



# M.A.C.C.

MAY 1998

# THE VIEW

VOLUME XXX, NO. 5

A MONTHLY BUSINESS PUBLICATION FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

(334) 433-6951

## And On Your Right, You'll See...

### ◆ Region hosts high-tech tour for State economic development managers

With the State's economic development officials headquartered in Birmingham and Montgomery, the Chamber wants to make sure South Alabama is a viable option when new companies are looking at our state.

In an effort to showcase the area's established electronic and high-tech sectors, and highlight its economic diversity, the Chamber hosted representatives from the Alabama Development Office, Alabama Power's Economic Development Office and the Baldwin County Economic Development Alliance.

*"When this group thinks of high-tech, they won't automatically think Huntsville anymore."*

The group spent the first two days touring Packard Hughes, BF Goodrich and Air Inc. facilities in Baldwin County. "Not very many people realize that 3,000 people are employed in electronics over here," said **Lance Lacour**, Baldwin County Economic Alliance.

In Mobile County, the group toured Equity Technology, Mitsubishi, Racer Computers, Accelerated Technologies, QMS and Xante.

Zack Daffin, a senior economic development representative who works with Alabama Power in Birmingham participated in the tour. A native Mobilian, his job is to help recruit businesses to Alabama.

Daffin believes the tour was successful in broadening the perspective of his economic development partners. "When this group thinks of high-tech, they won't automatically think Huntsville anymore. There's a story to be told in Mobile-Baldwin counties."

Technology-related companies typically pay some of the highest wages — and every community in the world wants any high-tech business as their newest neighbor.

ADO Project Manager David Hutchinson also works with new and expanding businesses looking at the state of Alabama.

Hutchinson said this trip really opened his eyes. "When you look at Mobile, the first thing you think of is paper and shipbuilding." He was familiar with QMS and Xante's operations, but was basically unaware of the other area technology-related companies.

The new partnership between Mobile and Baldwin counties is a real asset, commented Hutchinson.

"There are going to be those prospects that want to look at the Mobile area and take advantage of its size, airport and shopping, but not necessarily want to locate in a city environment. The same is true for Baldwin. Some projects are going to want to locate in an urban environment but take advantage of retail and leisure activities across the Bay," explained Hutchinson.

"Both communities stand to benefit by this cooperative agreement and I really applaud them for getting to this point. It certainly makes my job easier," he added.

"The similarities between many competing communities around the country are amazing," explained **Jim Apple**, the Chamber's vice president of economic development. "What makes Mobile unique is its quality of life and key Gulf Coast location." Hutchinson agrees, and was particularly impressed with the Mobile

Commerce Park, the campus-like business/industrial park located at I-10 and Rangeline Rd.

But even these assets on their own merit are not enough, explained Apple. "You have to be creative and focused."

Developer tours are not necessarily unique but our specific focus is

unusual. Later this year, the Chamber is planning another similar tour to spotlight transportation services and equipment, including the aerospace industry.

Both high-tech and aerospace industries are identified target markets in a jointly-sponsored effort between the Baldwin County Economic Development Alliance and the Mobile Chamber, conducted by Kate McEnroe Consulting.

## Mobile's Fastest Growing Small Businesses

**William E. Haynes** has a history of starting and growing small businesses into successful and profitable companies. Because of his extensive success and experience, Haynes was selected as keynote speaker for the 1998 **Future 30 Awards Banquet**, a program recognizing the Mobile area's fastest growing small businesses.

As Chairman, CEO and president of Innovative Valve Technologies Inc., a large industrial valve repair and distribution company out of Houston, Texas, Haynes definitely has a story to share with other small business owners.

"Each year we invite an advocate of entrepreneurs to speak at the Future 30 banquet," said **Norman Hill**, vice president of Small Business Development at the Chamber. "Mr. Haynes has certainly

been through the challenges and hardships small business owners go through to be successful."

Prior to starting Innovative Valve Technologies, Haynes served as president and CEO of LYONDELL-CITGO Refining Co. and was senior vice president of Lyondell Petrochemical Co. Haynes has

also held various managerial and executive positions with Atlantic Richfield Co. and serves on

the board of Philip Services Corp.

The Future 30 Awards Banquet will be held on Tuesday, **May 12** beginning with a cocktail hour at 5:30 p.m. and dinner at 6:30 p.m. at the Mobile Convention Center. To make reservations call **Jacqueline Jones** at 431-8607. Tickets are \$35 per person or \$300 per table of 10.

1998 MOBILE'S FUTURE 30

## Pork and Politics

With the June primaries right around the corner, it can only mean one thing! Well two actually — get ready to vote and come to the Chamber's annual *Pork and Politics in the Park*.

The Mobile Area Chamber and **Alabama Power Co.** will host the third annual political rally and barbecue on Wednesday, **May 27** from 6:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. at Cooper Riverside Park.

*Pork and Politics* honors candidates running for local and state offices and has grown tremendously since it was first held on the Chamber's front lawn in 1996. In fact, its growth in popularity has led Chamber

planners to move the event to Cooper Riverside Park to allow candidates and guests

more room to mix and mingle over barbecue, beer, wine, soft drinks and the music of a local jazz band.

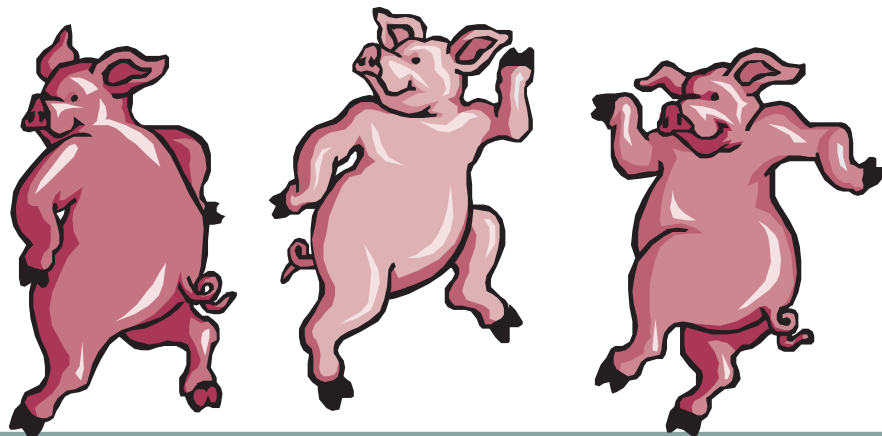
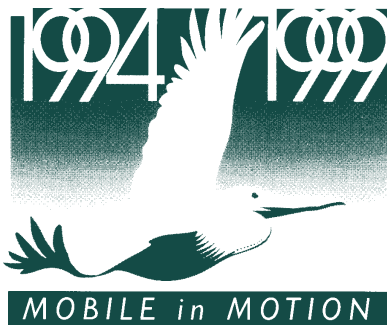
The event has fast become a Chamber tradition and receives statewide attention for its unique name.

More than 400 people attended last year's event, and with a large slate of candidates running in the 1998 elections, an even larger turnout is expected this year.

Reservations can be made by calling **Shelly Mattingly** at 431-8612. Tickets are \$10 per person.

**ALABAMA POWER**

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### Chamber Advantage

Discover how your small business can afford top quality health insurance for you and your employees! See story on Page 4



### Y'all Come See Us

Alabama received only 11,007 of the 3,275,335 foreign business visitors to the U.S. during 1995 which earned the state a no. 32 ranking in the country.

Among our sister states in the South — Florida was no. 2 with 412,036 foreign business visitors, Georgia ranked no. 8 with 78,336 and North Carolina was no. 15 with 38,611.

Louisiana ranked no. 24, Tennessee no. 25, South Carolina no. 29 and Mississippi no. 46. The Top 10 sources of business visitors to the U.S. are the United Kingdom, Mexico, Japan, Germany, China, France, Korea, Canada, Brazil and the Netherlands.

Source: Center for International Trade & Commerce

### History In The Making

Speaking at the annual meeting of the Economic Developers Association of Alabama, Gov. James said preliminary figures reflect that the announced industrial capital investment average for the past three years is the best of any three consecutive years in the state's history. More than 57,000 new jobs were announced during this time.

### Aerospace Mission

Pursuing additional aerospace-related companies, Chamber Vice President of Economic Development Jim Apple represented Mobile at the Singapore Air Show recently. This major Asian air show provided important contacts that lead to new business opportunities for existing aerospace companies and identified new projects.

### Camera, Lights, Action

"Hostile Intent" and "Hostage," two recently completed feature films, prove film production in Mobile continues to grow. John Anderson and Shelby Lynne recently filmed music videos in the Port City, Bayou LaBatre and Gulf Shores.

Many TV and film viewers wouldn't believe it if they were told they weren't watching scenes from Moscow, New York, Los Angeles or Singapore, but scenes from Mobile, Alabama. Eva Golson, director of the Mobile Film Office says, "we are film friendly and easy to work with."

### Secret Shopper

Main Street Mobile can unlock a few secrets for Downtown businesses. Find out what customers really think about your business, the level of customer service and their real opinion of your merchandise.

Each business will be evaluated by several shoppers who will be visiting stores during different days and times. After the information is collected, a confidential report will be given to each owner participating.

The Secret Shopper Program is free and Main Street will even customize the questionnaire for each business to address individual concerns. Contact Rhonda Davis, Main Street Mobile, 208-7540, for more information.

### Bumpy, Bump

"If we gave over 50 percent of the highway dollars to Birmingham, Mobile, Montgomery and Huntsville, we might be able to fix up your roads pretty good," said Gov. James, "but then when you wanted to drive to Auburn on Highway 280, you'd have to park your car and walk part of the way."

Source: Birmingham Business

### Home Sweet Home

The real estate market was hot property in 1997. Last year, 3,969 homes were sold, up from 3,710 in 1996. It took an average of 135 days to sell a home and the average selling price increased from \$96,934 to \$103,146 in 1997. The median selling price increased in 1997 to \$85,000 from \$81,900. Houses sold for an average of 96 percent of the asking price in 1997.

Interest rates are at 7 percent and it appears that they will remain stable through the second quarter. ERA Real Estate recommends that home owners get a current market evaluation each year for insurance and estate purposes.

Source: Sandy Frost, ERA Marie McConnell Realty Inc.

# Mobile-Based Company Signs Unprecedented Agreement With Mexico

A major Mexican-American trade agreement recently announced is expected to revolutionize the retail automobile-truck industry in Mexico and produce revenues of \$400 million for Warranty Corp., a Mobile-based company.

Larry Myers, president and founder, has been granted exclusive rights to provide warranties for used automobiles and trucks at the Mexican car dealer's association's (ANCA) 4,000 dealerships.

Prior to this agreement, consumers purchasing used cars from Mexican dealerships were unable to obtain warranties on the vehicles. Subsequently, Mexican banks rarely provided financing for such purchases.

Quadrum, one of Mexico's largest private banks, has already agreed to finance warranted cars at 20 to 22 percent, compared to the dealer's typical 80 percent, explained Gabriel Gonzales Gonzales, Myer's principal partner in Mexico and a Mexican attorney.

Warranty Corp. is establishing a nationwide network of offices, garages, mechanics and sales agents to make it possible for consumers in Mexico to purchase warranted vehicles and to finance their cars through one of the largest private bank groups in Mexico. Interviews are being conducted to hire the first 100 employees.

Myers said his representatives and mechanics would periodically visit each of the used car dealerships and inspect every car and truck on the lot. Those without defects will be adorned with Warranty's special Mexican logo—a blue angel decal.

Myers credits the continuously improving trade relations between the U.S. and Mexico that allow representatives of both countries to explore avenues of opportunity for mutually beneficial ventures.

"With our experience and expertise," Myers said, "we felt that our sound warranties at a bedrock price would do well in another



Larry Myers and Gabriel Gonzales present Joe Mareno, Vice President of Finance Operations and Membership, with a check for \$10,000. This generous gift was to show appreciation for the Chamber's efforts on behalf of international trade development. It will be used to support the Chamber's economic development activities which include trade initiatives and small business development.

industrialized country, and Mexico was a natural choice. This couldn't have happened without NAFTA," he added.

Warranty Corp. remains a leading small business in Mobile and was named the Chamber's Small Business of the Year in 1994.

## Sears Home Services to Hire 200

Sears Home Services recently announced it will be adding approximately 200 new jobs. Demand for Sears home repair and improvement services is steadily increasing, creating the need for additional personnel at the teleparts center since the company launched its Home Central brand.

The Sears Home Central brand includes a houseful of services including appliance and electronic repair, lawn and garden repair and maintenance services, replacement siding, windows, roofing and doors, as well as heating and air conditioning sales and service. Sears makes more than 17 million house calls a year.

Interested applicants should call 344-602-0186 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. to arrange an interview.



### Companies That Export Grow Faster

According to the "Trendsetter Barometer" survey by Coopers & Lybrand, a professional services firm, the growth gap is widening between U.S. companies that export and those that sell only domestically.

The company reviewed several fast growing "trendsetter" companies and found exporters expected to grow 25 percent faster than their domestic-only counterparts.

Of the "trendsetter" exporters surveyed, 76 percent sell to North and South America markets, 70 percent to Europe and 64 percent to the Pacific Rim.

For more information on how to export your product or service, contact the Chamber's Trade Director Tony van Aken at 431-8651.

Source: Center for International Trade and Commerce

## Low Cost Living in Mobile

Living in Mobile is still a great value! The 1997 Fourth Quarter ACCRA Cost of Living Index was recently published rating Mobile with a composite index of 93.6 — that's almost seven points below the national average of 100.

What exactly does that mean? ACCRA is a national association of community and economic development research professionals that measure the cost of consumer goods and services, excluding taxes and non consumer expenditures, in different areas of the country.

Cities participating in the ACCRA survey are assigned a cost of living index based on 59 items priced quarterly at a designated time and according to standardized specifications.

To determine an area's index, each metropolitan statistical area measures six component indexes: grocery items, housing, utilities, transportation, health care and miscellaneous goods and services like fast food, clothes, entertainment and dry-cleaning. From this information a composite index is determined.

To put Mobile's 93.6 index in perspective, larger cities like Atlanta, Ga., rated 99.4 and Cincinnati, Oh., was rated at 99.5. Other Alabama metropolitan areas rated either equal to or higher than Mobile. For example, Birmingham and Huntsville rated 98.6 and 97.5 respectively while Montgomery rated 100.5. Our closest neighbor, Pensacola, rated 93.9.

Over the past several years, Mobile's index has ranged between 91 and 94, which, according to Ritchie Hurt, director of information and research at the Chamber, makes Mobile extremely competitive with other U.S. cities.

Here's how Mobile ranked in each of the

six major categories (100 = national average): grocery items - 100.0, housing - 82.1, utilities - 104.1, transportation - 95.4, health care - 85.9, misc. goods and services - 98.6.

One of Mobile's lowest indexes is health care which well below the national average. Hurt says "Health care costs are lower because of the concentration of good quality care in the Mobile area."

The Chamber participates in the ACCRA survey each quarter to monitor how Mobile ranks with about 300 other areas of the country.

The evidence is clear, Mobile continues to beat the national average and offers residents a great value.

### ACCRA Index 4th Quarter, 1997

Baton Rouge	100.3
Biloxi, Gulfport, Pascagoula	98.6
Birmingham	98.6
Huntsville	97.5
<b>MOBILE</b>	<b>93.6</b>
Montgomery	100.5
Pensacola	93.9
U.S. Average	100

# Leadership Delegation Chooses Mobile

◆ Lexington, Ky. is bringing community leaders to study Mobile's recent success.

For years, the Chamber has taken a delegation of business, government and community leaders to other cities to study their successful initiatives and learn new, innovative ways to improve our community. For the first time, another city is coming to Mobile to do the same.

On Wednesday, May 13, more than 180 delegates from Lexington, Ky., will visit to meet with key leaders and study the local projects and activities that have moved Mobile forward. The Lexington group will hear about such topics as government/community relations, local public and private-sector partnerships, economic development strategies, community development and promoting community diversity.

Also, the group will study Mobile's "String of Pearls" downtown redevelopment project, visit our business innovation center (small business incubator) and tour some historic homes.

"We're already sold-out for this trip," said Laura Voss, executive vice president of the Greater Lexington Chamber of Commerce. "I think this year's success is due to two factors. First, we had a very good trip

last year and the momentum has carried over. Secondly, we've been working, as a community, on developing a more cooperative spirit between the public and private sectors and we see that in Mobile. We're anxious to hear more about how you collaborate on projects and accomplish things together."

Voss also commented on Mobile's progress in the area of race relations. "You have a good track record," she said. "You have a number of minorities in prominent positions and groups such as Mobile United and the Chamber have been working to improve community relations even more. We want to see how that's been done."

Members of Lexington's County Council will also visit with their Mobile counterparts to talk about 25 MPH speed limits in residential areas, storm water/sanitary sewer system planning, minority business development, handling of yard waste, creating win/win solutions in planning and zoning and other issues.

After discussing ways to take what they learned in Mobile and translate that into initiatives in Lexington, the group will return home on Friday afternoon.

# Get Your Own Personal Copy of *The View*

Many Chamber members have often asked about getting extra copies of the Chamber's newsletter, *The View*. Sales, marketing, public relations managers and other key personnel don't want to wait until it gets routed around to their office.

It's a great source for the latest business news, leads and Chamber networking events. A "must have" for busy professionals who want to

stay on top of what's happening.

Good news! Chamber members can now buy additional annual subscriptions of *The View* for \$30. As a bonus, the Chamber will also send its monthly *Calendar of Events*.

Fill out this form and mail it with a check for \$30 to *The View* Mailing List, P.O. Box 2187, Mobile, AL 36652.



## ADDITIONAL VIEW SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Chamber Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

(must be the same as membership address)

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Send renewal notice to \_\_\_\_\_

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PLEASE INCLUDE A CHECK FOR \$30 ANNUAL RATE TO: *The View* Mailing List, P.O. Box 2187, Mobile, AL 36652.

Depending on when we receive your order, it may take two to three issues to get your subscription started. Renewal notices will be mailed 60 days prior to your subscription's expiration date.



# Chamber Volunteers Ask Tough Questions of Superintendent Candidates

Have you ever worked on any partnerships between the school system and business community to better prepare students for the workplace? What has been your biggest accomplishment in your school system? What is your philosophy on teacher training? Have you ever been part of a campaign to raise money for your school system?

These were just a few of the questions posed by about 20 business and community representatives who met at the Chamber to interview finalists for the **Mobile County Public School** superintendent position. The series of meetings were suggested by the local School Board as one way of obtaining community input on each of the candidates.

"We commend the school board for allowing us to assist them in their search for the best candidate," said Chamber Vice Chairman of Education **John Turner of Whitney Bank**. "It's been a very rewarding opportunity for me personally, and I hope our feedback on each of the candidates will help **David Thomas** and the other school board members with their decision."

The Chamber, through its education program, has been working aggressively to promote a school-to-work program in the schools. Thus far, special focused academies have been formed in various high schools for students interested in pursuing careers in health care, construction, public safety and finance. Others are currently being formed.

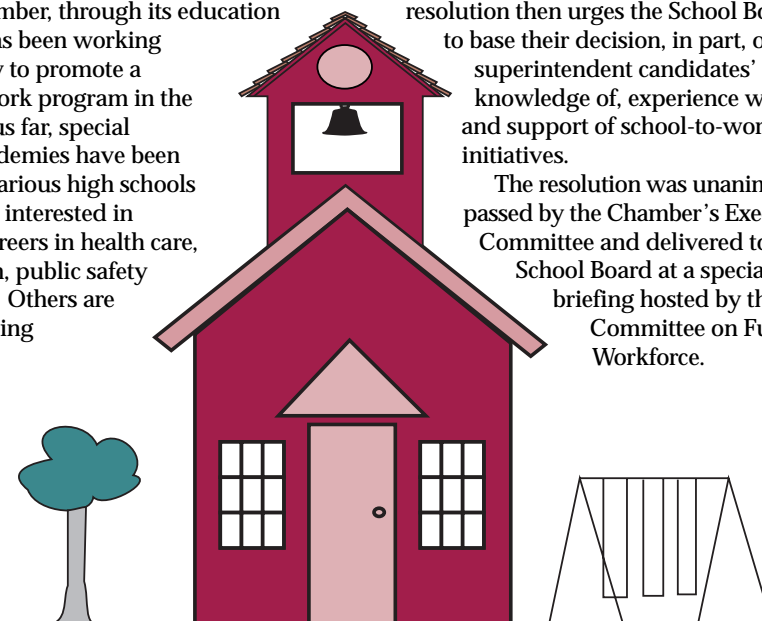
"I can think of several companies that are recruiting workers outside of the Mobile area right this minute," Turner said. "Yet, we have local people looking for jobs. It is vital we select a new superintendent who not only supports the school-to-work concept, but continues the work we've begun to help young people become successful wage earners whether they choose college, a two-year training program or go into the job market after high school."

Several weeks ago, the Chamber's Committee on Future Workforce recommended a resolution to the Chamber Executive Committee asking the school board to include questions related to school-to-work programs when interviewing superintendent candidates.

"Whereas, the technological advances of the last 25 years have created a global economy and our businesses face stiff competition from others around the world," the resolution reads. "And whereas a majority of our students do not seek a college education and, therefore, need job and life skills to be successful..." The resolution then urges the School Board

to base their decision, in part, on the superintendent candidates' knowledge of, experience with and support of school-to-work initiatives.

The resolution was unanimously passed by the Chamber's Executive Committee and delivered to the School Board at a special briefing hosted by the Committee on Future Workforce.



Coast Safe and Lock Ad



## Candidate Snapshots

### ◆ A new Chamber publication profiles primary candidates and their answers to questions.

For the first time, the Mobile Chamber will publish a directory of candidates running for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, area State House and Senate seats in the upcoming June primaries.

The directory will contain short biographies of each candidate and individual responses to questions about their personal and political philosophies. The candidates were asked questions on subjects ranging from ethics to education and each was given the same amount of space for their responses.

Primaries are considered one of the most confusing elections because there are so many candidates on the ballot, explained **Scott Posey**, the Chamber's vice president of governmental affairs. "With this new directory, we can provide a snapshot on all these people asking for support," he said.

Posey added he wished the directory could include the candidates for all the offices open this year, but explained there are so many that the directory would rival the city's yellow pages in size.

The publication is intended to encourage Chamber members to vote in this year's election. While the Chamber is a bi-partisan, nonprofit organization, it is issue-oriented and actively involved in public policy debates. The candidate directory will be mailed free of charge to Chamber members in plenty of time to prepare for the June 2 primary.

# All-America City Competition Comes to an All American Town



On your mark, get set, go! The race has begun as 30 excited communities have been named finalists in the All-America City competition scheduled for June 18-20 here in Mobile. About 1,500 participants will converge on the Port City to cheer on their cities with matching hats, shirts and an abundance of enthusiasm.

"We're gearing up for what we think will be the best competition in the history of this event," said Mobile All-America City Host Committee Chairman **Linda Ingram** with **Keep Mobile Beautiful**. "We have an outstanding volunteer team who has already impressed the sponsoring officials from Denver and Chicago." Ingram was referring to the Denver-based National Civic League, the organization that bestows the All-America City title and Allstate Insurance Co., headquartered in Chicago, the corporate sponsor.

Though each community has already gone through a difficult process in preparing its application, some of the real work is just beginning. As a finalist, the cities must prepare a 10-minute presentation to perform in front of 12 All-America City judges. The judges include at least one former governor, as well as experts from around the U.S. in the fields of community and economic

development and public policy.

"Last year, we attended the finalist presentations in Kansas City and they were incredible," said Chamber President, **Win Hallett**. "Though they could only name 10 All-America Cities, I'd say there were at least 15 really outstanding presentations."



"See You in Mobile" said a contestant in last year's competition. That's the All-America City spirit!

Tensions build on Saturday evening when all of the communities assemble in a boisterous, political rally-style gathering. Each community tries to out-cheer the others in a show of both excitement and resolve. The real emotion is unleashed, however, when former Mississippi Governor **William Winter**, foreman of the judges, describes and then names each winner.

"People scream, cry and hug as they make their way to the podium,"

said Ingram. "It's more exciting than I could ever describe."

Though some are named All-America Cities and some are not, it's the entire process that really counts, Ingram concluded. The fact that a community can look at itself honestly, pick out its best initiatives, present them in a way that shows success and results, and then showcase them at a national event is an extraordinary experience. Like one contestant said last year on behalf of his community, "See you next year in Mobile!"

## 1998 All-America City Finalists

- Bakersfield, CA
- Bryan, TX
- Chelsea, MA
- Columbus, OH
- Dekalb County, GA
- Delray Beach, FL
- East Providence, RI
- Fort Wayne, IN
- Green Bay Area, WI
- Hattiesburg, MS
- Little Rock, AR
- Longview, CA
- Lowell, MA
- Montgomery County, MD
- Moorhead, MN
- Naperville, IL
- New Haven, CT
- Piqua, OH
- Providence, RI
- Rio Rancho, NM
- Riverside, CA
- Rochester, NY
- Santa Maria, Ca
- Saranac Village Lake, NY
- Scottsdale, AZ
- Shreveport, LA
- Sterling, CO
- Tacoma, WA
- Toledo, OH
- Waco, TX

## Open Enrollment in Progress for Chamber Advantage

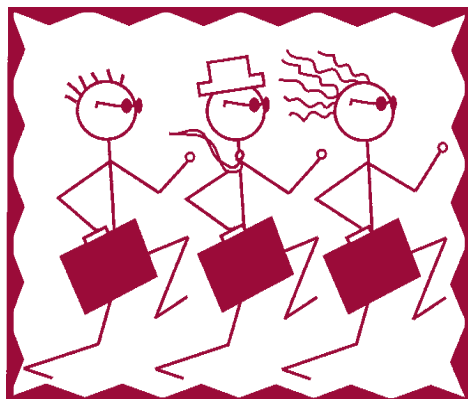
Recognizing that one of the biggest challenges for small business is affordable health insurance, last June the Chamber introduced **Chamber Advantage**, a program of group health insurance benefits offered at competitive rates for member businesses with 1-99 employees.

The insurance plan, provided by **Health Partners of Alabama**, is currently holding open enrollment through May 20. "This is a 30-day period where members can enroll in the health insurance program and current participants can make changes to their policy," said **Cindy McCrory** with Health Partners.

She added, this is the **only time current members can enroll until May 1999.**

Individuals with qualifying existing coverage for 12 consecutive months, can enroll in **Chamber Advantage** during open enrollment with no waiting period for pre-existing conditions. Insurance coverage will go into effect June 1.

Current Chamber members should have already received information regarding **Chamber Advantage**. If you have questions or need more information call **Ronnie Young** at 1-800-543-3153, ext. 11 or **Cindy McCrory** at Health Partners at (334) 470-8508.



## CHAMBER CHASE '98

It's just a few weeks into **Chamber Chase '98**, the Chamber's new member and resource development campaign, and already results are starting to add up. A total of 28 teams have volunteered to help the Chamber reach a goal of \$650,000 in cash, goods and services.

Last year's Chamber Chase Chairman **Clif Inge** officially passed the torch to 1998 Chairman **Erling Riis III** with **Lyon, Fry, Cadden Insurance Agency** at the kickoff breakfast in April. Teams are now busy bringing in new members, renewing members, selling event sponsorships and ads in the **Membership Directory** and **The View**, and recruiting contributions for economic development.

"The opportunity to enter a team is still open," said **Carolyn Golson**, the Chamber's director of resource development. "We also need door prizes to make each weekly reward session fun for the volunteers." If you can help please call **Karen Turner**, 431-8638.

# Chamber Chase Officially Underway

## 1998 Chamber Chase Teams

Team	CEO	Captain	Goal
Alabama Power	Cheryl Thompson	Linda Tipp	\$30,000
Allied Retail Services	Karen Fendley	Colleen Casto	\$15,000
AmSouth Bank	Bill Seifert	Kinnon Phillips	\$30,000
Attorney Team	N/A	Jay Watkins	\$15,000
Coca-Cola	Bob Bedell	Patrick Gueret	\$15,000
Colonial Bank	Mike Fitzhugh	Joe Butler	\$35,500
Compass Bank	Mike Granger	David Turner	\$30,000
Degussa	Wolfgang Buder	Glenn Serotsky	\$25,000
DigiPH PCS	Edd Williams	Cindi Daniels	\$30,000
Diplomat Team #1	N/A	Terry Downs	\$10,000
Diplomat Team #2	N/A	Angela Hays	\$10,000
Diplomat Team #3	N/A	Sheila Murphy	\$10,000
Equity Technologies	Cathy Giles	Danette Richards	\$15,000
Infirmiry Health Sys.	Chandler Bramlett	Kerry Golf	\$25,000
Insurance Team	N/A	Ray Hall	\$40,000
Keathley Engineering	Thomas Keathley	Mary Saunee	\$15,000
Lerio Corp.	Mark Christian	Susan Vick	\$15,000
Lewis Advertising	John Lewis	Ellen Wingard	\$15,000
Masland Carpets	Ken Dempsey	Mary Jane Asberry	\$15,000
Medical/Dental Team	N/A	Keith Harvey	\$15,000
Mobile Gas	John Davis	Sharon Moffatt	\$25,000
Providence Hospital	John Roeder	Randy Battiste	\$15,000
Radcliff, Ben Contractor	Ben Radcliff	Jeffery Florey	\$15,000
Regions Bank	Tom Hinds	Jo Shannon	\$30,000
SouthTrust Bank	John Gresham	Ray Palmer	\$30,000
Union Planters Bank	Bill Ainsworth	Beverly Baxter	\$30,000
Whitney Bank	John Turner	Mark McWilliams	\$70,500
Willis Corroon	Ray Miller	Robert Drew	\$16,600

## Chamber Advantage Highlights:

- Physician office visits covered at 100 percent after small copay (\$15 or \$25, depending on the plan)
- Unlimited hospital benefits covered at 100 percent after copay of \$300 or \$600, depending on the plan)
- No prescriptions cost more than \$20
- No major medical deductible to pay; no claims to file; no long waiting for reimbursements
- Worldwide emergency services
- Vision care and eyewear discounts
- 100 percent maternity coverage

**Reminder:  
Open Enrollment Ends May 20**

# Honoring America's Entrepreneurs

## ◆ Mobile will celebrate Small Business Week May 11-16

Small businesses in the United States create two out of every three jobs, employ more than half of the country's workforce and generate the majority of American innovations.

That's why it has become a tradition over the last 35 years for the President of the United States to designate a week to honor the estimated 23 million small businesses in America. This special week recognizes small business owners for their personal achievements and contributions to our nation's economy.

In Mobile, Small Business Week is being celebrated the week of May 11-16. The Future 30 Awards Banquet recognizing Mobile's fastest growing small businesses will be the highlight of the week.

National Small Business Week, sponsored by the U.S. Small Business Adminis-

tration, will be held in Washington D.C. from May 31-June 6. One outstanding entrepreneur is named to represent each state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam as that region's Small Business Person of the Year. From this

group the National Small Business Person of the Year is chosen.

Each year, the Chamber nominates a candidate from Mobile to compete for the state award.

**Robert Ross, Xante' Corp., D.R. Jordan of Jordan Pile Driving and Jim Busby, QMS,** are a

few recent examples of Mobilians who won Alabama's title and went on to compete in Washington, D.C.

This year's Mobile candidate was **Neil Armintrout of Televox Software Inc.** Results of the state competition will be announced in mid-May.



SMALL BUSINESS NETWORK

## Don't Let A Disaster Shut You Down

Preparing for emergencies at your place of business is probably one of those things you'd rather not have to deal with. Hurricanes, flooding, bomb threats, workplace violence, technology problems, terrorism and human error ... emergencies

come in many forms and each can put a stop to your business. The impact of a disaster can be devastating in terms of lost revenue, lost customers, lost business opportunities and the loss of peace of mind.

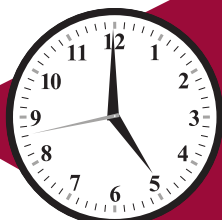
The *Business Continuity Seminar* for local businesses will be held at the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce (McGowin Room) on Thursday, **May 21** from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Speakers will include John Copenhaver, Southeast Regional Director for FEMA, as well as representatives from BellSouth, Mobile County Emergency Management Agency, Federal Bureau of Investigation and the America Red Cross.

There is a \$15 charge for the seminar, which includes a box lunch. Please RSVP to **Jacqueline Jones** at 431-8607.



SMALL BUSINESS NETWORK

## Beat the Clock!



Have you ever felt time just slipping by you and you haven't accomplished what you planned? Without effective time management skills, deadlines are missed, conflicts grow and customers aren't satisfied. Well, help is on the way!

Business leaders and Human Resource professionals will have an opportunity to preview a powerful time management tool designed to increase productivity, meet deadlines, control interruptions, master paperwork, establish clear goals, conquer procrastination and more.

**Larry Kryske**, co-founder of **Homeport Training & Development** will be leading a seminar that will expose participants to some of the latest outcome-based time management technology. He specializes in leadership, teamwork and innovation seminars. This is a fantastic opportunity for Chamber members to learn tips key to effective use of time.

Spend your time (and get a return on your investment) on Thursday, **May 14** in the Chamber's McGowin Room from 11:00-12:30 p.m. The cost of the seminar is \$15 and includes lunch. For reservations, call **Jacqueline Jones** at 431-8607 or fax her at 431-8646.

## Retirement Plans For Small Companies

It's never too soon to start planning for retirement. Business owners and human resource managers of companies with 100 or fewer employees are invited to a workshop on retirement plans targeted specifically to their size.

**Mike McDermott** of **Dean Witter Reynolds Inc.** will discuss and contrast several options including SEP IRAs, simple IRAs and money purchase plans.

Successful retirement plans aren't just for large companies anymore. Come learn from an expert how to take advantage of these plans.

Originally set for March, this seminar date was changed to accommodate more schedules. Mark your calendar for **Thursday, May 28** from 11:00-1:00 p.m. in the Chamber's McGowin Room. The seminar cost of \$15 includes both lunch and literature for each participant. For reservations call **Jacqueline Jones** at 431-8607 or fax her at 431-8646.

## Small Business of the Month Hospitality Services Inc.

Success has a certain "ring" to it for **Steve Johnson**, owner and president of **Hospitality Services Inc. (HSI)**, the Chamber's **Small Business of the Month**.

HSI is a full-service telecommunications provider for the hospitality industry. The company provides telephone equipment, maintenance, long-distance services and telecommunications consulting solutions to hotel/motel customers in 27 states from California to Florida to New York.

Calling on his 15 years of experience with "MaBell," Johnson began to carve a niche in the rapidly growing and deregulated telecommunications industry in a spare bedroom in 1990.

Deregulation opened up a number of opportunities explained Johnson. "I did a great deal of research and chose a very specialized market," he said.

In 1994, Johnson found another gap to fill. Bell Telephone was discontinuing their pay phones in hotels because with deregulation the company could only provide local service. "Where do most hotel guests call? Long-distance to the home and office," said Johnson. "We provided the equipment and the long-distance service our customers needed."

The company has grown tremendously through the years. His number one challenge is to find experienced technical people. Johnson said he runs ads regularly throughout the Southeast. But once he finds



An old operator switch board inspires today's newest technology.

them, he works hard to keep them.

With a team of 35 employees and now in its third location, Johnson projects the company will be in a new building at I-65 and Frontage Rd. by Christmas.

Hospitality Services is located at 916 Butler Drive and can be reached at **661-6061**.

### Guidelines for the Small Business of the Month selection:

- A. Current Chamber member
- B. Fewer than 100 employees
- C. Apparent solid financial base
- D. Considered successful by peers
- E. Expanding number of employees
- F. Sales growth and/or profit growth
- G. Outstanding public service contribution
- H. In business a minimum of a year
- I. New product line

## Do Business with Those Who Invest in Mobile!

1998 MEMBERS MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Thanks to a donation from Lamar Advertising during last year's Chamber Chase, the Chamber has unveiled its newest promotional tool near the intersection of Hillcrest and Grelot Roads. The billboard is designed to encourage citizens to do business with Chamber members who are helping further our quality of life. Be sure to drive by and enjoy the view!

# 911!

AFTER an intruder has entered your home? (or worse, your bedroom!)

OR... Have a **WESTEC FirstGuard™** Home Security System installed TODAY? (And sleep peacefully tonight.)



Westec Security has been a recognized leader in the industry since 1962. We pride ourselves on providing state-of-the-art technology and extraordinary service to our customers. Together our highly trained team and customized systems provide security for tens of thousands of homes and businesses throughout North America.

Call us today for a no-obligation security evaluation.  
**(334) 625-0595**

**Westec Home Security**

The Sign of Security™ for over a Quarter of a Century

Westec Home Security  
29000 Hwy. 98, Suite 203, Daphne, AL 36526

# SMOKED OUT House Fails to Fund Children First Legislation

For the fourth consecutive year, the state House of Representatives refused last month to consider a Chamber-endorsed cigarette tax increase that would have funded the Children First legislative package. The tax was controversial, especially in an election year when many legislators felt supporting a tax, regardless of the reason, would be political suicide.

**Children First** is a proposed youth program that would provide increased state funding for at-risk youth services and alternative schools and address such issues as school safety.

The House killed the tax issue on Thursday, April 8, when it voted down the BIR (Budget Isolation Resolution) necessary to bring up consideration of House Bill 91, the cigarette tax which would have funded Children First. A three-fifths vote is required to pass a BIR.

"It's the controversial issues, like this, that can separate your good friends from your acquaintances" says **Scott Posey**, vice president of the Governmental Affairs. "The local House members who voted to bring this tax up for a vote must be shown our gratitude because they stood with us when it may not have been cool to do. In fact, at least one legislator, **Mike Dean**, had a smear sheet distributed on him because of his stand with us."

"The Chamber's lobbying strength is only as strong as its members activism. When local representatives stand with us, especially on controversial issues, we need

to let them know we are grateful. We strongly encourage you to take two minutes to call the following representatives and offer a simple thanks for their support of this Chamber agenda item," Posey encouraged.

**District 104**  
Representative Mike Dean  
666-5724

**District 100**  
Representative Victor Gaston  
342-2213

**District 103**  
Representative Joseph Mitchell  
473-5020

**District 97**  
Representative Yvonne Kennedy  
690-6416

**District 94**  
Representative Walter Penry  
626-1752

**District 98**  
Representative Bill Clark  
866-2041

**District 96**  
Representative Mike Box  
432-0486

# Should You Start Your Own Business?

Should you start your own business? That is a difficult question to answer. To start and run a successful small business, you must be chief executive, purchasing agent, personnel officer, bookkeeper, advertising manager and sales director. Sometimes you even need to be the janitor as well. Are you prepared for the challenge?

The big question is "Why?" according to Mobile SCORE Chairman Bob Kirby. "Some of our clients are actually surprised when a SCORE counselor asks them why they want to be in business for themselves." SCORE is the Senior Corp of Retired Executives, an organization of retired professionals and executives.

The best way to choose a business venture is to consider your experience and your educational and business backgrounds. An honest and thorough review of both your strengths and weaknesses should give you some leads about which field to enter.

Basic business skills you should be familiar with include record-keeping, money management, personnel management, market analysis, knowledge of the product or service you intend to sell, communication skills and taxes. Do not worry if you are not adept at all these skills, many schools offer courses in the

aspects of operating a small business. Also, your Mobile SCORE center at the Chamber offers low-cost, pre-business workshops covering basic elements important to every start-up business.

The decision to open a business takes months, perhaps even years of planning and learning if you are to minimize your risk of failure.

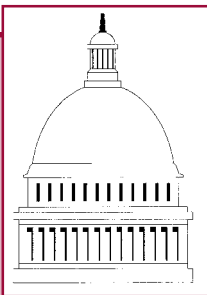
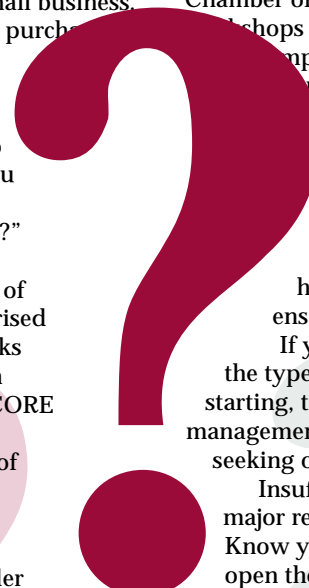
Rushing into a venture in hopes of easy success almost ensures failure.

If you are presently working in the type of firm you are interested in starting, try working your way into management. Gain valuable experience by seeking out more responsibility.

Insufficient financing is one of the major reasons for business failure. Know your financial needs, not only to open the doors of your firm, but to keep the enterprise going over those many difficult first months.

Work out a complete business plan before you make your final decision. This will include a cash flow chart that will spell out your capital requirement. Also, the marketing effort and estimated sales and expenses on a monthly basis are crucial in your planning.

Make an appointment with your Mobile SCORE chapter by calling 431-8614 for no-charge, confidential counseling to get some more detailed guidance.



## Who's Who & Where To Find Them

The Chamber's **Legislative Directory** has been reformatted and updated for 1998 and is now available to Chamber members. The directory contains information on federal, state, county and city officials in Mobile and Baldwin counties, including local and capitol office addresses, phone and fax numbers, and key

personnel. Also printed in this year's version is pertinent statistical information on the region and helpful websites.

One of the more popular publications of the Chamber, the directory is available to members for **\$5 per copy** and can be purchased at the Chamber's front desk or by calling 431-8612.



# Success Dominates 1<sup>st</sup> State of the City & County Report



**Mayor Mike Dow** and **County Commission President Sam Jones** spoke to a sell out crowd of 550 at the Chamber's first ever State of the City and County luncheon held in March.

The relationships of the City and County with private business were stressed as a major asset by both leaders. Significant advancements highlighted were in the areas of neighborhood planning, public service, Downtown redevelopment, economic development and recreation and culture.

"Anyone who wants to see us go after high-tech industry needs to help us fund education," Dow said as he touched on the future of economic development in Mobile.

Mayor Dow identified current city challenges that need to be addressed before the next century, reminding attendees the countdown has begun and there are approximately 700 days to the year 2000. He called for:

- ◆ Stronger and better organized neighborhoods;
- ◆ Funding for K-12;
- ◆ Welfare-to-work/school-to-work workforce training;
- ◆ Increased church involvement in city-wide interdenominational youth and family activities;
- ◆ Annexation; and
- ◆ Fundamental changes in state government and how it interacts and communicates on key issues.

In his address highlighting the County's successes, Jones pointed out Mobile county is the only county in Alabama that has taken an aggressive approach to funding road improvements and construction and bridge replacements without placing a heavy debt on the taxpayer. The "Pay-As-You-Go Road Paving Program" has resulted in more than 297 miles of paved roads.

Jones outlined future projects that will continue to positively influence the

community. One exciting project is the One-Stop Permitting Office that will house plumbing, electrical and building permit offices.

Both leaders emphasized the successes seen in 1997 and looked forward to a bright future for the City and County.

Summarizing the state of the city, Dow said, "Today our region stands on the threshold of challenge and opportunity as we shape our destiny. We can achieve greatness if we realize the lessons of history, preserve our proud traditions and harness the tremendous vitality of our individual communities in this area."

In conclusion, Jones said, "Although great strides have been made, it is the County's goal to develop a character and reputation throughout this nation as a community that provides for the well-being of all its citizens by offering equal opportunities to every segment of our community; to participate as an equal partner in growth, development and success of our combined efforts."

Dock Reed Ad  
From March View

## Diplomat of the Month Terry Downs

Congratulations to **Terry Downs**, the **Diplomat of the Month** for May! Downs is being recognized with this honor for the third time during his work with the Chamber Diplomat program. He is an agent with **Nationwide Insurance** and sells insurance and investment products.

Downs is geared up and ready for Chamber Chase '98, the Chamber's new member and resource development campaign. As one of the three team captains for the Diplomats, he is prepared to lead his team to first place. "Chamber Chase '98 is expected to be a lot more competitive than last year," Downs said. "All of the teams are bound and determined to go to the top—but that just makes it more fun!"

"I'm looking forward to this summer's membership campaign, especially the reward sessions. They always get me fired



up about the coming weeks," Downs said.

Downs is very involved in the community and serves a number of organizations including the Mobile Convention and Visitor Corp., Beat of the Bay Tips Club and Dauphin Way Baptist Church.

## Business Spotlight

# Mobile Janitorial and Paper Company

"If you need to clean, we sell the products you need," stated **Ray Fillingim**, president of **Mobile Janitorial and Paper Company**, the Chamber's **Business Spotlight of the Month** for May.

This 15-year-old family business distributes cleaning and paper supplies in addition to packaging supplies and food service items such as paper plates and plastic utensils.

"This is a very competitive business," Fillingim said. "But we do have an edge on the competition in that we train our customers on the products and equipment we use and sell. We have some fairly heavy machinery that requires operational knowledge. This keeps the operator safe and the customer happy."

Fillingim and his staff of 17 set monthly service goals to uphold their commitment to customer service.

The company also has addressed concerns of waste and the environment. "There was a study done a few years ago that concluded 40-60 percent of cleaning and paper products were wasted," Fillingim said. "Through training, we cut the waste down to a minimum."

Mobile Janitorial and Paper Company is located at 1582 Leroy Stevens Rd. and serves the Gulf Coast area.



# Vision Partners Tie Strategies to Existing Projects

Envision Mobile-Baldwin partners are busy selecting short and long-term strategies to work on. To date, 13 groups have chosen strategies.

A good example of how an organization has adopted strategies that fit into the mission and scope of their organization is **Keep Mobile Beautiful (KMB)**. The strategies they chose pertain to environment under quality of life.

Strategy E-2 reads, "Provide a comprehensive organic and non-organic recycling program throughout the region." KMB is currently working on plans for a metro recycling drop-off center, along with an education and resource center. A partnership with about eight local companies has been established to help collect recyclable materials.

To address strategy E-5, "Recognize the importance of our natural environment... and protect it, and develop and maintain green areas in our parks and throughout the community," KMB has many current projects. Continuing to plant trees and improve areas of public land through the "No More Eyesores" and "Adopt-A-Spot" programs will be a major contribution to this specific goal.

Promote diverse reforestation and use of native plants in landscaping," is

strategy E-9. Plans are underway for a model native plant garden at the Environmental Studies Center, a facility of the Mobile County Public Schools. This project will bloom next month as a part of the All-America City youth volunteer project.

In addition, KMB has hosted a Community Environmental Forum to focus on litter clean-up, prevention, education and enforcement of litter laws.

"This is exactly what we are asking organizations to do," said **Ginny Russell**, the Chamber's director of community development. "That is, to build on what they are doing through collaborative partnerships with other groups in the region."

Envision Mobile-Baldwin is a citizen-driven, long-range strategic plan for the two-county region identifying and creating projects to enhance education, quality of life, infrastructure, economic development, government and community leadership. The final document outlines these categories with six visions and more than 150 strategies.

For more information or to obtain a copy of the Envision Mobile-Baldwin plan, call **Ginny Russell** at **431-8618**.



## Six Easy Action Steps For Vision Partners

- 1** Meet with the members of your organization and select the strategy (or strategies) your organization will work on.
- 2** Make a list of other organizations your group could work with to accomplish each specific strategy. Contact these organizations and meet with them.
- 3** Contact Mobile United (432-1638) to request benchmark information for the strategy you have chosen. If that information is not available, it will need to be established.
- 4** At your meeting, develop action steps by thinking about some of the things that would have to happen before your group could meet its targeted goal.
- 5** Develop timelines for each strategy.
- 6** Send action steps and timelines to the Envision Mobile-Baldwin Steering Committee.

Call **Ginny Russell** at **431-8618** for more information.

# Spring Golf Tournament is a Hole in One!



It was windy and cool but golf swings and conversations were hot at the Chamber's Fifth Annual Spring Golf Tournament held at TimberCreek. More than 170 players enjoyed a day of food, beverages, prizes, and the cheers and jabs that accompany team competitions.

One enthusiastic participant said, "This is a super event. It helps pull the community together for some fun and enjoyment."

Congratulations to all of our winners!

### 1st Flight Winners:

- 1st - **Treadwell Ford** - Rick Doran, Barry Mathis, Eddy Etheridge, Steve Scarcliff
- 2nd - **Palmer's Airport Toyota** - Keith Palmer, Tim Stacy, Gary Grosz, Dennis Logan
- 3rd - **Roto Rooter** - Doug Harwell, Glen McCree, Greg Smith, Andy McLeod

### 2nd Flight Winners:

- 1st - **Magnolia Mortgage** - Kyle Hiers, Billy Anderson, Bryant Turner
- 2nd - **Alabama Power** - David Vesely, Dawn Bush, Joyce Boshell, Bob Coleman
- 3rd - **AmSouth Bank** - Lester Hamiter, Jim Currie, Charlie Jones, Glenn Sigler

### 3rd Flight Winners:

- 1st - **FastSigns** - Brian Vailes, Neil Carlisle, Russel Adams
- 2nd - David Monroe, Sam Crosby, Paul Lowzzi, Ritchie Hurt
- 3rd - Norman Hill, Al Stokes, Dr. Arthur McMillion

### Putting Contest Winner:

- Howard Witzner - Health Partners

Be sure to mark your calendars for the Fall Golf Tournament to be held on **Oct. 9** at **Magnolia Grove**.

As always, this event is successful in large part to the tremendous support of area businesses. A big thank you goes out to all of our sponsors.

### Major Sponsors:

- Exxon Co. USA
- GTE Mobilnet
- Health Partners of Alabama Inc.

### Hole Sponsors:

- Alabama Power Co.
- AmSouth Bank
- Atlantic Marine Inc.
- Colonial Bank
- Compass Bank
- Degussa Corp.
- FastSigns
- Gulf Long Distance Inc.
- ITC DeltaCom Long Distance
- Masland Carpets Inc.
- The Mitchell Co.
- Mobile Beer & Wine Co.
- Mobile Gas Service Corp.

### Hole Sponsors Continued:

- Mobile Register
- Palmer's Airport Toyota
- Perdido Beach Resort
- Recycled Fibers of Alabama
- Roto Rooter Plumbing Service
- ST Mobile Aerospace Engineering Inc.
- SouthTrust Bank of Alabama, NA, Mobile
- T. Leavell & Associates Inc.
- Treadwell Ford
- University of South Alabama
- World Omni Financial Corp.

### Product Sponsors:

- Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Consolidated
- Cock of the Walk

### Putting Contest Sponsor:

- Marriott's Grand Hotel

## Featured Profiles Advisors

Each month, the Chamber is proud to salute members of its Board of Advisors. These business leaders represent key businesses whose significant dues investment leads the way in funding the Chamber's programs and initiatives. For more information, please contact **Katrina McCrory** at 431-8611.



W. Bill Ainsworth  
Union Planters Bank

W. Bill Ainsworth is president of the South Alabama Division of **Union Planters Bank**, and oversees the operations of 13 deposit and loan offices in Mobile, Daphne and Foley. Ainsworth holds a B.S. degree from Mississippi State University and is a graduate of the Louisiana State University School of Banking. He has held various banking positions over the past 31 years, and began his career with Union Planters Bank in 1991. Ainsworth has been active with Rotary Clubs of Indianola and Laurel, Miss., the South Mississippi Fair Commission and The Salvation Army.



Robert L. Chappelle Jr.  
BellSouth Mobility

**Robert L. Chappelle Jr.** is regional director for **BellSouth** in Mobile. A native of Montgomery, Chappelle holds bachelors and masters degrees from the University of Alabama. He began his career with BellSouth in Montgomery in 1986, and has worked for the company in Kentucky and most recently, in Huntsville, Ala. Chappelle is past president of the Greater Huntsville Rotary Club and has worked extensively with United Way in Madison, Morgan and Montgomery counties. He is a graduate of three community leadership programs and has served on the boards of a number of nonprofit, pro-education and charitable organizations throughout his career.

# From Mercedes to Weinerschnitzel New Alabama-Germany Partnership Encourages Stronger Relationship

When Mercedes-Benz built its new plant in Vance, Ala., a new era of Alabama and German relations was set in motion. Even before the plant was built, Mercedes sponsored events in Tuscaloosa and Birmingham highlighting the German culture. These were met with such resounding success that the idea of cultivating a closer relationship between both areas was born.

This idea has found strong support statewide and resulted in the formation of the Alabama-Germany Partnership, a nonprofit organization designed to develop and enhance relationships between organizations and individuals in Alabama and Germany.

Announced formally on March 12 at the Mercedes-Benz Institute in Vance, five purposes outline the organization's mission:

1. To encourage understanding and relationships between Alabamians and Germans.
2. To support business development by encouraging such initiatives as direct investment, trade and tourism.
3. To stimulate and pursue educational opportunities through language, cultural and exchange programs.
4. To serve as an information network for existing and new organizations and to build relationships in Alabama and Germany.
5. To regularly communicate to the public and our membership (Alabamians and Germans) through meetings and appropriate media.

According to Honorary Consul General and Charter Board member **Dr. Peter**

**Mannsfield, Degussa Corp.**, the organization will serve as a coordinating point for a broadly-based exchange of educational, cultural, business and personal ideas, and is open to everyone. Because local German cultural activities have not been publicized well outside their local areas, the state office will publish a calendar announcing activities and events so interested parties statewide may have the opportunity to participate.

Chapters are being formed across the state with chapters already active in Tuscaloosa, Vance, Birmingham and Huntsville. With so many German companies and universities in the Mobile area, Dr. Mannsfield believes a Mobile chapter would be very successful and beneficial to the community.

Anyone interested may contact **Dr. Peter Mannsfield** at (334) 443-4219.

Gov. Fob James spoke at the Board of Advisors meeting on March 25. The Governor recounted strides made in improving the efficiency of State government including the hiring of 200 additional State Troopers, increased inmate capacity and enhanced children's programs. He made strong positive statements about the North and South trade and the role that Mobile and the Alabama State Docks play in enhancing trade opportunities. Springhill Memorial Hospital hosted the meeting.



## Revised Issues of Popular Publications Available

The Chamber recently updated several publications — The **Statistical Abstract**; **Mobile Community Profile**; **Mobile Economic Indicators**; and the **Directory of Civic Clubs, Charitable Organizations, Professional and Trade Associations**.

Currently in its final stages, the **Statistical Abstract** will be ready by mid-May. This publication is a collection of significant statistics and information about the city, state and county. For example, included in

this annual booklet will be updated cost of living data, census data, employment statistics and a list of major employers.

This **Statistical Abstract** serves as an in-depth community profile and is an excellent resource for new residents and businesses considering expansions or relocation to our

area. The cost is \$3 for members and \$6 for potential-members.

The **Mobile Community Profile** is an abbreviated version of the **Statistical Abstract**.

Comparing employment trade, transportation and construction stats for a two-year period is found in **Mobile**

**Economic Indicators**.

As its name implies, **The Directory of Civic Clubs, Charitable Organizations, Professional and Trade Organiza-**

**tions** lists the names, addresses and current contacts for groups in the Mobile area. The cost for members is \$4 and \$6 for potential members.

Call **Ginny Morris** in Research and Information at 431-8656 to get an updated copy of the publications and their costs.

**Mobile**  
*area*  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

SIPCO AD  
from March View

# Local Faces Even More Recognizable

There's no lack of interesting people in Mobile and Baldwin counties — and four of the area's infamous characters are listed among "Alabama's Unforgettable Faces," named by the Alabama Bureau of Tourism and Travel.

The Bureau of Tourism and Travel recognized 10 individuals and two couples in the state who represent some of the most fascinating people tourists may encounter while visiting Alabama.

**Capt. Gene Burrell** of **Wildland Expeditions** in Mobile, **John and Kathi Henderson** of **Stacey Rexall Drugs** and **Old Tyme Soda Fountain** in Foley and **Chester Hunt** of **Marriott's Grand Hotel Resort and Golf Club** in Point Clear the four unforgettable faces in this area.

Capt. Gene journeys into the Mobile-Tensaw Delta to give passengers a rare glimpse of an exotic world located just

minutes from Mobile's busy seaport. He has spent a lifetime exploring, studying nature, calling animals and returning injured and orphaned animals to the wild.

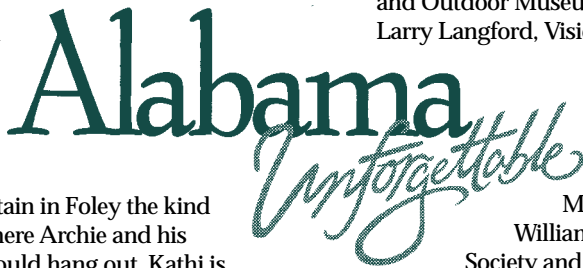
John and Kathi Henderson make the Stacey Rexall Drugs and Old Tyme Soda Fountain in Foley the kind of place where Archie and his buddies would hang out. Kathi is the pharmacist and John is the "fizz-ician." An electric Lionel train overhead carries prescriptions from John's soda counter to Kathi's pharmacy in the rear.

Chester Hunt is the official historian and driver who has worked at Marriott's Grand

Hotel Resort and Golf Club in Point Clear since 1941. He furnishes van transportation around the resort and greets many guests by name. His extensive knowledge of the resort's history has caused guests to dub him the "Grand Historian."

Other unforgettable faces in Alabama are: Jim and Elmore Insoce, Jasmine Hill Gardens and Outdoor Museum; Fairfield Mayor Larry Langford, VisionLand; Al Mathis, DeSoto Caverns Park; Eunice Merrell, Eunice's Country Kitchen; Mildred Rosenbaum, Rosenbaum House; Mary H. Wallace, Hank Williams Sr. International Society and Fan Club; and Kathryn Tucker Windham, author and Tale-Tellin' Festival storyteller.

Some of the above individuals and couples will be featured in the 1999 Alabama Vacation Guide. This is the first year for the list, and the Bureau hopes to make this an annual event.



# Spring Scams and Schemes

With spring here, so come con artists who prey upon homeowners, especially senior citizens. They show up at your door, call you at home or send you mailings, offering a variety of products and services ranging from household goods to magazines and tree trimming to roof repair. Some may offer to pave your driveway with leftover materials from a previous job, mow your lawn or remodel your home for a very low price.

Oftentimes, these fly-by-night operators will drive vehicles with out-of-state license plates or have a drivers license from another state. They may set up temporary offices and obtain a business license when they move into town.

How do you know if it is a con artists or a schemer? It is difficult to spot all potential scams and schemes, but there are a few tell-tale signs:

- ▼ Beware of "too good to be true" offers.
- ▼ Will try to pressure you into making a decision that day, even going so far as to send a courier to pick up the money.
- ▼ Will not give straight answers to your questions, or fails to answer a question.
- ▼ Will not submit any information in writing or put their promises in a contract.
- ▼ They want you to pay cash or make out a check to an individual instead of a company.

Before you deal with anyone you do not know or are unsure of, take time to do the following:

- ▼ Obtain the name and address of the company the person represents. If the person does not represent a known business and the circumstances suggest a drifting contractor or sales representative, ask for a contact and references.
- ▼ Get all details and oral promises of the offer in writing and carefully review it. Make sure you understand everything in a contract.
- ▼ Make sure the salesperson has provided you with the proper "notice of cancellation" forms if you are solicited at your home. This is required by the Federal Trade Commission.

▼ Verify any contractor you are considering doing business with is properly licensed, bonded and insured.

▼ Determine how long the company has been in business and check out the company with the Better Business Bureau and the State Consumer Protection Office.

▼ If you have checked references and the company's reputation and you decide to hire the company, make any checks payable to the company and not to an individual. Do not pay in cash.

▼ Remember, any legitimate company that wants your business will be more than willing to allow you time to check them out. Do not fall prey to high pressure tactics such as "this is the only chance you have" or "by tomorrow the extra materials will be gone," or "I'm only in this area today." If you have an expensive repair or project, be especially cautious of these offers.

The **Better Business Bureau of South Alabama** issues this warning and encourages consumers to check all questionable solicitors with their office at **431-5494**.

# Top Ten Printing Mistakes

If you use printed materials to market your products and services, you face a sea of unique time, money and management decisions every day. How well you utilize print technology and communicate with print services will go a long way in determining your overall effectiveness.

As a company that specializes in helping businesses take the guesswork out of print projects, The Front Page Co. has identified the ten most common mistakes that businesses make in working with the graphic arts industry.

- 1** Not making use of print deadlines and schedules.
- 2** Failing to consult with print specialists early in the conceptual stages of communications projects.
- 3** Failing to research the proper paper specifications for your project.
- 4** Project team members failing to present unified goals to printer.
- 5** Working in software that is incompatible with graphic arts technology.
- 6** Not knowing which printer can do the best job for your particular project.
- 7** Relying only on "Spellcheck" to edit your work and eliminating the human factor.
- 8** Using technical jargon and buzzwords without a solid grasp of basic concepts.
- 9** Not adequately explaining your needs and expectations for your print projects to your supplier.
- 10** Neglecting to give the amount of attention your print project needs to make it a unique, specialized and successful marketing tool.

A complete copy of *The 10 Most Common Mistakes Business Make When Working with print Media & How to Avoid Them* is available free of charge from The Front page Co. at 800-323-9002.

# Main Street Mobile Awards Downtown Revitalization

Three years ago, **Main Street Mobile** created an annual awards program to recognize outstanding efforts in the revitalization of downtown. The 1998 awards recipients were recently announced.

The Leadership Achievement award, given to an organization, individual or business, was presented to the **Bank of Mobile** and **Virginia and Emile Naman and family**.

**Oscar H. Lipscomb**, Archbishop of Mobile, was selected for the Outstanding Individual Award.

**Bienville Bistro**, **Cathedral Square Arts Gallery** and **Drayton Place** won the Downtown Innovation Award, recognizing an entities that exhibit great foresight in undertaking a successful project in downtown.

Finally, the Bienville Award, presented to an individual, organization or business which has positively affected the lives of the people in downtown Mobile, was presented to **Bayfest Inc.** and the **Mobile Arts and Sports Association**.

# J.L. Bedsole Scholars Program to Promote Entrepreneurship

The J.L. Bedsole Scholars Program is looking for local business owners to serve as mentors this summer for scholars participating in its entrepreneurial program.

The entrepreneurial program is a week-long summer institute where 20 students will learn the fundamental skills to start their own business. Students study everything from marketing to sales to writing a business plan.

After the Institute, students are paired with area business mentors who provide the students with practical experience during a seven-week internship.

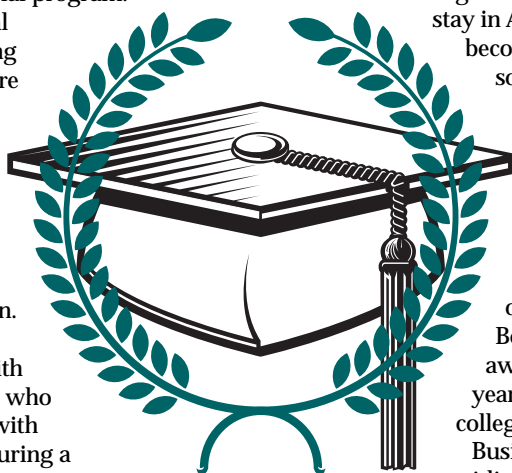
Employers are urged to act as mentors, guiding the student to understand the implications of that particular career choice. The employer is given the opportunity to observe and train possible employees without any obligation beyond the summer

job, explained Stephen Dill, director of the scholars program.

"It is incumbent on all Alabamians to encourage our brightest minds to stay in Alabama and become involved in the social and economic improvement of the state," said Dill.

There are currently 148 Bedsole Scholars attending 16 colleges in the state of Alabama. The J.L. Bedsole Foundation awards \$500,000 each year in renewable college scholarships.

Businesses interested in providing a non-salaried internship for a J.L. Bedsole Scholar should contact **Meghan Stacey** at **432-3369**. The J.L. Bedsole Foundation provides participating students with a \$1,500 stipend upon completion of the program.





### Future 30 Awards Banquet

**Featuring:** William E. Haynes  
**President, Innovation Valve Technologies**  
**Time:** 5:30 p.m.  
**Place:** Mobile Convention Center  
**Cost:** \$35 per person or \$300 for a table of 10  
**Call:** Jacqueline Jones at 431-8607



### Net Gain - How to Prepare Your Business for a Disaster

**Time:** 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
**Place:** Chamber McGowin Room  
**Cost:** \$15 includes a catered box lunch  
**Call:** Jacqueline Jones at 431-8607



### Net Gain - Retirement Plans for Companies Under 100 Employees

**Time:** 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
**Place:** Chamber McGowin Room  
**Cost:** \$15 includes catered boxed lunch  
**Call:** Jacqueline Jones at 431-8607



### First Friday

**Time:** 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.  
**Place:** Grand Slam U.S.A.  
**Cost:** \$2 for members  
 \$5 for potential members



### Net Gain - Making Time Work For You

**Time:** 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
**Place:** Chamber McGowin Room  
**Cost:** \$15 includes a catered box lunch  
**Call:** Jacqueline Jones at 431-8607



### Pork and Politics in the Park

**Time:** 6 - 8:30 p.m.  
**Place:** Cooper Riverside Park  
**Cost:** \$10 per person  
**Call:** Shelly Mattingly at 431-8612



### Business After Hours

**Time:** 5:30 p.m. - 7 p.m.  
**Place:** Grand Oak Wildlife  
 300 Industrial Pkwy.  
**Cost:** \$2 for everyone  
 Reservations not required



### Lunch with Secretary of the Treasury Robert Rubin

**Place:** Mobile Convention Center  
**Call:** Shelly Mattingly at 431-8612

## April Business After Hours



Take off your tie, shed those high-heeled shoes and get ready for a jungle adventure. No, it's not a safari. It's Business After Hours at Grand Oak Wildlife co-sponsored by Brown Industries.

While networking, you'll be amazed by the antelope, fascinated by the fallow deer and captured by the capybara. Plan on visiting the "NeoTropica," a small rain forest that houses plants from all over the world.

Be sure to wear comfortable shoes and join us May 28, 5:30 p.m. - 7 p.m. at Grand Oak Wildlife located on Hwy. 158, exit 13 off I-65 in Saraland.

Thanks to our sponsors, the cost is \$2 for everyone. Reservations are not required.



## ANNIVERSARIES

### 30 YEARS

Dupont Mobile Manufacturing Center

### 15 YEARS

Irvine Co. Inc.

### 20 YEARS

McMullan Construction Co. Inc.  
 Pickett & Adams Insurance Inc.

### 10 YEARS

ASM Recycling Inc.  
 Central Collection Services  
 Snelling Personnel Services

### 25 YEARS

O'Neal Steel Inc.

### 5 YEARS

Mobilphone Paging Inc.  
 Caribbean Enterprises Inc.  
 Southern Glass Inc.  
 Star Service Inc.  
 Thomas Sheet Metal Co. Inc.

## NEW MEMBERS

Clip and add these to your Membership Directory.

**Karen Aikin & Associates PA**  
 Accountants-Certified Public  
 Karen Aikin CPA  
 1110 Hillcrest Rd. Ste. 2C  
 Mobile, AL 36695-3920  
 (334) 634-9332

**Armstrong World Industries Inc.**  
 Ceiling Manufacturers  
 John F. McClay  
 1251 Baker St.  
 Mobile, AL 36603-1905  
 (334) 433-3971

**Balloons For Less**  
 Balloons-Novelty & Toys  
 Karen R. Chandler  
 850 Pinemont Dr.  
 Mobile, AL 36609-3036  
 (334) 345-3311

**Joseph W. Belanger**  
 Author-Book  
 Helen C. Belanger  
 4601 Bit & Spur Rd.  
 Mobile, AL 36608-2607  
 (334) 344-2564

**Brasfield & Gorrie LLC**  
 Contractors-General  
 Brian Barr  
 729 S. 30th St.  
 Birmingham, AL  
 35233-2939  
 (205) 328-4000

**Carpenter & Associates**  
 Consultant  
 Mark Carpenter  
 6312 Heritage Trace Dr.  
 Mobile, AL 36695-3297  
 (334) 460-6264

**Contract Resources**  
 Furniture-Dealers  
 Dan Jenkins  
 30 E. Cedar St.  
 Pensacola, FL 32593-0527  
 (800) 469-1272

**Crystal Ice Co.**  
 Ice  
 Steve Quinlivan  
 800 Monroe St.  
 Mobile, AL 36602-1121  
 (334) 433-3711

**Cypress Engineering Inc.**  
 Engineers-Professional-Consultant  
 Bobby Seale  
 308 S. Sage Ave.  
 Mobile, AL 36606-3616  
 (334) 478-9219

**Diversified Foods & Seasonings Inc.**  
 Food Brokers  
 Richard Talluto  
 1001 Hariman Ct. S.  
 Metairie, LA 70001  
 (504) 834-0114

**Diversified Foods & Seasonings Inc.**  
 Food Brokers  
 Walter Sambola  
 5213 Hamilton Blvd.  
 Theodore, AL 36582-8535  
 (334) 653-6450

**The Grand Band**  
 Entertainment  
 Glenn Normand  
 181 Ridgewood Dr.  
 Daphne, AL 36526-7533  
 (334) 621-0234

**Grasshopper Flats Inc.**  
 Gifts  
 Dale Johnson  
 9220 Airport Blvd. Ste. D  
 Mobile, AL 36608-9516  
 (334) 639-7331

**Gulf Coast Relocation Systems Inc.**  
 Relocation Services  
 Robert Paulk  
 1900 S. Broad St.  
 Mobile, AL 36615-1302  
 (334) 433-2853

**IHOP**  
 Restaurants  
 Ben Atigh  
 3912 Airport Blvd.  
 Mobile, AL 36608-1621  
 (334) 342-7501

**IHS Enterprises Inc.**  
 Warehouses-Cold Storage  
 Laura Booth  
 2801 Cotton St.  
 Mobile, AL 36607-1208  
 (334) 479-7600

**Jani King of Mobile**  
 Cleaning Service  
 Rich Henderson  
 1141 Montlamar Dr.  
 Ste. 2004  
 Mobile, AL 36609-1720  
 (334) 414-5560

**Keith Realty Inc.**  
 Property Management  
 Barbara Keith  
 13 S. Florida St.  
 Mobile, AL 36606-1987  
 (334) 478-3379

▶ See NEW MEMBERS, Page 12

## First Friday

Don't just go for a base hit — go for a grand slam! Come to June's First Friday at Grand Slam U.S.A. Step up to the plate in the batting cages, dunk a couple on the basketball court or putt putt on the golf course. You can also take the time to network during a round of laser tag.

Cost is \$2 for member and \$5 for potential members.



## Upcoming Communications Seminar

This summer, the Chamber will host *Working with the Media*, a two-part seminar exploring print and broadcast media.

Watch the June *Calendar of Events* and the next issue of *The View* for details.

MEMBER

NEWS

MEMBER

**ATTENTION MEMBERS!**

If you know of a company interested in benefiting from Chamber membership, please contact one of our account executives:

- Jeff Lambeth at 431-8627, pager: 582-1899
- Tom Lewis at 431-8629, pager: 582-2076
- Beth Tate at 431-8647, pager: 371-0562

**Gold Art Inc.** has moved! Their new location is 4501 Old Shell Rd. The phone number remains the same, **342-6303**.

**T. Keith King P.E.** was recently named the 1997 Outstanding Civil Engineering Alumnus by the Auburn University College of Engineering. King is President and CEO of **David Volkert & Assoc. Inc.**, a 400-person, full-service engineering, architectural and planning firm with offices in seven states.

In other news, Volkert was recently honored as one of the 10 fastest growing design firms in the U.S. by the Professional Management Association.

Members of the **University of Mobile** Students in Free Enterprise team are teaching the principles of free enterprise to young people throughout Mobile County. Their projects include teaching the Jr. Achievement program to fifth graders, tutoring and developing an after-school program for kindergarten through first grade.



Poole



Nelson

In other news, **Dr. Daniel Nelson**, assoc. professor of Spanish and English, was voted Favorite Faculty member. **Jim Poole**, director of student activities, was voted Favorite Staff member.

**Marie McConnell-Perkins** and **Mike Perkins** of **ERA Marie McConnell Realty** attended the 1998 ERA International Business Conference in Las Vegas, Nev. The conference demonstrated initiatives and a host of new ERA franchisees in the U.S. and internationally.



McConnell-Perkins

In other news, ERA Marie McConnell Realty announces their new sales executives **Sharon Gaither**, **Vicki Sims** and **Byron Bailey**.



Gaither



Sims



Bailey

**Spring Hill College** presented **Carleton Wilkins Jr.** with the 1998 Ignation Award, recognizing alumni who have dedicated their lives to helping others.

The College also announced the appointment of **Elizabeth Ann "Annie" Stafford** as Spring Hill college's vice president of development and college relations.

**David Houston Mull M.D.** has joined the physicians of **Cardiovascular Associates, P.C.** for the practice of cardiac, thoracic and vascular surgery. Prior to joining Cardiovascular Associates P.C., Dr. Mull served as an Assistant Professor and Chief of Cardiothoracic surgery.

**United HealthCare Corp.** recently named **Sharon Rose Smith** manager of consumer affairs for the Southeast region, **Ellen Waller** sales manager for the Mobile office, **Deidra Dorsey** director of provider information management and **Linda Chambers** manager of internal review.



Waller

**Stephen W. Simmons** has joined **T. Leavell & Associates Inc.** as a portfolio manager. He previously served as director of equity research of the retirement systems of Alabama.

**A.G. Edwards and Sons Inc.** announced the promotion of **John Robb** to associate vice president for investments. John has been an investment broker for 11 years and joined the firm in 1994, specializing in retirement and estate planning.

**Sharon Scroggs**, president and CEO of **Multi Services Group Inc.** announced the promotion of **Rocky Rodriguez** to the position of vice president and **Maxine Smith** to the position of operations manager. **Keith A. Graham, CPA** has joined the firm as controller.

**Whitney National Bank** announced the additions of **Susanne Foster** as mortgage loan originator; **Grady W. (Jody) Dunn Jr. CPA** as Business Banker; and **Cheri Ortiz**, coordinator of bank-wide training programs. **Dawne B. (Dee Dee) Raley** and **James T. Freeland** have also joined the Whitney staff. Raley will manage the Schillinger Branch, and Freeland joined the management trainee program.



Foster



Ortiz



Raley



Freeland

**Welding Engineering Supply Co. Inc. (WESCO)** announced **Scott Flowers** passed the American Welding Society, Certified Welding Inspector program, and **Don McDoniell** passed as an associate of the CWI program.

**Prudential Cooper & Co. Inc., REALTORS** announced their new associates. **Danny Blight & Debra Houke** will be working out of the Hillcrest South office.

Prudential Cooper & Co. Inc., REALTORS received Prudential Real Estate's prestigious Round Table Award along with the Sunshine Kids Foundation National Award. Associates to receive professional honors are **Don Foster**, **Sheree Dees**, **Hope Downey**, **Sandra Walley**, **Jordan Cooper**, **Tony Cooper**, **Barbara Higgins**, **Lloyd Botsford**,

**Elaine Fredricks, Elaine Sessions, Frank Peoples** and **Pat Nickerson**.

They are also proud to announce their new associate, **David Gengo**.

**Alabama Power Foundation** awarded more than \$160,000 in grants to 121 Alabama Educators. Grant funds will be used to implement new, innovative educational projects in public, private and parochial schools.

For the second time in the last three years, **Associated Builders and Contractors Inc. of South Alabama** was awarded the prestigious Charles Mullan Award for outstanding membership growth. In the National Excellence in Construction Awards, **W.G. Yates and Sons Construction** won the Merit Award for their Pelican Beach condominium project. Congratulations!

The Board of Trustees of **Mercy Medical** elected four new Board members. They are **William J. Cox**, **Sister Mary Vernon Gentle**, **Richard E. Powers** and **John B. Saint**.

**Thomas M. Hinds**, chairman and CEO of **Regions Bank** announced the promotion of **George G. Massey** to credit officer. He holds a B.S. degree in accounting from the University of South Alabama.



Casto

**Colleen Casto** has been promoted to vice president of marketing for **Allied Retail Services Inc.** and **Allied Sign Co. Inc.** She will coordinate the local, regional and national marketing efforts of both companies.

**Star Service of Mobile** announced the addition of **John Bridges** as account executive.

**Elaine Kelly Henderson** has been named **Easter Seal Rehabilitation Center's** director of communications and development.



Henderson

The **University of South Alabama** is hosting Kid South, a summer camp program. The camps include boy's soccer, junior golf, boy's basketball, financial camp, jazz improvisation and combo camp, girl's soccer, volley ball, baseball, computer camp and art camp. For more information call **431-6411**.

**Donald Ray Beard**, of the **Exxon Oil Corp.**, presented the South Mobile County Educational Center a check for \$50,000 for science technology. The funds will be used to support the development of an aquaculture program at Bryant High School.

The prestigious American Diabetes Association Award of Recognition for a quality diabetes education program was given to **Mobile Infirmary Medical Center's** Diabetes Resource Center.

In other news, the area chapter of the **American Diabetes Association** will host the Tour de Cure May 16 at Fairhope Pier at 9:00 a.m. Call **1-800-741-5957** for more information.

Internationally known shipbuilder **Cato F. Sverdrup** has been named president of **Atlantic Marine Holding Company**.

**Janet N. Scott, LMT #435**, announced her addition to the growing list of Licensed Massage Therapists in the Mobile area. Call **649-5744** for more information.

**Xante Corp.** announces a technology and marketing agreement with the Belgium based company, Agfa. Engineers have partnered to optimize technology for the printing industry.

**John F. Gresham**, chairman and CEO of **SouthTrust Bank**, announces that **Christine T. Grove** has been promoted to vice president in the Assets Management Division.

The **Architects Group (TAG)** announced **Irene J. David** and **Scott C. Black** have joined their team as Intern Architects.

**Karen Fendly** has been nominated to the Regional Board of Directors of the Professional Retail Store Maintenance Association (PRSM). Foley is president of **Allied Retail Services Inc.**

**McKinney Petroleum Equipment Inc.** announces Harrell "Doc" Blair is the sales representative for Southeast Ala. and Northwest Fla., and **Steve Bradford** has recently been hired as a service technician.

**Steelwood**, the new private club/corporate retreat located near Loxley, has started construction on two additional lodges. The initial lodge is now available for group meetings and outing. For more information, call **334-964-4502**.

**Correction:** Last month's View stated the Downtown YMCA had been renamed the Hearin-Chandler YMCA. It should have read the Midtown branch had been renamed.

Member News features Chamber member announcements, such as grand openings and relocations, or employee news, such as promotions. All Member News is due by the 5th of the month to appear in the following month's issue. If you have a news item, please send your information to: Member News, The VIEW, MACC, P.O. Box 2187, Mobile, AL 36652-2187, fax to 431-8646 or E-mail to [susan@mobcham.org](mailto:susan@mobcham.org)



**If You Have The Vision, We Have The VIEW**

If your company wants to be seen by the Mobile area businesses community, look no further. The VIEW is sent to more than 3,400 Chamber members, and a recent survey indicates that 96 percent of all Chamber members read The VIEW consistently — a high percentage for any publication.

Call for discounted ad rates when you advertise for three months or more. Call Susan Rak Blanchard at 431-8641.