



## Community banker

**O**K, first off, it wasn't lunch. It was breakfast, but not just any breakfast at just any place. I met Crawford, who is one of Buckhead's most notable executives and leaders, at one of Atlanta's most notable spots for deals being finalized, relationships being nurtured, and policy being born.

If the walls at the White House Restaurant could talk, its tales of business and political deals might rival any of those coming from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Crawford has been in banking for more than 20 years, serving as president of The Buckhead Bank, Milton National Bank and Riverside Bank of Buckhead. He started his banking career in New York with Bankers Trust Company. After coming to Atlanta, he was with Bank South for 10 years where he held various management positions in retail, commercial and private banking.

In 1996, he started The Buckhead

**The VIP:** Charlie Crawford  
Chairman, President, CEO  
Private Bank of Buckhead

**The Restaurant:**  
White House Restaurant



Bank as a division of Milton National Bank. Following its sale, he started Riverside Bank of Buckhead in 2001. He later organized Private Bank of Buckhead and its holding company, Private Bancshares, Inc.; the bank opened its doors to the public on December 11, 2006 with nine employees.

"I wanted to start the bank as a challenge," he says. "I needed something new, something with an entrepreneurial spirit. This is a highly regulated business but we give our people more leeway to operate than a big corporate bank. We empower them to use their common sense."

His vision for the bank? "The average life span of a startup bank is six years,"

he says. "We have a rolling five-year plan, and we understand what it takes to start a business. Ninety-six percent of all banks are well-capitalized, but the ones that aren't are the ones that generate all the bad press."

Crawford is on the board of the Georgia Tennis Foundation; the city of Atlanta Board of Ethics; the Cherokee Town and Country Club; and just concluded his term as the 57<sup>th</sup> president of The Rotary Club of Buckhead. **B**

-Tim Darnell

### About the restaurant

The White House Restaurant (motto: Presidential Food Service) opened in 1948 near the original Buckhead triangle. Land on which the restaurant was located was given by the Woodruff Foundation to the city for a park, which led the restaurant to move to its current location.

Demos Galakdiatis began working at the restaurant in 1968, and bought it outright two years later. Today, the White House is owned by Tasso Costarides, who, only a few months ago, decided the restaurant needed to start accepting credit cards.



#### White House Restaurant

3172 Peachtree Road, NE  
Atlanta, GA 30305  
404/237-7601

Monday-Saturday 6 am-3 pm  
Sunday 8am-3pm