

## **Script Excerpt**

Awards Presented at the Gwinnett Chamber 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner

**Jim Maran, Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce President and CEO:**

### **Ambassador of the Year Award**

The first award to be presented this evening will be the Chambers Volunteer Ambassador of the Year Award, an individual who best exemplifies outstanding and dedicated service to this Chamber.

This professional lady has lived in Gwinnett County since 1976, is a graduate of Parkview High School and graduated from Georgia State University with a concentration in Accounting. After a decade with a prestigious accounting firm, she opened her own practice in 1996. She also owns a firm that manages home-owner associations, has served as a treasurer for the PTA of her children's school and has served five years as the Board President for her home-owner's association.

Laurie McClain has served as a Gwinnett Chamber Volunteer Ambassador for the past four years. You only have to watch Laurie to understand her commitment, dedication and passion to our Chamber and our members. She goes the extra mile in connecting members with members, and is very creative with marketing ideas. She answers both of her cell phones day and night, and does not recognize the words CAN'T and NO.

Tonight we recognize her passion and commitment to our 2007 Ambassador of the year.

Laurie McClain

### **Public Service Award #1**

We'll now transition into a very special segment of our evening, the presentation of our Public Service Awards. These awards are presented to individuals who have made profound contributions to Gwinnett, Metro Atlanta and Georgia. Their vision and accomplishments have improved the quality of our lives throughout the entire community.

These are hometown heroes and these are their stories...

Our first Public Service Award recognizes the accomplishments and contributions of a gentleman who is a true American success story and one of today's most influential Gwinnettians

Miguel Candelaria began his career in the restaurant business in his hometown of El Paso, Texas, before switching to the construction industry and moving to Houston and then Miami. Lured to Atlanta by the business opportunities of the 1996 Olympics, Miguel started his own business where his company worked on the AT&T Pavilion among other significant projects. Since then, his business has boomed, as has Miguel's many personal accomplishments.

He has been named Outstanding Georgia Citizen, Texas Sub-contractors Association Sub-contractor of the Year, and has been the recipient of the Governor's Endurance Award.

Miguel has served as Chairman of the Hispanic Contractors Association of Georgia, on the boards of the Mexican Center of Georgia, the Mexican-American Business Chamber, and the Hispanic-American Economic Development Organization of Georgia. He is also the founder and board member of the Southeastern Asian-American Construction Association.

Miguel has been very instrumental in the Gwinnett Chamber's Hispanic business recruitment programs.

And, is proudly known throughout the community as a big family man, an agent of positive change and community supporter.

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome our first Public Service Award Winner...

President and CEO, M-A&O Construction  
Miguel Candelaria

## **Public Service Award #2**

Our second public service award goes to a veteran law enforcement officer with more than 30 years of experience.

Sheriff Butch Conway has served in almost every capacity of police work and has achieved many noteworthy accomplishments during his three terms as sheriff, including the \$200 million dollar expansion of the county jail, and his vigilance at going after people involved in dog fighting by offering a \$10,000 dollar award, of his personal money, to those who turn in dog fighters in Gwinnett.

Although his dedication to law enforcement is highly visible, what is often not noticed is his tireless dedication to the community. He currently serves on the Executive Board and the Anti Graffiti Coalition of Gwinnett Clean and Beautiful, on the Board of Gwinnett Neighborhood Leadership, and on the Georgia Sheriff's Association Legislative Committee. He was also a founding director of the Girls Club of Gwinnett.

However, it's his dedication to charities that's an outstanding attribute.

In 2007, he jumped on his Harley and rode from Prudoe Bay, Alaska to Key West, Florida dodging moose, grizzly bears, flying rocks from the frozen tundra and thunderstorms as his way of raising money for the Special Olympic Athletes.

It's efforts, like mentioned above, that have made the Gwinnett Sheriff's Department the top fund raising agency for the state of Georgia every year, for the past five years, for the Special Olympics.

Additionally, another cause that has his passion involves animals. He gives most of the credit to his wife, Judge Carla Brown, for driving this desire to help animals. Between the two of them – and he would say mostly Carla – they have rescued too many animals to count.

A true lifesaver in every sense of the word, ladies and gentlemen, let's welcome our second Public Service Award winner.

Gwinnett County Sheriff  
Butch Conway

## **Public Service Award #3**

Our third Public Service Award goes to a woman whose many contributions takes place behind the scenes and who, along with her husband, make up one of Gwinnett's most generous and dedicated couples.

In 2006, when the Hi-Hope Service Center needed to enhance its annual gala and raise critical funds to accomplish its mission of helping adults with developmental disabilities, they knew who to call.

Karen Hill and her husband, Steve, orchestrated a record-setting gala that set the standard for future fundraisers. This type of success and dedication to high standards can be seen throughout all of her activities.

The organization's' to which she is devoted and the subsequent lives she has touched are a "who's who" of some of the most prominent organizations in Georgia: the Gwinnett Medical Center Foundation, the American Cancer Society, the Impact Group, the Community Foundation of Northeast Georgia, the Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center, the Hudgens Center for the Arts, the High Museum of Art, the Georgia Aquarium, Georgia Gwinnett College, Gwinnett Clean and Beautiful, the March of Dimes and many more.

As Steve related to us, Karen's passions in life are children and charities. Thanks to Karen's contributions, the future of thousands of children across Georgia is much brighter and full of hope.

Ladies and Gentlemen, please welcome our third Public Service Award winner...

Karen C. Hill

#### **Public Service Award #4**

Our fourth Public Service Award goes to a man whose talents and commitment can be seen in business, community affairs, charities and, excitingly, even in the world of entertainment.

Herman Pennamon, Jr. is the community relations manager for Georgia Power where he has held numerous positions including customer service manager, state lobbyist, economic development project manager and equal employment opportunity manager, just to name a few of his career activities.

A graduate of Georgia State University, Herman is engaged with numerous civic and community boards including past chair for the Gwinnett March of Dimes Walk America, the Gwinnett Red Cross Heroes Campaign, the YMCA Program Committee, and the Foster Children's Foundation Board.

And when he's not building relationships for Georgia Power or helping to build a better Gwinnett, Herman's talents direct him to writing and recording music.

In fact, his most recent CD is entitled "Life" and we in Gwinnett have certainly been blessed with the "life" of our fifth public service award winner...

Herman Pennamon Jr. of Georgia Power

#### **Public Service Award #5**

Our fifth Public Service Award goes to our second power couple of the evening who believe in life's simple things: Love, God, Family and Community.

“That’s what life is all about,” said Sandra and Clyde Strickland in a recent interview. “Giving of ourselves and our money is an extension of our love for the community. We’ve always saved a portion of what we’ve earned, given to God and then given to the community.”

These values are highly visible in the Strickland’s recent \$1 million gift to Gwinnett Medical Center Foundation. As they said: “a gift from the heart, for the heart,” because it will help expand cardiovascular services in Gwinnett County.

Entrepreneurs, teammates, partners and soul mates, Clyde and Sandra both grew up in North Carolina before moving to Georgia in 1965.

On January 13th, 1972, Clyde and Sandra ventured out to build a company — Metro Waterproofing. Their strategy was to reach for greatness and set high goals. Metro Waterproofing started with only the essentials - a \$100 ladder and \$1,400 pick-up truck.

Today, their company has transformed into the largest waterproofing company in the Southeast. From there, they have dedicated much of their financial resources toward a number of charitable causes.

As Sandra likes to say, “Life is not about how much we do, but about how much love we put into to it.”

For more than 40 years, Clyde and Sandra have expressed both love and commitment into both business and charitable endeavors and we are the fortunate recipients. Please join me in congratulating our fifth Public Service Award winners ...

Clyde and Sandra Strickland

### **Public Service Award #6 and #7**

The last two Public Service Awards are being presented together for two great friends. One is a country lawyer whose work can be seen on the roads we travel, the parks and green spaces in which we play, the new baseball stadium to be built and the water we drink. The other is to a man whose trucks and facilities span several states, makes America beautiful, keeps our lawns green and shrubs trimmed and is known to many as Dr. Dirt.

Would Richard Chandler of Chandler, Britt, Jay & Beck, LLC. and Dr. William Edward Russell of Russell Landscaping Group please join me on stage.

Rick Chandler has been practicing law since graduating from UGA University Law School in 1973 and representing the Georgia Department of Transportation, Gwinnett County, and property owners in real estate for over 34 years. Over this span of time, he has been involved in major road projects, such as, the widening of I-85, Highway 316, and Sugarloaf Parkway. He has helped acquire green space and park land for locations like Pinckneyville Park, Settles Bridge Park, Bogan Park and the expansion of George Pierce Park.

Rick was also engaged in the land acquisition for the F. Wayne Hill Water Resource Center and the 20 mile pipeline from the plant to the river.

Over the years, he has contributed greatly to the Atlanta Regional Commission, the Boy Scouts of Northeast Georgia, Buford Rotary, Hi-Hope Service Center and the Buford Kiwanis.

He is past Chair of the Gwinnett Chamber and past President of the 1818 Club. He currently is a member of the Community Foundation of Northeast Georgia, Trustee for the Georgia Gwinnett

College Foundation, seated on the Executive Board of the Gwinnett Chamber and serves as board member and counsel for the Development Authority of Gwinnett County. In 2008, he was selected, by his peers, for inclusion into the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of the Best Lawyers in America.

As a good friend said, Rick is one of the best statesmen he knows and much more than just a lawyer to his clients...he's a mentor and one of the most genuine people you'll ever meet.

And, now Bill Russell. Don't let that Shelbyville, Tennessee accent, his love for Tennessee Walking Horses, his bright red lined custom tailored suits and down-home charm fool you.

Dr. William Edward Russell has successfully used his PhD in Agricultural Chemistry from Ohio State University to create and build Russell Landscape Group into one of the most successful landscaping companies in the United States, making Bill a legendary entrepreneurial success story from Gwinnett County.

He served in the five hundred and seventy seventh Combat Engineer Battalion, South Vietnam.

The list of charities and boards Bill has served on is longer than his dissertation entitled "Growth Characteristics, Herbicidal Control, and C-14 Radioactive Translocation, Properties in Jerusalem Artichoke Helianthus Tuberosus."

However, over the years, Bill has taken the same enthusiasm he has for his businesses and his other "odd job"... auctioneering... and directed that talent to remarkable use in community activities, as varied, as soccer coach, Board member on the Council for Quality Growth, Past President of The Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce, a senior member of the Chamber's Executive Board, Keystone Society Member and Board of Directors of the Gwinnett Hospital Foundation, Board of Directors-Georgian Bank, and Member of the Republican National Committee. He has also authored several professional journal publications in his field of study.

He has dedicated hours and years of his auctioneering skills raising funds for charities and other community programs—over \$10 million dollars worth!

His work ethics and premier reputation have paid off.... just to mention a few of his accomplishments: he was named the 2003 Howard Allen Business of the Year Award by Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful, received the 2003 Pioneer Life Achievement Man of the Year Award from the Metro Atlanta-Landscape and Turf Association, and has been honored for four straight years in Gwinnett's Who's Who in Business by Gwinnett Magazine.

Aside from all the accolades of Bill's professional and community accomplishments, it may be his commitment to his family and the Jackson Jinright Foundation that stands out the most. We have seen in Bill, a man that is tireless in his pursuit of excellence, a man of incredible character and faith, and, an inspiration to all of us.

Tonight we recognize these two close friends that have been a catalyst for positive change and have helped steer our community to higher levels of achievement.

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome our final two public service award winners.....

Rick Chandler  
Chandler, Britt, Jay and Beck

and

Bill Russell - Dr. Dirt  
Russell Landscape Group

## **Legacy Award**

Our next award is entitled the Legacy Award. This special award is presented by the Gwinnett Chamber to honor the memory and legacy of an individual who has made a significant difference in the history and progress of Gwinnett County.

Bobby J. Sikes, a Lawrenceville resident since 1945, owned and operated Bobby Sikes Oldsmobile, Pontiac, and Buick dealership for 28 years. He was a veteran of the U.S. Navy. He was married to Faye Lovin Sikes for 47 years. They raised two children, Bobby, Jr., a renowned local artist, and Susan Sikes Davis, who both own and operate successful businesses on the Historic Downtown Square in Lawrenceville. There are three grandchildren.

Bobby served 14 years on the Lawrenceville City Council before being elected Mayor in 2002 and serving until his death in 2006.

His influence on Lawrenceville, its growth and the prominent revitalization of the town center are significant components of his legacy. Bobby played an important role in the creation of the City's recreation department, acquiring Rhodes Jordan Park, Park West and Bartow Jenkins Parks, the design of the city's sidewalk system, the Aurora Theatre, the downtown parking deck and the success of Lawrenceville's Tourism & Trade Association.

Bobby was also an active member of Hebron Baptist Church and served on the Gwinnett County Board of Health.

His family shared that he had a love for people from all walks of life...was a friend to both the rich and the poor and a quiet philanthropist.

These accomplishments are a true legacy that will be recognized by generations to come.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am pleased to present the 2008 Legacy Award for Bobby J. Sikes, to Susan Sikes Davis and Bobby Sikes, Jr.

## **D. Scott Hudgens Humanitarian Award**

And now we are honored to present the D. Scott Hudgens Humanitarian Award. By honoring Scott as a respected developer and philanthropist who unselfishly gave of his time and talents to ensure that many others, especially those with limited means, would benefit from his treasure, this award recognizes those that exemplify his commitment to a humanitarian society.

This year, we are please to present the D. Scott Hudgens Humanitarian Award to Annandale of Suwanee.

The mission of Annandale at Suwanee is to perpetuate a village community to provide progressive life assistance to adults with developmental disabilities so that they may maximize their abilities and maintain their independence in the least restrictive environment.

Annandale at Suwanee is also known as Annandale Village and is a private, non-profit organization founded in 1969 by Dr. and Mrs. Maxwell Berry. They dreamed of a place where their daughter with developmental disabilities could grow and develop to her maximum potential while enjoying the best life possible. After searching the world over, they decided that a "village" approach would best meet these needs.

Located on more than fifty beautifully-wooded acres, Annandale offers a comprehensive range of residential and non-residential programs and services to help both men and women lead lives that reflect quality, value, self-worth and achievement.

In 2002, Annandale Village opened the Laura Grier Center for Special Care which contains the Laura Grier house and the D. Scott Hudgens Center for Skilled Nursing. The center provides all of the services of a traditional nursing home, while specializing in the special needs of adults with developmental disabilities or traumatic brain injury.

Ladies and gentleman, Annandale Village is truly a home-grown success story that has touched the lives of thousands in Gwinnett. Let's welcome Annandale's Board President Rob Ponder to the stage to receive the award...

### **Citizen of the Year Award**

The final award this evening is for Citizen of the Year.

This man became involved in healthcare in 1989, when he was asked to serve on the Hospital Authority of Gwinnett County. By 1993, he had joined the Gwinnett Hospital System Board and, the Health System Board. This past December, he ended his term as Chairman and is currently a Board member.

Wayne Sikes has been named Small Business Person of the Year by the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce and was presented the Distinguished Service Award by the Georgia Hospital Association "for significant contributions in improving health care for the people of Georgia".

A native of Atlanta, Wayne graduated in 1963 from Georgia Tech, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Management. After a stint in the Air force as an aero-med-ic, he joined General Motors as a Methods Engineer and then moved to Lockheed Aircraft Corporation's Engineering Department and later to the Finance Division.

In 1970, Wayne and his wife Beth, a teacher, opened a childcare center in Snellville. Thirty years later, the couple owned a chain of 10 schools, 24 kindergartens and a large summer camp, which they sold in 1999.

Wayne has served as a city council member in his hometown, president of the Rotary Club of Gwinnett County, on the Board of the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce and on the Board of the First Bank of the South. Wayne is an active outdoor enthusiast and enjoys bird hunting.

Wayne and his wife reside in Snellville and have three grown children.

Please join me in honoring the outstanding accomplishments of our Citizen of the Year....

Wayne Sikes  
Gwinnett Medical Center  
Congratulations to all of tonight's award winners.

### **For more information on the Annual Dinner, contact:**

Alicia Krogh, Senior Manager of Executive Programs  
Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce  
Phone: 770-232-8809  
alicia@gwinnettchamber.org