

BUSINESS BUILDING

Buckhead, Sandy Springs, Vinings groups map out 2010 goals

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Finding creative ways to maintain and even grow businesses in the second challenging winter of a down economy is the stuff of local business groups' finest hours.

"The Vinings Business Association is all about business," said its 2010 president, Bill Borden, senior loan officer at Kennesaw-based Checkpoint Mortgage, a certified auctioneer and Georgia's first Iditarod Sled Dog Race finisher. "With this new decade, VBA will continue to provide first Tuesday lunch speakers that help members grow their businesses and increase sales."

The organization that keeps reinventing itself — from its formation in 2006, disbanding in 2007 and reformation the following year — is also adding new features for 2010.

"The addition of our new Executives' Brunch once a month allows for small group interaction and exchange of ideas," Borden said. "We recognize that one line of thinking will not work for every line of business; therefore the new year will bring a retail section and a restaurant group to the VBA's membership options."

Besides business-friendly programs and networking events, the organization is also becoming more user-friendly, Borden said.



Staff / Nathan Self
Bill Borden, 2010 president of the Vinings Business Association.

"VBA's newly redesigned Web site, ViningsBusiness.com, allows our members to have a narrative webpage listing complete with hyperlinks, photos and maps," he said. "This will allow for a strong Web presence to promote the Vinings way of business life."

Buckhead Business Association Executive Director Sharon Silva said the association will continue its weekly Thursday morning breakfast meetings, quarterly luncheons and A Taste of Buckhead Business Expo in the spring.

"[Our] focus will be on increased corporate partnerships and value-added membership benefits to promote business opportunities for our members and the community," she said. "The lessons of the last decade, hard learned, will help us turn the corner in 2010 and beyond."

Debbie Goldman, 2010 president of the Sandy Springs/Perimeter Chamber of Commerce, said her group also anticipates the return of a local networking event.

"The second annual Business Expo is in March," she said. "It was very successful [last year]. We're looking forward to that again."

However, the organization, which recently moved to new offices at 7000 Central Pkwy., is looking beyond its borders as it continues the global and educational initiatives it began in 2009.

"We think this is a good long-term solution for everyone," Ms. Goldman said. "If you don't think outside the box, you get left behind."