We really "TIED" one on.

It was the pleasing networking environment, SC-grown gourmet feast and the crème de la crème of conservation honorees that made the 2011 Green Tie Award Luncheon a great success. Now affectionately referred to as the "GTL", our annual 'green' power luncheon attracted over 400 guests, 40 state Senators and Representatives and more than 70 corporate sponsors.

The GTL has become the premiere venue for business leaders to converse with their elected leaders about the value of promoting both conservation and economic opportunity.

The Green Tie Awards are presented to South Carolinians who have distinguished themselves in conservation leadership and advocacy, and we thank all our honorees whose lives of service have enriched the quality of life in our state.

CVSC is truly grateful for the immense generosity of our In-Kind sponsors and our Volunteers, without whom GTL would not be possible. We have already begun planning to make the 2012 luncheon another stellar event. For more information about becoming a Green Tie Luncheon Sponsor, please contact Suzi Sale, CVSC Development Director or visit www.cvsc.org/greentie/.

Let's Do It Again!

Save The Date:
Wednesday, September 19, 2012.

Please let us know if you would like to be a GTL 2012 corporate sponsor.

Green Tie Award™ LUNCHEON

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Recycling grows Jobs

Recycling works. It's a $52 million opportunity for this state, annually. The companies we want to move here, as well as tourists and patrons of restaurants and bars, expect and appreciate recycling. And most importantly, recycling reduces the more than 800 million pounds of trash that we currently bury in landfills each year.

"There is significant potential for the recycling industry to give South Carolina an economic boost," says Elizabeth Garrison, owner of Ever-Green Recycling in Greenville. "By diverting material that is being landfilled today to recycling markets, we can create jobs and increase state revenue. Entrepreneurs and businesses will continue to be motivated by recycling opportunities."

Because recycling is good for both South Carolina's business and the environment, the Alcoholic Beverage Container (ABC) Recycling bill is a priority of the 2012 Common Agenda supported by Conservation Voters and forty organizations across the state.

Businesses welcome recycling. According to Scott Fleming, owner of Group Therapy in Columbia, "Aside from the initial investment in a few recycling bins and the training of staff, we have not experienced any additional costs related to our recycling program. In fact, we have seen a decrease in the amount of trash we incur and the resulting garbage pickup costs. I support S461 and know firsthand that recycling programs for bars and restaurants are not only possible, but can be very successful."

The ABC Recycling bill would provide a sustainable stream of plastic, glass, corrugated cardboard and aluminum that would quickly attract more processors and manufacturers to the state. Implementing recycling plans in hotels, restaurants and bars could grow South Carolina's recycling rate from a low of 22% to within reach of the state's 35% goal.

"We at Strategic Materials remain keenly interested in the progress and eventual passage of the South Carolina ABC Recycling Bill. Passage of this legislation has multiple benefits which include: keeping valuable commodities out of the state's landfills, encouraging the state's recycling businesses to expand and for new ones to establish, and creating much-needed jobs for South Carolinians."

-Dave Hudson, Vice-President of Strategic Materials

The cost for businesses is comparable to what they now spend to send waste to landfills and the benefits are proven. According to a Clemson study, in 2009, the recycling industry created 1,354 new jobs and had an economic impact of $6.5 billion.

Senator Ray Cleary (R/Georgetown) modeled the bill after a successful program in North Carolina. S461 passed the Senate last year in an overwhelmingly favorable 31-9 vote and is now in the House Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee. Representative David Hiott (R/Pickens) is championing the bill and chairs the Subcommittee that will schedule a hearing in the next few weeks.

Get Involved!

When businesses recycle, the expenses they incur paying haulers to take their waste to landfills decrease. When South Carolina businesses recycle, everyone wins. Which side of the bin are you on?

Ask your State Representative to support S.461 and create new jobs. You can find his/her contact info at http://www.scstatehouse.gov/legislatorssearch.php)

We encourage restaurant and bar owners/managers to visit our website at www.cvsc.org/recyclingworks and sign the pledge showing your support for responsible recycling.

Green Schools Coming to Columbia

Palmetto Green Schools, a project of the CVSC Education Fund, is partnering with the University of South Carolina's Environment and Sustainability Department, and the US Green Building Council-SC Chapter, to offer a Green Schools Summit on May 2nd. The day-long public event will feature sessions and keynotes on "net zero" energy use, best energy conservation practices, eye-popping testimonials, and potential energy policies and incentives for schools. Visit www.palmettogreenschools.com for more information or contact Ed Falco, CVSC Program Director, or his new assistant, Jenni Asman.

Winter ■ 2012

We Thank our 2011 Donors

Thank you for your contributions to CVSC, CVSC Education Fund, and CVSC PAC. Please let us know if you have not been properly acknowledged so we can correct our records.

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A Letter from the Executive Director

Conservation is South Carolina's Business

The kingfisher flew over the iconic river that rises in the swamps and sandhills of the Midlands and empties 206 miles later into the Atlantic. The Edisto is "our" river, the longest, completely undammed blackwater river in North America.

It was a beautiful New Year's Eve, yet the noise of the Canadys coal plant reminded me that the waters on which we floated are polluted with mercury. South Carolina's coal plants account for 69 percent of the atmospheric mercury released in the state. All of our blackwater rivers carry warnings for mercury contaminated fish.

As I dipped my paddle in the current, I pondered the cost of bad business to our environment and our health. I was reminded of the Governor's chilling statements about the need to ease regulations to favor business.

Three days before Christmas, the Environmental Protection Agency issued a sweeping new air-pollution rule that regulators say will reduce toxic mercury pollution. As a result, some of our older coal plants are likely to be closed rather than retro-fitted with expensive pollution-control equipment to meet the new rule.

Now or later, there is a cost to how we do business. Is cheap power generated without the best available technologies worth the price we pay down the road in lifelong illnesses, medical bills and pollution of the places and rivers we cherish?

In 1972, South Carolina passed the Pollution Control Act. This enabling legislation authorized DHEC to limit pollution in all of the "waters of the state." Last year, the SC Supreme Court agreed with two long expressed contentions of conservationists: that DHEC has a responsibility for permitting what happens to Carolina Bays and that citizens have a right to defend their property against pollution.

Business lobbyists are pushing legislation to disarm the historic Pollution Control Act. At stake is the ability of citizens to contest private deals that allow arsenic to leak from coal ash ponds into our rivers. At issue is whether citizens can contest dredging the Savannah without Georgia having a DHEC permit for the pollution that will ensue.

Places like the Edisto have more than intrinsic value. They also anchor much of South Carolina's business. Tourism, farming and forestry and outdoor recreation make up about one-third of our economy.

The Edisto reminded me why I work for Conservation Voters. We are the conservation community's watchdog. We cannot let the Governor or the General Assembly undo hard-won environmental protections. Conservation is truly South Carolina's business and 2012 will be a year for vigilance.

Ann Timberlake is Executive Director of Conservation Voters.
Email her at ann@cvsc.org.