authority was welcomed as a special guest. The Development Authority was saluted as a Platinum Sponsor for the Meriwether County Chamber of Commerce.

Next month, the Board travels to the Big Red Oak Plantation in Gay, Georgia. The Board is committed to increasing its presence and visibility throughout the county and equally committed to inviting local businesses to attend to share information and ask questions.

Big Red Oak will also be the site for our first Member Showcase this year—watch for an invitation.

THANK YOU  
RENEWING MEMBERS

Wachovia Bank  
Manchester

Dept. of Family &  
Children's Services  
Greenville

United Way of West GA  
LaGrange

AT & T  
Columbus

Big Red Oak Plantation  
Gay

Big Chic  
Manchester

J & G Stores, Inc.  
Manchester

F & M Bank and Trust  
Manchester

Best Western -  
Whitehouse Inn  
Warm Springs

City of Manchester

Marlene White  
Woodbury

## ***Congratulations Manchester Development Authority***

The Manchester Development Authority has received \$500,000 from the OneGeorgia Equity program to purchase the vacant Goody's building. The 350,000 square-foot structure was built in 1969 and expanded in 1979. With the funds, the Manchester Development Authority will purchase the building and remaining 22 acres. They will then repair the plant's roof and electrical systems and lease-purchase the building and site to an industry. Loan proceeds will continue to be re-loaned in Manchester for other industrial projects.

## ***Rapid Finish Construction, Inc. Granted DBE Status***

Rapid Finish Construction, Inc. has recently been granted Disadvantaged Business Enterprise status by the state of Georgia. For general contractors to qualify for a state job they are required to have a certain percentage of minority participation included in their bid. The business must be certified by the state as a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise. This is good information for any of our general contractors who bid on state jobs and a big step for a newly developed company like Rapid Finish Construction. If you have questions, contact Priscilla Medina-Waid, President @ 706.326.2598 or email Priscilla@rapidfinishconstruction.biz

## ***New Method to Conduct Drug Testing***

A new state law, recently signed by governor Perdue is about to change the way companies conduct drug testing of their employees. The law permits employers to test an employee's saliva rather than urine specimens. Within ten minutes of administering the simple test in the open at the job site, it can be determined if the applicant or employee has used any of more than six different illegal drugs. If the results are negative, the test is complete. Positive test results are sent to the laboratory for confirmation before any action is taken. If you company or organization is currently enrolled in the Drugs Don't Work program, you are eligible immediately to adapt to this new method. If not, this is the ideal time to become a participating member to help your business maintain a drug free workplace and save a state mandated 7.5% discount on workers' comp insurance premium. Lori Quinlan, Georgia Power is the local coordinator for the Drugs Don't Work Program in Meriwether County-call 706.655.2558 for information.

***First Ever Statewide Water Plan*** signed into law on February 6<sup>th</sup> by Governor Perdue, the plan calls for the creation of 10 regional water councils with 25 members each. Over the next three years, each council will analyze how much water is currently available in local streams, rivers and other sources; how to manage and conserve it; and how much will be needed to accommodate future growth within the region. The Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the House will appoint the members, but local businesses and Chambers of Commerce will play a major role in deciding who is named to each council, according to Georgia Chamber president George Israel.

***Crawford Grading and Pipeline, Inc. has a new email address:  
cgp@crawfordgrading.com***

***Evans Realty has relocated to their new location at 412 N. Fifth Avenue, Manchester, GA***

***Greenbow-Blue Creek Basic has a new satellite office at 132 Riverstone Terrace, Suite 103, Canton, GA 30114. Phone# 770.720.2717***

***Bryan Oglesby, Financial Advisor with Edward Jones has moved into his new office location at 911 N. Church Street in Thomaston, GA***

***Watch Next  
Month***

***Member Showcase to be held at Big Red Oak Plantation in Gay, GA***

***Watch for Invitation***



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Warm Springs, GA 31830  
706.655.2558

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<http://meriwethercountychamber.org>