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Buckhead adopts Bermuda as 'sister community'

Buckhead Coalition members visit island nation

By staff reports



Special photo

The Buckhead-Bermuda trade mission group included, from left, Garth Peters, the Buckhead Coalition's director of community development; Sam Freedman, chairman of AFCO Realty; Charlie Crawford, chairman, president and CEO of the Private Bank of Buckhead; Alana Shepherd, the Shepherd Center's co-founder and board secretary; Tim Lowe, CEO of Lowe Engineers; Derrick Burgess, deputy premier of Bermuda; and J. Michael Robison, chairman and CEO of Lanier Parking Holdings.

Members of the Buckhead Coalition, the chamber-of-commerce-type nonprofit in Atlanta's affluent suburb, last week spent three days in Bermuda to arrange a "sister community" agreement with the Atlantic Ocean island and the coalition's 45-neighborhood community. Bermuda is 21 square miles with a population of 65,000, and Buckhead is 28 square miles with 76,000 residents.

A delegation from the coalition visited the deputy premier in Hamilton, Bermuda's capital city, during its trade mission visit May 26 through 28, to exchange formal proclamations. The group included Alana Shepherd, the Shepherd Center's board secretary and co-founder; and Sam Friedman, chairman of AFCO Realty; both members of the coalition's chairman's council; Tim Lowe, chief executive officer of Lowe Engineers and the coalition vice president; Charlie Crawford, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Private Bank of Buckhead and the coalition treasurer; and Michael Robison, chairman and chief executive officer of Lanier Holdings and the coalition director.

The members were led by Garth Peters, the coalition's director of development (formerly with Bermuda's Department of Tourism). In Hamilton, they met with professional counterparts and visited with the mayor, Charles Gosling, to deliver a letter of greetings from coalition President Sam Massell, a former mayor of Atlanta.

The familiarization trip was aboard the inaugural flight of AirTran Airways' new daily nonstop service connecting Atlanta and Hamilton.

"This new travel service is of real economic value to both cities, and we plan to nurture our relationship with this delightful island. We both are major tourist destinations, and have fine hotels and restaurants, excellent shopping, and a common attitude of good

will," Massell said.

At a later date, arrangements will be made for a British contingency to visit Buckhead and tour its amenities, in the hopes that it will generate economic development between residents of both communities.