

# Building Small Business

The Mobile Area Chamber's small business development department uses this forum to help your business become more successful.

If you have a question, contact **Danette Richards**, the Chamber's director of small business development, at 431-8652, [drichards@mobilechamber.com](mailto:drichards@mobilechamber.com), or visit [www.mobilechamber.com/smallbusiness](http://www.mobilechamber.com/smallbusiness).

**Q** With the rising price of gas, is there a way to help employees with their transportation costs?

**A** Yes — the CommuteSmart Mobile program can help. Recently launched by the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission as a solution to growing traffic congestion and as an alternative to single, occupied vehicle traffic, the program offers commuters free, on-line ride-matching, carpool services, an Emergency Ride Home program and more.

**Encourage Employee Carpooling**  
Carpooling saves money — as much as 50 percent on commuting costs, reduces wear and tear on vehicles, reduces pollution, often mitigates stress levels and can lower insurance costs. And it isn't only for employees of the same company. For example, workers employed

by different retailers at the Bel Air Mall could carpool, or a group of small businesses located downtown could form a carpool.

Register your company with CommuteSmart's ridematching service to easily add or find workers to share a commute. Employees can carpool as frequently as they'd like, with two or more people. Things to consider when forming a carpool include: work schedules, daily departure times, what days to carpool, driver responsibilities (like being on time, carrying insurance, etc.) and group financial responsibilities, if any.

### Emergency Ride Home

One of the most common reasons people give for not trying alternative forms of transportation is the fear of being stranded at work or being unable to get home quickly in an emergency. The Emergency Ride Home program takes the fear out of leaving a car at home because it offers registered participants who carpool at least three times a week and live 60 miles or less from their place of work three free emergency rides home a year.

For more information, tips to get a carpool started or to register your company, visit [www.commutesmart.org/mobile/](http://www.commutesmart.org/mobile/).

*Source: South Alabama Regional Planning Commission*

# Who's In Town?

July 2008

The Mobile Bay Convention and Visitors Bureau (MBCVB) provides a list of the current month's conventions coming to the bay area. For more information contact the MBCVB at 208-2000.

### July 3-6, July 31- Aug. 3

#### Christian Congregation of Jehovah Witnesses Annual District Convention

Delegates: 11,000  
Hotels: Citywide  
Location: Mobile Civic Center

### July 7-13

#### International Conference of Police Chaplains

Delegates: 800  
Hotel/Location: Renaissance Riverview Plaza Hotel

### July 13-19

#### Alabama State Department of Education Mega Conference and Special Education Program

Delegates: 2,000  
Hotels: Battle House, A Renaissance Hotel, Holiday Inn Downtown Historic District, Malaga Inn, Mobile Marriott, Radisson Admiral Semmes Hotel, Ramada-Civic Center, Renaissance Riverview Plaza Hotel  
Location: Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center

### July 18-23

#### Order of the Eastern Star-Prince Hall Affiliation Annual Communication

Delegates: 2,000

Room Nights: 1,670

Hotel: Renaissance Riverview Plaza Hotel  
Location: Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center

### July 19-23

#### Professional Photographers of Mississippi and Alabama Annual Meeting

Delegates: 150  
Hotel/Location: Renaissance Riverview Plaza Hotel

### July 19-27

#### United States Tennis Association USA League Tennis Southern Sectional Championships Adult & Senior

Delegates: 800  
Hotels: Hampton Inn & Suites Providence Park/Airport, Homewood Suites by Hilton, Mobile Marriott  
Location: Copeland/Cox Mobile Tennis Center

### July 23-28

#### U.S. Handicapable Square Dance Association Biennial Meeting

Delegates: 400  
Hotel: Renaissance Riverview Plaza Hotel  
Location: Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center

### July 26-31

#### African Methodist Episcopal Church Ninth Episcopal Education Congress

Delegates: 700  
Hotel/Location: Renaissance Riverview Plaza Hotel

## Get To Know LAGNIAPPE Readers

Source: Scarborough Research

Average Age 41

50%

More Likely To Have Had A Beer In The Last Month

83% Have A Cell Phone

More Than Half Make Over \$50K A Year

60% Are Professionals

47% More likely to go to a Casino

40,170 People Read Lagniappe Every Two Weeks

According to Scarborough Research, Lagniappe readers are the people most businesses want as customers. Lagniappe reaches the Mobile Area's most desirable audience in an affordable way. To find out more about advertising in Lagniappe, call 450-4466, or e-mail us at [ads@lagniappemobile.com](mailto:ads@lagniappemobile.com).

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