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SUPPORT SYSTEM

BBA expands networking option at A Taste of Buckhead event

By **Cathy Johnson**

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Staff / Nathan Self

From left, Brenda Horne, co-chair of A Taste of Buckhead Business Expo and CEO of Community Health Charities of Georgia; Sharon Silva, executive director of the Buckhead Business Association; and Catherine Cattles, co-chair of the event and vice president of Georgian Bank in Buckhead; look out over the ballroom of the Grand Hyatt Buckhead in anticipation of Thursday's event.



Planners of the fifth annual A Taste of Buckhead Business Expo — a showcase of Buckhead's business leaders, dining establishments and business resources — shifted their focus this year to better meet the challenges of the changing economy.

"We added 'expo' to the title because we wanted people to know it's not just a social event. It's for networking and our main idea is to create a way for people and businesses in

Buckhead to connect," said Brenda Horne, co-chair and CEO of Community Health Charities of Georgia.

The expo will feature exhibits by 48 Buckhead businesses and food and drink samples from 18 Buckhead restaurants.

"Our target audience is to those who have a business, work for a business or want to do business with executives in Buckhead," said Ms. Horne, who has been a member of the business association for two years and views this event as a way for her to "immediately get involved with Buckhead's business community."

"Because of the economy we wanted to set reasonable goals," said Catherine Cattle, co-chair for the second year in a row and a vice president for Georgian Bank in Buckhead. "We want to net \$15,000. This is what the event brought in last year."

All proceeds go to the association's operating budget and contribute to educational outreaches or supplement funds to help Atlanta's homeless population, she said.

"We held our breath after setting financial goals because we knew money was tight this year," said Ms. Cattle. "But we're sold out of space for vendors. We're expecting more than 1,000 to attend, about the same as last year."

Sharon Silva, executive director of the business association added, "After five years, this has become our signature event."

She said the first year the event was held in the atrium walkway at Phipps Plaza.

"It's come a long way in terms of vendor participation and offerings to participants," Ms. Silva said.

If you go

- o **What:** A Taste of Buckhead Business Expo
- o **When:** Registration and cocktails 5:30 to 6 p.m., event 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., Thursday
- o **Where:** Grand Hyatt Buckhead, 3300 Peachtree Road
- o **Cost:** \$10; Complimentary tastings. Cash bar. Attendees must be 18 or older.
- o **Information:** (404) 467-7607 or visit [www. buckheadbusiness.org](http://www.buckheadbusiness.org)