



# Annual Report 2012

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the TLC is to provide a unified group with committed leadership pledged to promote, protect and serve the interests of the tourism and hospitality industries of the greater Savannah area.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Executive Committee

#### President

**Jack Bussert**, River Street Inn

#### Vice President

**Mark Spadoni**, Westin Savannah Harbor Golf Resort & Spa

#### Treasurer

**Mitch Linder**, Holiday Inn Express/  
Hampton Inn Historic District

#### Secretary

**Fran Harold**, Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace

#### At-Large

**Greg Kelly**, Savannah/  
H.H. International Airport

#### At-Large

**Mark Dana**, Prince-Bush-Smith Hotels

#### Immediate Past President

**Whip Triplett**, North Point Hospitality

### Directors

**Charlie Brazil**, Old Town Trolley Tours

**Jim Cone**, Georgia Power

**Brendan Ferrara**, Savannah Technical College

**Marc Friday**, Planters Inn on Reynolds Square

**Lindsay Fruchtl**, Tybee Island  
Tourism Council

**Marcie Hill**, City Market

**Sandy Hollander**, 45 bistro

**Marty Johnston**, City of Savannah

**John Katz**, Savannah Sand Gnats

**Paul Kennedy**, Paul Kennedy Catering

**Sarah Lamar**, Hunter Maclean

**Jody McIntyre**, Savannah Marriott Riverfront

**Matt Meece**, Savannah Theatre

**Michael Plummer**, Yates-Astro

**Diane Rousakis**, United Distributors, Inc.

**Scott Snipes**, Hyatt Regency Savannah

**Ansley Williams**, Live Oak Restaurants

## Past Presidents

**Charlie Brazil** (2010), Old Town Trolley Tours of Savannah

**Mark Dana** (2009), Prince-Bush-Smith Hotels

**Marcie Hill** (2004-2005), City Market

**Sandy Hollander** (2002-2003), 45 bistro

**Jody McIntyre** (2007-2008), Savannah Marriott Riverfront

**Michael Plummer** (2005-2006), Yates-Astro

**Mark Spadoni** (2003-2004), Westin Savannah Harbor Golf Resort & Spa

**Whip Triplett** (2011) North Point Hospitality

## TOURISM LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

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[www.tourismleadershipcouncil.com](http://www.tourismleadershipcouncil.com) • [www.tasteofsavannah.org](http://www.tasteofsavannah.org) • [www.jobsinsavannah.com](http://www.jobsinsavannah.com)

## History of the Organization

In 1997, seven tourism and hospitality professionals had a vision to establish an organization that would support the local tourism industry with programs, scholarships, and other projects. Thirty-seven businesses contributed \$1000 each to provide seed money for the organization, and the first TLC meeting was held in July 1998.

## Membership

In 2012, the TLC retained membership and brought in new members, growing our membership to more than 250 businesses (see below). The TLC enjoys a diverse membership, including lodging properties, restaurants, food and beverage distributors, caterers, tour companies, museums, retail shops, printers, banks, non-profit associations, law offices, and many other companies who are touched by the tourism industry.

With a staff of three, the non-profit professional association continually strives to provide members with resources to strengthen their businesses. These resources include networking opportunities for industry professionals, advocacy efforts on behalf of the industry, educational seminars and training for industry employees, workforce development initiatives, monthly luncheons with informative topics, job fairs and a job-listing website, and an emergency fund available for members in times of crisis. The TLC is dedicated to leading the way for greater tourism in Savannah and strives to ensure that the needs of the local tourism industry are being addressed.

### 2012 TOURISM LEADERSHIP COUNCIL MEMBERS

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| 1. 17 Hundred 90 Inn & Restaurant                  | 25. Blue Focus Media                        | 45. Courtyard By Marriott Savannah Historic District |
| 2. 24e   | 26. Bluegreen Resorts                       | 46. Creative Catering                                |
| 3. 45 bistro                                       | 27. Boar's Head Grill & Tavern              | 47. Creative Peanut                                  |
| 4. AAA Parking                                     | 28. BowStern Marketing & Communications     | 48. Crosspointe Interactive                          |
| 5. Adventure Radio Group                           | 29. Bradbury Suites                         | 49. Crosswinds Golf Club                             |
| 6. Advertising Specialty Services                  | 30. Chart House Restaurant                  | 50. Crystal Beer Parlor                              |
| 7. Aloha Janitorial Services                       | 31. Churchill's Pub                         | 51. Cumulus Broadcasting                             |
| 8. AlphaGraphics                                   | 32. City Market                             | 52. Desoto Beach Bed & Breakfast                     |
| 9. Ambos Seafoods, LLC                             | 33. City of Savannah                        | 53. Desoto Beach Hotel                               |
| 10. American Diabetes Association                  | 34. Classic Party Rentals                   | 54. DeVivo Marketing, LLC                            |
| 11. American Red Cross                             | 35. Clear Channel Media + Entertainment     | 55. Discovery Maps                                   |
| 12. America's Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia    | 36. Club One Jefferson/The Bay Cafe         | 56. Doubletree Hotel Historic Savannah               |
| 13. Ameris Bank                                    | 37. Coastal Heritage Society                | 57. Downtown Business Association                    |
| 14. ANdAZ Savannah                                 | 38. Coastal Insurance Partners              | 58. East Bay Inn                                     |
| 15. Andrew Low House                               | 39. Cobblestone Connections                 | 59. Eat It and Like It.com                           |
| 16. Arc Media Group                                | 40. Comfort Suites Historic District        | 60. Eliza Thompson House                             |
| 17. Azalea Inn                                     | 41. Cosmos Mariner Productions              | 61. Elizabeth on 37th                                |
| 18. Azelle Photography                             | 42. Country Inn & Suites                    | 62. Embassy Suites Savannah Airport                  |
| 19. B. Matthews Eatery                             | 43. Country Inn & Suites - Savannah Airport | 63. Empire Distributors, Inc.                        |
| 20. Baymont Inn                                    | 44. Country Inn & Suites Savannah-Midtown   | 64. Fairfield Inn by Marriott                        |
| 21. Belfor Property Restoration                    |   | 65. Fiddler's Crab House                             |
| 22. Belford's Savannah Seafood & Steaks            |   | 66. Four Points by Sheraton Historic Savannah        |
| 23. Best Western Plus - Savannah Historic District |   | 67. Friends of Cockspur Island Lighthouse            |
| 24. Blowin Smoke BBQ                               |   |  |

68. Friesens America
69. GA Department of Economic Development & Tourism
70. Garden City Convention & Visitors Bureau
71. Garibaldi's Cafe
72. GaySavannah.com
73. Georgia Power
74. Georgia Restaurant Association
75. Global Events Partners
76. Greater Savannah Travel
77. Green Palm Inn
78. Guardian Angels Sitting Service
79. Hampton Inn & Suites Midtown Savannah
80. Hampton Inn Historic District
81. Hancock Askew & Co. LLP
82. Hard Hearted Hannah's Playhouse
83. Hilton Garden Inn-Midtown
84. Hilton Garden Inn-Savannah Historic District
85. Hilton Savannah DeSoto
86. Historic Savannah Carriage Tours
87. Historic Savannah Foundation
88. HMSHost
89. Holiday Inn & Suites-Pooler
90. Holiday Inn-Express Historic District
91. Hostess City Celebrations
92. HostSouth
93. HT Creative, LLC
94. Huey's
95. Hunter Maclean
96. Hyatt Regency Savannah
97. IMS Productions, LLC
98. Inn at Ellis Square
99. J & M Displays
100. Jazz'd Tapas Bar
101. Joe's Homemade /Jozef's
102. Johnny Harris Banquet Center
103. Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace
104. Kehoe House
105. KeytoSavannah.com
106. Landmark Inn
107. Leopold's Ice Cream
108. Levy Jewelers
109. Liberty Mutual Legends of Golf
110. Lighthouse Pizza Inc.
111. Local 11ten Food & Wine
112. Louis C. Mathews Seafood
113. Love Living Today
114. Mansion on Forsyth Park
115. Marshall House
116. Massie Heritage Center
117. Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum
118. Monroe Marketing
119. Moon River Brewing Company
120. NeSmith Gift Advertising
121. North Beach Bar & Grill
122. nourish
123. Ocean Plaza Beach Resort
124. Oceanfront Cottage Rentals, LLC
125. Official Guides of Savannah
126. Oglethorpe Inn & Suites
127. Oglethorpe Tours
128. Old Savannah Tours
129. Old Town Trolley Tours
130. Olde Harbour Inn
131. Patrick's Uniforms
132. Paul Kennedy Catering
133. Plantation Carriage Co.
134. Planters Inn
135. Pocket Maps
136. Pooler Chamber of Commerce and Visitor's Bureau
137. Premier Events, LLC
138. Presidents' Quarters
139. ProActive Control Systems, Inc.
140. Randy Thompson Photography
141. Red Clover
142. Red Sand Solutions
143. Residence Inn by Marriott Savannah Downtown
144. Resort Services, Inc.
145. Richmond Hill City Center
146. Richmond Hill CVB
147. River Street Inn
148. River Street Market Place
149. River Street Riverboat Company
150. River Street Sweets
151. Roussell's Garden B&B
152. Ruth's Chris Steak House
153. Salt Table
154. Sapphire Grill Restaurant
155. Savannah Bed & Breakfast Inn
156. Savannah Book Festival
157. Savannah Candy Kitchen
158. Savannah Coca Cola
159. Savannah Coffee Roasters
160. Savannah Destination Management LLC
161. Savannah Distributing
162. Savannah Int'l Trade & Convention Center
163. Savannah Magazine
164. Savannah Marriott Riverfront
165. Savannah Morning News
166. Savannah Music Festival
167. Savannah Quarters Country Club
168. Savannah River House
169. Savannah River Street Pirates
170. Savannah Riverfront
171. Savannah Sand Gnats
172. Savannah Scene/Savannah.com
173. Savannah Special Events by Ranco
174. Savannah Technical College
175. Savannah Theatre
176. Savannah Yoga Center LLC
177. Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport
178. Savannahjobs.com
179. Savor Savannah Catering by SMG
180. Scott West
181. Sea and Breeze Hotel
182. See Savannah
183. Segway of Savannah
184. Service Experts Commercial HVAC/Refrigeration/Industrial
185. SHELTAIR Aviation
186. Sherrill & Company
187. Ships of the Sea Maritime Museum
188. Shrimp Factory
189. Siefker, Vicki
190. Signature Flight
191. Society for Human Resource Management
192. Southern Belle Vacation Rentals
193. Southern Elegance Staffing, Inc.
194. Southern Enviro Solutions, LLC
195. Spanky's River Street

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|---|--|---|
| 196. Spectrum<br>Printing/Marketing<br>Service          | 211. The Dresser Palmer<br>House                         | 233. U.S. Food Service                              |
| 197. Spring Hill Suites<br>Savannah Airport             | 212. The Gastonian                                       | 234. Uncle Bubba's Oyster<br>House                  |
| 198. Spring Hill Suites<br>Savannah I-95 South          | 213. The Kennickell Group                                | 235. United Community<br>Bank                       |
| 199. Springhill Suites<br>Savannah Historic<br>District | 214. The Lady & Sons                                     | 236. United Distributors,<br>Inc.                   |
| 200. SpringHill<br>Suites-Savannah<br>Midtown           | 215. The Landings at<br>Skidaway Island                  | 237. United Way - Coastal<br>Empire                 |
| 201. Stage Front<br>Presentation Systems                | 216. The Melting Pot                                     | 238. United WebWorks, Inc.                          |
| 202. Staybridge<br>Suites Historic<br>Savannah          | 217. The Mulberry Inn                                    | 239. USCB - Hospitality<br>Management Program       |
| 203. Sysco Jacksonville, Inc.                           | 218. The Olde Pink House<br>Restaurant                   | 240. Vashti<br>Boutique                             |
| 204. Tech Rentals,<br>Inc.                              | 219. The Pirates' House<br>Restaurant                    | 241. Vicki's on Tybee                               |
| 205. Telfair Museum of Art                              | 220. The Savannah<br>Bank                                | 242. Vic's on the River                             |
| 206. The Blood<br>Alliance                              | 221. The Savannah Walks<br>Inc.                          | 243. Virginia College                               |
| 207. The Bohemian Hotel<br>Savannah Riverfront          | 222. The Vacation Station                                | 244. Visit Savannah                                 |
| 208. The Coastal<br>Bank                                | 223. Thunderbird Inn                                     | 245. Visitors Television<br>Network                 |
| 209. The Crab<br>Shack                                  | 224. Tour Services, LLC                                  | 246. Westin Savannah<br>Harbor Golf Resort &<br>Spa |
| 210. The Creative Approach                              | 225. TownePlace Suites<br>Savannah Airport               | 247. Wet Willie's                                   |
|   | 226. TRAVELHOST of<br>Savannah & Hilton<br>Head/Beaufort | 248. Wild Wing Cafe                                 |
|   | 227. Trident Sustainability                              | 249. William D. Cannady,<br>CPA, PC                 |
|   | 228. Tubby's Thunderbolt                                 | 250. WJCL-TV; WTGS-TV                               |
|   | 229. Tybee Island Historical<br>Society                  | 251. Yates-Astro                                    |
|   | 230. Tybee Tourism Council                               | 252. Zeigler House Inn, LLC                         |
|   | 231. Tybee Vacation Rentals                              | 253. Zip Line Hilton Head                           |
|   | 232. Tybee Wedding Chapel                                |   |

## [Membership Luncheons](#)

Networking socials and membership luncheons were a top priority to many of our members as we prefer to do business with those whom we have relationships. Each month, about 120 business professionals gathered at membership luncheons to network and listen to speakers discuss a variety of issues related to the tourism and hospitality industry. Not only did these offer our members opportunities to network, but it also allows them opportunities to distribute promotional and marketing materials. The TLC scholarship fund proceeds were raised through raffle ticket sales at each membership luncheon. Our programs committee worked hard this year to provide relevant, quality programs for our membership. We gave our members the opportunity to showcase their culinary talents throughout the year in hosting these events. We hosted 10 luncheons this year and experienced some of the highest attendance rates ever.

## **Education & Workforce Development**

The TLC continued to build on educational opportunities internally and externally. We continued our intern program during 2012. Throughout the year, four students, one from *Georgia Southern University*, one from *Savannah Technical College*, and two from the *University of South Carolina – Beaufort*, experienced the tourism and hospitality industry while assisting with TLC events and programs.

This year, the TLC jointly hosted a hospitality job fair with *Savannah Technical College*. The Workforce Development committee began planning for additional events in 2013 to include a hospitality job fair and internship and mentoring opportunities for members.

Seminars and training opportunities that were presented to the membership this year included a dynamic customer service training provided by “Twitchy,” ServSafe food and beverage training, and two Front Line Training programs. The TLC’s free Mobility Front Line Training program, featuring *Savannah Technical College* instructors, was offered in order to educate industry employees on how to get around in Savannah, highlighting the ‘dot’ system. To date, more than 300 people have gone through the program.

The Tourism Leadership Council continued to partner with *Savannah Technical College*. We were involved on the advisory board of the school’s hospitality program and served as a liaison between the educational institutions and the industry.

Through the support of raffle monies raised at monthly luncheons and fundraisers throughout the year, the TLC was able to award scholarships to students pursuing higher education in culinary and hospitality careers. Scholarships were awarded at the Annual Tourism Awards & Scholarship Dinner in February to students enrolled in *University of South Carolina – Beaufort* and *Savannah Technical College*. To date we have awarded more than \$50,000 in scholarships.

The TLC’s [jobsinsavannah.com](http://jobsinsavannah.com) website enjoys a strong partnership with [Savannahjobs.com](http://Savannahjobs.com) for the management and promotion of the site. A great benefit to membership is the free job posting each month to assist in staff recruitment efforts. Also, TLC members have the option to post additional jobs at a significant discount through this website.

# **Fundraisers**

## **Fundraising Events**

The TLC's three fundraising events provide financial support for the programs and activities of the organization each year. They also provide exposure opportunities for businesses and a fun time for everyone involved! Not only did each fundraiser experience financial growth over last year, but we also focused heavily on improving the flow of the events and streamlining the volunteer process for our many volunteers.

On Thursday, February 16, 2012, the TLC hosted its 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Tourism Awards & Scholarship Dinner at the *Savannah International Trade and Convention Center*. Several awards were presented and scholarships were administered to five students pursuing careers in the hospitality industry at local area schools. The John P. Rousakis Community Champion Award went to Fran Harold of the Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace. The Herb & Franklin Traub Visionary Award was presented to Walter O. Evans. Kimberly Philips of City Market took home the TLC Member of the Year Award

The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual TLC Golf Tournament, sponsored by *Yates-Astro*, took place on Monday, May 14, 2012, at *Savannah Quarters Country Club*. *Belford's Savannah Seafood & Steaks*, *Doubletree Hotel Historic Savannah*, *Moon River Brewing Company*, *Paul Kennedy Catering*, *Savannah Coca-Cola*, *Southern Eagle*, *Spanky's River Street*, *The Olde Pink House*, and *Wild Wing Café* provided food and beverage. Through the support of team entries and sponsorships, the tournament was able to net more than \$22,000.

The TLC's 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Taste of Savannah® – In partnership with Savannah Waterfront, presented by *U.S. Foods*, took place on Thursday, November 8, 2012 in the *Savannah International Trade & Convention Center's* Exhibit Hall. Twenty restaurants and caterers served samples of their favorite menu items to more than 500 guests and competed for awards presented by *SYSCO*. The event net nearly \$50,000.

## **Savannah – A Southern Journey**

The Tourism Leadership Council produced the third edition of the *Savannah – A Southern Journey* coffee table book in 2011. The book is intended to serve as a guide to visitors and is placed in more than 5,500 guest rooms in the Savannah area. This year, the book became available for retail purchase at four local retail shops. The 2012 *Savannah – A Southern Journey* book was designed and developed throughout 2012. The book is hard cover and includes advertisements, editorial, and photography.

As an addition to the *Savannah – A Southern Journey* project we created and implemented the 2012 *Savannah – A Southern Journey* Concierge Dining Directory. This book is placed in the lobbies of more than 50 participating hotels in the Savannah area and includes menus and photography from Savannah restaurants.

## [Advocacy & Community Involvement](#)

Legislative and governmental affairs continued to be a focus and high priority this year. The TLC worked hard to create a greater awareness both to and for the industry in the legislative arena.

The TLC hosted a “Welcome Home” thank you reception for our Chatham County state legislators at *45 bistro*. We also provided forums where local government candidates spoke about their views regarding issues specifically affecting Savannah’s tourism industry.

The momentum of the TLC continues to grow strong by working together on projects with other community organizations. The TLC represented the tourism industry through involvement with the following organizations, committees, and task forces including:

- American Red Cross
- Blood Alliance
- City of Savannah Arena Advisory Committee
- Coastal Workforce Investment Board
- Cruise Ship Exploratory Committee
- Dress for Success
- Georgia Restaurant Association (GRA)
- Georgia Southern University Eagle Fund Delegate Committee
- Hospitality Advisory Committee at Savannah Tech & Woodville Tompkins
- Junior League of Savannah
- Paint the Town Red Committee – Savannah Red Cross
- Pooler Chamber of Commerce
- Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce
- Savannah Development & Renewal Authority (SDRA)
- Savannah Downtown Business Association
- Savannah Riverfront
- Savannah Tree Foundation
- South of DeRenne Association (SODA)
- Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC)
- Visit Savannah
- Westside Business Network

The TLC supported the community with various charitable donations and events throughout the year. The TLC hosted two blood drives with the *Blood Alliance* and the *American Red Cross*. The TLC Community Happenings email blast continued to promote charity events taking place in Savannah. The TLC Good Samaritan Fund paid out \$250 to assist individual TLC members in need this year.

## 2012 TLC HIGHLIGHTS – MONTH BY MONTH

### January

- Participated in Savannah Chatham Day in Atlanta – bronze sponsorship
- Participated in Tourism Day in Atlanta
- Hospitality Job Fair hosted with Savannah Technical College
- Training – ServSafe Course “Managers Certification Course”
- Membership Luncheon – *Hilton Savannah DeSoto* – Mayor Edna Jackson talked about her commitment to tourism.

### February

- 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Tourism Awards & Scholarship Dinner – *Savannah International Trade & Convention Center* – The event net nearly \$12,000.
- Membership Social/SASJ Book Launch Party – *Westin Savannah Harbor Golf Resort & Spa*
- Training – ServSafe Course – “Employee Food Safety Training Course”

### March

- Membership Luncheon – *Savannah River Queen* served a Civil War inspired lunch while Maria Sastre, Chief Operating Officer of Global Affairs for Signature Flight Support, shared her unique perspective on the cruise industry from her previous role as a former cruise ship industry executive.

### April

- Membership Luncheon – *Roundhouse Railroad Museum* – Emra Smith presented “PRIDE building – The Cornerstone for Great Service.”
- Membership Social– *Ruth’s Chris Steak House*
- Training –Frontline Mobility Training – *The Mulberry Inn*

### May

- 14<sup>th</sup> Annual TLC Golf Tournament – *Savannah Quarters Country Club* – The event net \$22,500.
- Membership Luncheon – *Tybee Wedding Chapel* – Melissa Yao Hille with Visit Savannah presented “The Perfect Proposal: Marketing Savannah to Brides and Grooms.”
- Membership Social – *45 bistro* – Welcome home reception given for State legislators returning from Atlanta.
- Training –Tourism Service and Sales Mastery Training, “Twitchy”
- The Blood Alliance Blood Drive at AVIA

### June

- Membership Luncheon – *Savannah Marriott* – Brett Bell with the City of Savannah presented marketing ideas.
- Membership Social – *Massie Heritage Center*

### July

- Membership Luncheon – *Richmond Hill City Center* – Chris Sheppard with the Richmond Hill Convention and Visitor’s Bureau presented, “Get the Scoop on Savannah’s Own Backyard: Richmond Hill.”

### August

- TLC Board volunteer day with *Savannah Tree Foundation*
- Membership Luncheon – *AVIA* – Joe Marinelli with Visit Savannah presented, “The State of Tourism in Savannah.”
- Membership Social – *Uncle Bubba’s Seafood and Oyster House*
- Training – Bar Card Training by Jim Deal with *ProActive Control Systems, Inc.*

### September

- Participated in Governor’s Conference on Tourism in Atlanta, GA
- Membership Luncheon – *Holiday Inn & Suites Pooler* – US Airways, Steve Limberg presented, “Current State of the Airlines.”
- Membership Social – *Churchill’s Pub & Restaurant*
- Training – Sarah Lamar with Hunter Maclean presented, “Social Media: What Employers Need to Know.”

### October

- Membership Luncheon – *Bryson Hall* – Chatham County Commission candidates forum
- Training – Frontline Mobility Training at *The Mulberry Inn*



#### November

- 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Taste of Savannah® – *Savannah International Trade & Convention Center* – more than 500 attendees and the event net nearly \$50,000
- Membership Luncheon – *Hampton Inn & Suites - Midtown* – Yelp's Kathleen McNeill presented on the benefits of managing your online presence .

#### December

- Membership holiday reception with *Visit Savannah* and *Savannah Riverfront* – *Vic's On the River* proceeds contributed to *America's Second Harvest*
- TLC Board Retreat – *The Westin Savannah Harbor Golf Resort & Spa*