



M·A·C·C

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THE VIEW

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(334) 433-6951



The State Docks' 45 ft. ship channel is one of the largest in the Southeast.

State Docks – A 70 Year Investment

In 1922, citizens voted for the Constitutional Amendment creating the State Docks Commission. Alabama native Gen. William Sibert, one of the chief builders of the Panama Canal, designed and supervised the building of the Docks.

The initial \$10 million investment has grown into a \$600 million complex, including nearly 3,500 acres and 37 ship berths stretching along several miles of Mobile and Theodore waterfront. In addition, the State Docks has 10 inland docks along Alabama's major waterways.

Today, the Docks handles more wood pulp than any other U.S. port and leads the Gulf ports in forest products. The Alabama State Docks' McDuffie Coal Terminal is the largest on the Gulf, the second largest in the nation and is the only coal terminal in the U.S.

that accommodates rail, barge and ship operations.

By overall tonnage, Mobile follows 12th ranked Pittsburgh, Pa., by only 10,423 tons.

Jim Apple, the Chamber's vice president of economic

development, credits the State Docks as a "major economic engine" in the local economy and an important asset when recruiting businesses to Mobile.

According to **Dr. Semoon Chang**, director of **USA's Center for Business and Economic Research**, the State Docks impacts financial and employment statistics in all 67 Alabama counties.

As Alabama businesses strive to carve their niche in the global economy, the seaport industry is becoming increasingly competitive. Vessel owners are developing bigger ships that carry twice the load, and neighboring state and local governments are pouring millions of dollars

into new and expanded port facilities.

A total of 28 major ports are located in the Southeast, and nearly half are a source of significant competition including Charleston, SC; Savannah, Ga.; Jacksonville, Fla.; Gulfport, Miss.; and New Orleans, La.

From the competition lineup, only the New Orleans, Baton

Rouge and the South Louisiana ports match Mobile's 45 ft. ship channel, and New Orleans has one additional railroad service.

All the contending ports, however, do have something the Docks does not – state funding. While the Alabama State Docks operates from its own revenues, Georgia contributes 75 - 80 percent funding with a \$263 million 10-year capital plan. Florida matches port revenue dollar for dollar. Mississippi accounts for 50 to 75 percent for its ports with gaming industry leases, local subsidies and port user tax rebates.

► See STATE DOCKS, Page 9

Alabama State Docks Has Statewide Impact

- 118,500 employees benefit directly or indirectly
- \$1 billion in wages is earned by employees directly benefiting
- \$3 billion in wages when indirect and direct impact is calculated
- \$450 million in state tax revenue and subsequent expenditures is generated by firms and their employees that utilize the State Docks.

Alabama Jumps Ahead in New Business Start-Ups

A recent Dun & Bradstreet report ranked Alabama at the top of its list for new business growth in 1997.

Leading with 16 percent growth, a total of 2,480 new businesses opened in search of the American dream last year. **Jim Barksdale**, district director of Small Business Administration explained, "We're running against ourselves when they're measuring percentages, but a good economy encourages small business creation and growth."

New business owner, **Sara Kramer**, **House of Blends**, owns a specialty wine, gourmet food and gift shop on Old Shell Rd. Kramer said she started her business because "the time was right. Mobile's economy is growing and the interest in a one-stop gift shop was there."

The Dun & Bradstreet report credited 20.1 percent of last year's job growth to new businesses. Barksdale added that over the last five years, companies with less than 20 employees were responsible for 73 percent of Alabama's job growth.

"Some of the momentum relates to downsizing," said Lynn Stacey, director of the Business Innovation Center.

More businesses are outsourcing services like layout and design and that is an important trend to **Beverly Crenshaw**, **Desktop Designs**, in launching her new business. "There's a definite market to tap into and this has been a life-long dream of mine."

Stacey said numerous local resources for small businesses was one reason Mobile's growth has continued to climb. "Both Huntsville and Mobile ranked in Cognetics, the definitive source for start-up data, in the top 10 nationally as places to start companies."

Neighboring states Miss. had a 8.8 percent increase and Fla. grew 6 percent. Ga. eaked out a .9 percent and Tenn. experienced 6 percent growth.

Superintendent Sousa to Retire on July 31

After 36 years of service as an educator in the Mobile County Public School System, Paul Sousa will retire on July 31. Since 1962, when Sousa entered the field of education as an algebra teacher and athletic coach at Clark Middle School, he has afforded thousands of Mobile school children with an education.

Sousa, currently the Superintendent of Mobile County public schools, has served in this position for the past five years. He was also principal at Phillips Middle School, Murphy High School and Theodore High School for 14 years.

There have been significant accomplishments made in the school system while Sousa was at the helm. For example, he and his staff managed to retire the system's \$23 million debt and raise its bond rating from a BB to AA.

"Paying off the debt permitted us to move forward into the building program we're working on today," Sousa said. "In 1992 we were threatening to close schools because we could not meet payroll."

Sousa is referring to the \$64 million bond issue passed in 1996 that funded

construction for eight new schools and additional wings at six others.

He directed an achievement program resulting in considerable increases in the system's Stanford Achievement Test scores, aided in initiating a system-wide uniform policy and developed the "Model Middle School Program," now considered among the nation's best structures for educating adolescents.

The Model Middle School Program increased teacher and administrative control in middle school classrooms. Students are now grouped into "pods" and stay together, rather than change classes. Teachers in the four-core class areas, English, math, science and social studies change classrooms working as a team to provide students with the best education. The program has drastically decreased discipline referrals and has helped increase student test scores.

"I'm proud of the accomplishments this school system has made over the past five years," said Sousa. "Student achievement has drastically increased, our schools are safer and we've made our

classrooms more conducive to learning."

In 1997, Sousa was selected by the Alabama PTA as "Superintendent of the Year," and this year testified before the U.S. House of Representatives about getting more dollars to the classroom.

But all of Sousa's efforts have not been directed toward the school system. He is active in numerous community and civic groups such as the Rotary Club, Mobile United, Senior Bowl committee and the Chamber's Advisory Council on Public Education.

"Sousa took over the system during a critical time and brought stability as well as a direction for improvement," said Chamber vice chairman of education **John Turner of Whitney Bank**.

Sousa earned a bachelor's degree from William Carey College, a master's degree from the University of South Alabama and an AA certificate from the University of Alabama.

Editor's Note: Dr. Harold Dodge was selected as the next Superintendent for Mobile County and begins his term on August 1, 1998. Watch for an interview with Dr. Dodge in The View next month.



Federal \$ Breakdown

Ever wondered what the financial breakdown was for federal earnings and expenses? U.S. Sen. Richard Shelby (R-Tuscaloosa) outlined the equation at a Montgomery Area Chamber event earlier this year.

Coming In

39 percent – individual income tax
33 percent – payroll taxes
11 percent – corporate taxes
9 percent – borrowing
4 percent – excise taxes
4 percent – other

Going Out

51 percent – direct benefits to individuals
16 percent – national defense
15 percent – pays interest on debt
17 percent – all other expenses

Predictions are the national debt interest payments will soon exceed national defense, according to Shelby.

Source: U.S. Sen. Richard Shelby's Office & 1997 U.S. budget from *Alabama Today*, Business Council of Alabama.

Auto Account for Half of Toxic Emissions

"Fifty percent of the nation's air pollution comes from automobile emissions. Industry has reduced their emissions from 4.5 billion tons to 2.8 billion tons in the past five years, while emissions from automobiles have increased tremendously," according to Maureen Hart, data analyst for EPA.

At a recent workshop looking at the real state of Mobile and Baldwin counties' environment, Hart discussed sustainable community indicators – tools to measure the present and future state of our community and tradeoffs between environment and development.

Hart has 17 years of experience in information management and is the author of the *Guide to Sustainable Community Indicators*.

Employees Wanted

Employee bonuses and prizes are just two examples of how companies are creatively seeking new workers. According to the *New York Times*, American employers haven't had to scramble for employees since the 1970s when unemployment was last below 5 percent mark.

Other tactics include recruiting employees on the Internet, searching nationwide for candidates, using temporary help firms, lowering hiring standards and considering more experienced workers.

Source: *Developments*, published by the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama

We've Heard It Before...

...but the international accounting and consulting firm Ernst & Young says retailers can thrive in today's marketplace with five key attributes. This is good old-fashioned advice updated with modern day examples:

Price/value: superior every day value on each item (Wal-Mart); **Service:** giving individual attention and excellent customer service – always (Nordstrom); **Product:** having the best and most innovative products in your business sector (Williams Sonoma, a mail order catalog for fine home furnishings and gardening); **Experience:** each experience with your business should be unique (Disney Store and Planet Hollywood); and **Access:** easy to find, easy to get to, convenient hours (Walgreen, Dunkin' Donuts, CVS Pharmacy).

Source: *Nations Business*, published by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Playing It Safe

Look for regulations outlining what protective gear employers must provide for employees. OSHA is expected to clearly outline requirements by early 1999. Workers will be expected to buy their own glasses and safety shoes.

Source: *The Kiplinger Washington Letter*

Floating Saucer Lands in Mobile

On June 9, a floating saucer was spotted on Mobile Bay. No, it wasn't something out of the X-Files, it was Hvide Marine's newest ship, the *Escambia*, being christened at the Mobile Convention Center.

This strange looking tug with its far-out design is only the third of its kind in the world. The Ship Docking Module tractor tug (SDM™ for short) is the first major breakthrough in tugboat design in 100 years. Built by Halter Marine at a cost of approximately \$5 million, it is the first vessel of its kind that can generate full power in any direction—forward, backward or sideways. The unique placement of twin Z-drives, or propellers, at each end of end will even enable the SDM to rotate 360 degrees.

The *Escambia* was assigned to Hvide Marine Towing's Mobile Bay unit in June. John Harmon, Assistant Operations Manager of Mobile Bay Towing said, "We

are very excited to have the *Escambia* in our fleet. It will enable us to maneuver ships into tight spaces that have been difficult in the past for traditional tug boats.

"This ship is also easier to operate. It only requires a two person crew as opposed to the four-person crew required for other tugs. Earlier operations have demonstrated that SDM can outperform conventional tugs in ship berthing operations within harbor confines," added Harmon.

So don't worry, if you are driving by and notice something that looks like it came out of a TV show, don't try to call Mulder or Scully, its only the *Escambia* doing her job.



Ship Ahoy!

In 1996 the Alabama Shipyard landed the largest export shipping contract in state history by agreeing to build two chemical tankers for a Danish firm. Recently, the first of two

chemical tankers built for Dennebrog Rederi AS of Rungsted Kyst, Denmark was delivered. This represented the completion of the first self-propelled ocean-going vessel built for export by an American shipyard in over 40 years.

This multi-million dollar project created 200 jobs at the shipyard and 500 jobs in maritime support industries.



Degussa Receives Environmental Awards

The 1998 "Excellence in Industrial Treatment Award" was recently presented to Degussa by Alabama's Water Environment Assoc. This prestigious award recognizes innovative techniques used for treating industrial wastewater.

The National Audubon Society also presented Degussa an award for installing the nation's first artificial marsh system for treating industrial waste.

Degussa's wastewater treatment system has been in operation since 1988. Developed by Degussa personnel, this innovative system was based on the work of NASA's National Space Technology Laboratories team.

The process includes filtering organic wastewater through artificial marshes and limestone rock. The plants remove the remaining nutrients and organic carbon content from the water before it is discharged into the Theodore Industrial Barge Canal.

The company maintains an aggressive monitoring system to ensure their excellent record of Alabama Department of Environmental Management permit compliance including an on-site laboratory and a staff marine biologist. The treatment system is a model of the creative blending of innovative and traditional technologies to solve environmental problems.

Explore More Business in Mexican Markets

Whether your company currently does business in Mexico or is interested in business opportunities in Mexico – make plans to join the Fourth Annual Expo Veracruz and the Third Annual Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce Trade Mission to Mexico planned for **September 28 - October 4, 1998**.

The purpose of the trip is to increase opportunities for small and medium-sized U.S. businesses to export and import their products and services to Mexico.

In Mexico City, delegates will have an economic briefing with the American Chamber of Commerce and visit with key governmental officials. The Chamber will also work with Mexican trade specialists to set industry specific appointments for U.S. companies interested in exporting and importing from one of Mexico's largest industrial and agricultural states.

While in Mexico, participants plan to attend Expo Veracruz, a trade exposition

featuring more than 250 companies from the State of Veracruz. This show will allow a unique networking opportunity for participants to identify and meet potential clients.

NAFTA's (North American Free Trade Agreement) impact in Alabama's growing business relationship with Mexico has been significant and continues to increase. Alabama is already among the top 10 U.S. states in exports to Mexico. For the fourth quarter of 1997, exports from Alabama to Mexico reached \$335 million, totaling \$1.2 billion for 1997. In fact, among all countries, Mexico ranks as the second largest production of goods from Alabama in 1997 up from fourth in 1993.

Numerous companies have already expressed an interest in joining this year's trip. Participation will be limited so please call **Tony van Aken** at **431-8652** as soon as possible to learn more details if you are interested.

Small Business of the Month

Gold Art

What started out as a "closet operation" has turned in to a retail gold mine. **Gold Art**, the Chamber's Small Business of the Month, originated 17 years ago in a closet of Tony Clarke's home. "We started making repairs and mounting stones mostly for family and friends," says Clarke.

Gold Art designs and creates custom jewelry and specializes in gold, silver and platinum. The business has expanded over the years, but still maintains the personal service customers love.

According to President **Daniel Clarke**, "the Clarke brothers had a vision." The Clarke brothers, Tony, Pat and Danny, grew up around the jewelry business with their grandfather, Ernest Toenes, who later left the business to play an active role in local government.

Gold Art has always been located in the Springhill area and recently moved into a new showroom near the corner of McGregor and Old Shell Rd. Just around the corner from their new address, their sister, Bernadette Smith took over their old store and carries primarily silver jewelry.



Three brothers and a friend make Gold Art a family tradition. From left to right, Paul Moore with Tony, Danny and Pat Clarke.

As far as what makes this small business successful, Gold Art attributes this to customer satisfaction. Their customer's loyalty and referrals prove the service they give is exceptional and Clarke says their best source of advertising comes "word of mouth."

A family friend and gemologist, Paul Moore, recently joined Gold Art. Some jewelry stores are not as fortunate to have an employee with his expertise. "Having a certified gemologist on our team means we can provide the knowledge our customers need in making their gemstones selections," Clarke explains.

Gold Art is located at 4501 Old Shell Road and can be reached at 342-6303.

10 Communities Win All America City Distinction in Mobile

Amidst cheers, tears and fever-pitched excitement, 10 cities were given the designation of "All-America City" at the Mobile Convention Center on June 20.

Following three days of presentations, receptions, tours and even a festival in Bienville Square, the consensus was that Mobile had set a new standard for the event. "This is the third year we've competed to become an All-America City and Mobile has, by far, done the best job and been the most hospitable," said one delegate from Piqua, Ohio.

National Civic League Chairman Bill Bradley addressed the crowd with words of praise for the outstanding projects and commitment each of the communities brought to the event. Former Mississippi Governor William Winter followed Bradley with the announcement of the 10 winners.

Here are the 1998 All-America Cities:

- Chelsea, Mass.
- DeKalb County, Ga.
- Fort Wayne, Ind.
- New Haven, Conn.
- Riverside, Calif.
- Rochester, N.Y.
- Santa Maria, Calif.
- Saranac Lake Village, N.Y.
- Tacoma, Wash.
- Toledo, Ohio



Two "sun lovin" delegates from Delray Beach, Fla., try to shade their excitement. Thirty communities across the U.S. vied for the title of All-America City during the annual competition held in Mobile.

Chamber Chase '98 - The Final Countdown



Crowned "buckaneers," Joe Butler, David Smith, Gary Adams, Mike Garner pose with Erling Riis III. These four bucks were among the first to recruit four new Chamber members at an early report session.

Only a few weeks remain before the Chamber Chase Victory Celebration on July 23. More than 200 volunteers have been hitting the pavement and braving the summer heat to guarantee success for the Chamber's Resource Development Campaign.

Volunteers from corporate teams are recruiting a number of things in addition to Chamber memberships. Sponsorships, advertising, corporate gifts and trade-outs, and Chamber Foundation contributions, to name a few.

"The campaign has been going very well," said Chairman **Erling Riis III**. "The volunteers are doing a great job and having fun at the same time."

"The teams from AmSouth Bank, Whitney Bank, Diplomat Team #1 and Diplomat Team #2 have already met and surpassed their goals," said **Carolyn Golson**, the Chamber's Director of Resource Development and staff leader of Chamber Chase. "It's been very rewarding to see people really catch the spirit of the whole campaign and surprise even themselves by what they're able to do."

Myrinda McCarron of Diplomat Team #3 added, "the Chamber staff has kept Chamber Chase organized and interesting. Their constant encouragement and support really makes us not want to give up."

At the View deadline, volunteers had reached more than 59 percent of their goal of \$650,000 in cash, goods and services.

Although the finish line is in sight, the volunteers show no sign of slowing down. They attend weekly reward sessions where accomplishments are recognized and volunteers are reenergized.

A special thanks goes to all the reward session sponsors: David Volkert and Associates, AmSouth Bank, Whitney Bank, South Alabama Bank of Mobile, Adam's Mark Hotel, Equity Technologies, Banana Docks, Regions Bank, Bienville Club and Southtrust Bank. Thanks also to the Kick-off Breakfast sponsor, American Express Corporate Services and to BellSouth for sponsoring the Victory Celebration.

Got An Angel?

For small businesses the phrases "seed money" and "angel investors" mean a chance to market a new product or service. Unfortunately, many innovative products and services are never marketed for public consumption because the companies don't have the necessary resources.

Venture capital could change that for Mobile's small businesses.

Professional venture capital firms finance a small percentage of entrepreneurial companies. These firms deal in high risk-high return lending, and most often work with established small businesses looking to expand operations, rather than people looking to open a business.

Professionals working with venture capital firms assess hundreds of business plans each year, and invest in the most promising ventures. Venture capital investors are regulated by the Federal Trade Commission, often hold a seat on the company's board of directors and take an active role as a strategic manager of the company.

The Chamber's Venture Capital Task Force is interested in talking with local companies who have received financing from "angels" or venture capital firms. If your company's start-up or expansion was boosted by either of these methods, contact **Walter Underwood**, Director of Small Business Development at 431-8652.

Mobile's 10-Minute Oil Change Specialist



15 Convenient Locations!

Mobile Trip Tells Leaders Importance of Teamwork

Excerpts reprinted from the Lexington, Ky., Herald-Leader

Developing small business may have been the reason more than 175 of Lexington's leaders came to this Gulf Coast city, but they left realizing they need to work better with one another.

"We need to find some way to work together," said Ralph Coldiron, manager of business development for the James N. Gray Company. "This is lacking in our community."

After hearing a talk by Mobile Mayor Michael Dow about the importance of communication, the group recommended that Lexington, like Mobile, form a leadership council that would meet monthly to discuss economic development efforts and issues facing the city.

"For me, the greatest lesson from this trip is communication, communication, communication," Lexington Mayor Pam Miller said. In Mobile, they communicate well with each other and often."

"We came here for one reason — to create a better working atmosphere between the council and the chamber and we're leaving with another goal — better teamwork between the mayor and the council," Councilman Bill Farmer said.

Learning how to get small businesses started was another reason this year's Greater Lexington Chamber of Commerce annual leadership visit came to Mobile.

"What we saw in Mobile was one of the most successful small business incubators in any city," Miller said. "It creates an environment to help small business get started and flourish."

Business, education and government officials went on the chamber's 59th annual leadership visit. The chamber trip is an annual sojourn to study how other cities do business and operate their government.

The visit included discussions on how to improve economic development, public-private partnerships and diversity in Lexington businesses. It also featured a tour of Mobile's revitalized downtown, visits to a business innovation center and historic neighborhoods.

As a result of the trip, extra focus will be put on expanding the Mayor's Training Center for work skills development and developing a small business incubator downtown with help from Mobile's Institute of the Future South, Miller said.

Business Spotlight FastSigns

Even though computer technology has enabled us to communicate with thousands of people at once, there are still times when we need a good old-fashioned sign or banner. That's where **FastSigns** comes in.

Owned by Brian and Catherine Vailes, FastSigns truly lives up to its name by providing quality signs in the shortest time possible. "Most signs are completed in 24 hours or less," says Brian. They also offer customized service, creating signs to the customer's exact specifications.

Before the Vailes opened FastSigns in November 1997, they were in the restaurant business. However, their entrepreneurial instincts led them to franchising. They decided on FastSigns because of its impressive credentials. "FastSigns is the no.1 business-to-business franchise in the country, and is fourth overall," Brian said.

With only two other staff members and an average of 80 orders to fill every week, the Vailes work plenty of nights and weekends. They also do a number of different jobs, acting as owners, salespeople and production workers simulta-



Catherine and Brian Vailes work hard to make FastSigns a successful business.

neously. Currently, they are in the process of hiring an outside salesperson and a few production people to lighten their load. FastSigns is located at 3756 Airport Blvd., 343-0060.

Long's Human Resource Services Celebrates 50th Anniversary

It's hard to imagine that 50 years ago, when Tom Long left a job at the U.S. Treasury Department he'd have a hard time finding work in Mobile. Rather than pounding the pavement day after day with no luck, he and his wife Myrtle decided to open up a company of their own.

Today the company, now Long's Human Resource Services, has grown from a "mom-and-pop," two-employee business to more than 35 local employees, and throughout the region employs more than 600.

employee and later that same year, *The Kiplinger Letter* rated the company as one of the best places to find a job in the South.

"The company was really taking off at this time, with over five offices," said Damson who was named president of the company in 1986.

The company experienced steady growth throughout the 1980s with Long's Human Resource Service employees becoming a familiar sight in hundreds of offices in Mobile and Baldwin counties. Long's was named the Chamber's Small

Business of the Year in 1988. Also that year they received the Small Business Administration Award.

Long's began to grow again in the 1990s, culminating in 1995 after an intense three-year planning session to develop long-range goals. A direct result was the implementation of a training school located next to the company's corporate office in Midtown. The Learning Center offers a combination of skills training for its customers, including a Microsoft computer lab, hotel and hospitality training and most recently, Intergraph training.

"The Learning Center has enhanced job skills, as well as reading, math and grammar skills," said

Damson. "We're able to now take raw material and turn them into hard-working people with marketable skills."

So what does the future hold for Long's? Damson said they will focus on updating the Learning Center to make it more user-friendly and accessible for its customers. For example, Damson believes the company's new intense work preparedness program; "Train-2-Hire," will give every one of their customers a well-rounded training on how to work.



President Tom Damson with Billie Robinson who is celebrating her 24th year with Long's.

While many things have changed at Long's over the years, including the couple's daughter Sarah, and son-in-law, Tom Damson joining the family business in 1972, providing great customer service has remained the same.

Several major events have increased the company's longevity and popularity over the years, Tom Damson said. In 1956 as the company began to grow, Long opened Long Help Service — the first temporary help company in the area. In 1968 the company transacted the first computer-driven joint placement of an

Mobile and Baldwin School Systems Receive National Award

Mobile and Baldwin County school systems received the 1998 "What Parents Want Award" recently for meeting the needs of families choosing their schools.

Superintendents Paul Sousa and Larry Newton received the award from SchoolMatch, an independent nationwide school-selection consulting firm that helps corporate employees find the right school for their children. The two local systems were among 22 systems statewide to receive this honor. Nationally about 2,200 systems were recognized.

In determining award winners, SchoolMatch rates each school system in the nation based on a survey completed by 56,000 parents. Participating parents have been most interested in competitive and academic test scores; accredited schools; recognition for excellence by a national foundation or the U.S. Department of Education; competitive teacher salaries; above average instructional expenditures for classrooms and media centers; and small classes.

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Regional Revolving Loan Fund Alive and Active

The Regional Revolving Loan Fund (RLF), administered by the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC), was established in 1996 as a source of capital for start-up or expanding businesses. It provides low interest loans for small and medium-sized businesses and industries that are financially healthy and growing,

but cannot obtain adequate financing to carry out an expansion project.

New entrepreneurial ventures will also be considered for loans. However, the RLF is not intended to provide financing to high-risk enterprises. The SARPC will provide up to one-third of the total project costs, with private lending institutions providing the balance of the financing requirements.

These funds may generally be used in the same way as conventional or private funds are used in business ventures. The RLF loan amounts may range from \$10,000 to \$125,000 with no more than 30 percent being used for working capital.

The repayment terms of these loans vary depending on the intended use of the funds although it may be paid back in full at any time before it is due. The principle with interest is revolved back into the fund as it is repaid to provide funding for future loans.

According to **David Bishop** of the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission, the ultimate goal of these loans is to save existing jobs or to create new jobs in the Mobile area. As of April, 1998, the RLF has closed 11 loans for more than \$1 million. These loans have resulted in the creation of 42 jobs and helped save 41 existing jobs in Mobile and Escambia Counties.

Anyone interested in more details concerning the SARPC RLF is encouraged to contact Bishop at 334-433-6541.

Vote "Yes" for Baldwin County

It's bad news that Baldwin County is currently ineligible for use of the SARPC RLF. It's good news that this situation can be resolved if Alabama voters cast their ballots in the upcoming State General Election to support a proposed

amendment to the Alabama Constitution.

This amendment, listed as Amendment No. 1 on the ballot, is the result of Alabama legislation signed into law on March 18 by Gov. Fob James. The proposed amendment allocates a total of \$12 million to be divided equally among the 12 regional planning commissions and councils of governments in the State. Each organization, with its portion of the funds, will create a local revolving loan fund. In the case of the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission this would create a new RLF for the area including Baldwin County.

It is somewhat early to address the details of this new RLF, but it is speculated it will function in the same manner as the existing one. As time draws nearer to the election, there will be more information available about the proposed amendment. In the meantime, if you have any questions about the amendment, please feel free to contact Russ Wimberly, the Executive Director for SARPC at 433-6541.

	# of Loans	Loans \$	# of Jobs
MOBILE COUNTY			
City of Mobile	1	\$100,000	4
Saraland	1	\$66,000	5
Unincorporated Mobile County	4	\$381,000	2
Mobile County Total	6	\$547,000	37
ESCAMBIA COUNTY			
Atmore	4	\$186,000	24
Brewton	1	\$295,000	22
Escambia County Total	6	\$481,000	46
REGIONAL TOTAL	11	\$1,028,000	83

Myrinda McCarron Diplomat of the Month

Myrinda McCarron may be a relatively new Diplomat, but she has started off with a bang. She was recently named Diplomat of the Month.

McCarron is an account executive with Remedy Intelligent Staffing, a company that recently celebrated its first anniversary in Mobile. She joined Remedy in September 1997, and became a Diplomat shortly thereafter.

"Because Remedy is a new company to Mobile, being a Diplomat was an excellent way for me to get involved and get our name out," said McCarron. "Not

to mention the fact that I've met a lot of really nice people that I might not have met otherwise."

In fact, making new friends is one of Myrinda's favorite things about becoming a Diplomat. "All of the people I have come in contact with are so nice and friendly. I really look forward to our activities."

McCarron is a graduate of the University of Alabama with a marketing degree. Her many community activities include the Mobile Society of Human

Resource Management and the Executive Women's Forum.



Joe Hudson Diplomat of the Month



The Chamber salutes last month's **Diplomat of the Month**, Joe Hudson. He is the owner of Hudson's Financial Services. He has been a Diplomat for six years and selected Diplomat of the Month five times. Hudson's other community activities include the Mobile Association for Life Underwriters, Alabama Independent Insurance Agents Association, University of Alabama National Alumni Association and Dauphin Way Baptist Church.

"How Can I Keep Those Customers I Worked So Hard to Get?"

Once you earn a customer's business - it's yours to lose. Customer loyalty is or should be of utmost importance to every business.

Good service, matched with honesty and fairness equals good customer service. There's not enough of it these days and quite frankly, good customer service is exactly what it takes to keep customers happy and coming back. A few may cross over to a company offering lower prices, but often they'll return if that price does not include service or quality.

Here are a few simple ideas to consider when building your customer service policy. While they all may sound like common sense, it's a real challenge to create this attitude in every employee toward every customer.

Provide a reasonable and simple guarantee for your service is essential. When creating the customer's guarantee, keep it simple, and keep in mind the limitations of your business so you don't promise more than you can deliver.

If the final bill is going to exceed the initial estimate, it's common sense to call the customer before going ahead with the work. Surprisingly, many businesses don't. Most customers are willing to pay a little more for quality service work and a reasonable explanation of why the costs are going to be higher can be a real "plus" for your firm.

Repair services must always take the time to explain the nature of the needed repairs. Go the extra mile and return a replaced part to the customer. That gesture is an explanation of the service provided and assures the customer that you're honest in your work.

Treat all customers with common courtesy. It's no secret that people not only like to be treated nicely but want to know their concerns are important. Small things like listening, taking customers in sequence and providing prompt service can make a big difference.

Use follow-up letters and questionnaires to thank customers and to determine whether your service was satisfactory or above and beyond what was expected. Use customer responses to improve and help all employees understand the importance of good customer service at every level.

Every business has complaints. The trick is to resolve them quickly and fairly. Always give the customer the benefit of the doubt and don't let complaints go unsettled for very long. Even a fair decision, when delayed, will not satisfy the customer.

To review your customer service policies with a SCORE counselor, contact the Mobile SCORE chapter at 431-8614 for an appointment.

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Sipco carries a full line of advertising specialties . . .

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Chamber Director Graduates from Leadership Mobile

The Chamber's Director of Resource Development, **Carolyn Golson**, recently graduated from Leadership Mobile. The **Mobile United** program is designed to develop community leadership skills by exposing participants to area government, operations, race relations, economic development, education and more.



The Chamber, a sponsor of Leadership Mobile, selected Golson as its 1997-98 candidate.

Golson attended day-long classes twice a month from last October through May. During that time, she also worked on a project focusing on public safety. Other project topics presented by her class included: health and human services, economic development, education and cultural diversity.

"Our project was really challenging. We helped coordinate a volunteer program to work with non-violent juvenile delinquents," Golson said. "After learning how important this program is, I decided to volunteer at the Strickland Youth Center."

Leadership Mobile's goal is to assist in

building better citizens and volunteers in Mobile. "I met some people in Mobile who are really trying to make a difference. This class has definitely been a positive experience that encouraged me to get more actively involved in my community," Golson added.

Susan Rak Blanchard Changes Schedules - Takes Part Time Position

There have been a few changes in the Chamber's Communications team. Leigh Perry has joined the staff as Communications Director and Susan Rak Blanchard, former director, is taking a part-time position as senior communications specialist. Rak Blanchard will be taking the lead on the newsletter, *The View*, and a few additional select projects.



"About three years ago we moved to Mobile in an effort to slow down our life that had accelerated to warp speed. Anyone who knows the Chamber, knows that "slow" is not an adjective used in conjunction with this organization," joked Rak Blanchard. "Kids involved in school, sports and Scouts, make rush hour on Airport Boulevard look like a walk in the park."

An opening in the department allowed some reorganization and the Chamber will benefit from having a seasoned professional focusing entirely on *The View*,

explained Jodi Swiderek, vice president of Communications for the Chamber.

Rak Blanchard added, "This is the best of both worlds - I'll have community involvement, intellectual stimulation (although, I'm proud to say I can do multiplication without a calculator thanks to those endless fifth grade fact drills) and more time with my family."

Be sure to send your member news and story ideas to her. Mail, fax or e-mail information to Susan Rak Blanchard, P. O. Box 2187, Mobile, AL 36652-2187, 334-431-8641, fax 334-431-8646, susan@mobcham.org.

Envision Co-Chair Receives Award

John Davis, Co-Chairman of the Envision Mobile-Baldwin process and President & CEO of Mobile Gas received the Sam Walton Business Leader Award.

Sponsored by the Wal-Mart Foundation, Davis received a \$500 grant for Envision.

Davis was one of more than 650 business people in communities around the country who were selected by their local Chambers of Commerce to receive the award.

The Sam Walton Business Leader Award was created in 1995 to recognize local business people who are dedicated to customer service, have respect for the individual and strive for excellence.

More Area Organizations Take A Piece of the Plan

Since the *Mobile Register* published the Envision Mobile-Baldwin document in February, several new companies and organizations have signed up to become Vision Partners.

Envision 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.

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

- Adams & Reese
- Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority
- American Businesswomen's Assoc.
- American Red Cross
- American Society of Civil Engineers
- Baldwin County EMC
- Cintas Corp.
- City of Bayou La Batre
- City of Mobile Swim Assoc.
- Colonial Dames of the State of Alabama
- Community Care of Mobile
- Compass Marketing Inc.
- Construction Specifications Institute
- Dauphin Realty - Fairhope
- EAP Lifestyle Management
- Faulkner State Community College
- Gulf Coast Child Development Assoc.
- Gulf Coast Computer Services Inc.
- Gulf Shores Woman's Club
- Hayes Handpiece of the Gulf Coast Inc.
- Hudson and Watts
- Human Relations Commission
- Ladies Auxiliary of Franklin Health Centers
- Lions Club of Mobile
- Maysville Action Team
- Medical Society of Mobile County Inc.
- Mobile Area Dental Society
- Mobile County Community Corrections
- Mobile County Department of Human Resources
- Mobile Public Library
- Mobile-West Rotary Club
- North Baldwin Chamber of Commerce
- Prichard Housing Authority
- Providence Presbyterian Church
- Reams, Philips, Brooks, Schell
- South Baldwin Regional Medical Center
- SouthTrust Bank-Daphne
- Sports Kids
- The Harbinger
- The Shoulder
- Union Planters Bank
- United Cerebral Palsy of Mobile
- University of South Alabama Foundation
- USCG-Marine Safety Office Mobile
- Youth Leadership Mobile

Chamber Hires Communications Director

Leigh D. Perry joined the Chamber staff on June 8 to serve as director of communications.

As the communications director, Perry will assist in planning and implementing the Chamber's Annual Meeting, local and national public relations, media relations, Chamber publications as well as other projects.

Prior to her work with the Chamber, Perry was the public information director and grant writer for Dothan City Schools. In Dothan she was an active volunteer for the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce's Spirit of Service and Education committees, a graduate of Leadership Dothan and a member of the Bi-Racial Study Club.

A native Mobilian, Perry worked for the *Mobile Register* before moving to Dothan in 1996 to work as the education reporter for *The Dothan Eagle*. She earned a bachelor's degree from the University of South Alabama in 1992.

If you need any information about Chamber activities or would like to contact Perry about any communications matter, call **431-8623**.





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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.



Edward E. Lucente
QMS Inc.

Edward E. Lucente is president and CEO of QMS Inc. Lucente earned his B.S. in Civil Engineering from Carnegie Institute of Technology in 1960. Prior to joining QMS, he held various

positions with Digital Equipment, Northern Telecom and IBM, where he spent 30 years. Lucente's positions with IBM included Marketing vice president, director of Corporate Business Plans, president of Information Products Division, group executive US Marketing & Service, and president and chairman IBM World Trade Asia-Pacific Corp. in Tokyo, Japan. Lucente serves on the Boards of QMS, Software A.G. Americas and Information Resources. He is a life trustee to Carnegie Mellon University. He was born in Pittsburgh, Pa., and is the father of six children.

Cheryl A. Thompson is vice president Mobile Division for Alabama Power Co. She received her bachelor's degree from Auburn University, and an MBA from the University of



Cheryl A. Thompson
Alabama Power

Alabama in Birmingham. Thompson joined Alabama Power in 1972, and was selected in 1992 as assistant to Alabama Power's Birmingham Division vice president. She later served as manager of the Montevallo and East Jefferson operations, and as a corporate marketing segment manager. She was named southeast region manager for Georgia Power in 1996. As Mobile Division vice president, Thompson directs Alabama Power's customer operations in the South Alabama service area. She has served on the boards of United Way of Southeast Georgia, the Georgia Southern University Foundation, Bulloch Memorial Hospital, the Development Authority of Bulloch County, and was active in the Statesboro Rotary and Statesboro-Bulloch Chamber of Commerce.



Walter Brunson
International Paper Co.

Walter Brunson was named mill manager for International Paper Co. in early January. He served the mill as operations manager from May 1997, until January. Prior to

joining International Paper, Brunson was paper area manager for Willamette's Marlboro mill division in Bennettsville, S.C. He has a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Louisiana Tech. He and his wife, Peggy, reside in Fairhope.



Net Gain- Marketing On A Shoestring

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



Business After Hours

Time: 5:30 p.m. - 7 p.m.
Place: Ramada Plaza Hotel
Cost: \$2 for members
\$5 for potential members
Reservations not required.



First Friday

Time: 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.
Place: Mobile School of Massage Therapy
Cost: \$2 for members
\$5 for potential members
Reservations not required.



Business Writing Seminar

Time: 8:15 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Place: Chamber McGowin Room
Cost: \$15 includes a catered box lunch
Call: Leigh Perry at 431-8623

July Business After Hours

Beat the heat and celebrate Independence Day all over again at this month's Business After Hours on **Thursday, July 30** sponsored by the **Ramada Plaza Hotel**. From 5:30 - 7 p.m. enjoy hot dogs, ice cream and popsicles at a "Fourth of July-style picnic" while making valuable business contacts.

RAMADA PLAZA HOTEL

Everyone in attendance will also have the chance to register for a free night's stay at the Ramada.

The cost is \$2 for members and \$5 for potential members. Reservations are not required.

Show Your Stuff At August Business After Hours

Make your company known! August's Business After Hours is the perfect time to show Chamber members everything your company has to offer. Brochures, discount offers, free samples and much more can be displayed on your table top. Tables are \$50 each and space is limited, so call **Reeda Taylor** today at 431-8649 to reserve yours.

First Friday

Relax and recover from those grueling days at work with a massage! The First Friday networking event in August 7 is being sponsored by the **Mobile School of Massage Therapy**, from 7:30 - 8:30 a.m. at 3995 B Cottage Hill Rd. Learn about massages and then experience one yourself.

A therapist will speak about the benefits of massage, and free chair massages will be available. Meet and unwind with other Chamber members before work begins, keeping yourself stress-free and in touch with the business side of Mobile.

Cost is \$2 for members and \$5 for potential members. Reservations are not required.

Mobile School of Massage Therapy



Pork and Politics

Politicians and barbeque were the attraction of the day at the Chamber's Third Annual Pork and Politics on May 27.

More than 100 candidates from state and local races and more than 500 guests mixed and mingled over barbecue, beer, wine, soft drinks and the music of a local jazz band.

A new addition this year was "Swiftly Swine Pigs." Everyone had a good laugh as they cheered on their favorite baby pig while they squealed to the finish line for an Oreo cookie.

Early Birdies

Now is the time to sign up for the 11th Annual Fall Golf Tournament scheduled for Friday, Oct. 9. This popular event will be held at Magnolia Grove Golf Course. It will be a fun day of networking on the greens with great door prizes and a putting contest.

Plan to treat your clients, customers and yourself! Hole Sponsorships are available for \$800 and individual tickets are \$150. This event will sell out in a hurry, so don't delay. Sign up now. For more information call **Carolyn Golson** at 431-8622.



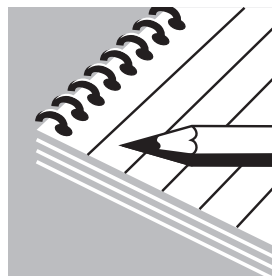
Business Writing for the 90s

Even the best of writers could always use a refresher course. Don't miss our newest seminar designed to bring everyone up to speed in the fast paced world of e-mails and memos. **Business Writing for the 90s** is scheduled for **Thursday, August 20** from 8:15 to 11:30 a.m. in the Chamber's McGowin Room.

Designed for everyone from secretaries to CEOs, this course will benefit anyone who writes everything from memos to proposals.

Three experts in the field will guide participants through topics such as business writing, persuasive writing and grammar. Your memos and e-mails don't have to be boring and confusing. Learn tricks to help you write more accurately and concisely.

A class like this is a must for everyone. It will fill up quickly so don't delay. Sign up now by calling **Jennifer Acosta** at 431-8606. The cost of the class will be \$15.



Dock Reed Ad From May View

Marketing on a Shoestring Budget

Who couldn't use more money to market their business? This month Kathryn Cariglino, owner of the **Women's Yellow Pages of the Gulf Coast**, will untie the mysteries of conducting creative, low cost and no cost marketing campaigns. Designed for the small business owner or sales professionals, almost anyone can benefit from this seminar.

Set for **Thursday, July 23**, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. in the Chamber's McGowin Room, the cost is \$15 and includes a catered box lunch. Call **Jacqueline Jones** at 431-8607 or fax in your name, company name and phone number to 431-8646.

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ATTENTION MEMBERS!

If you know of a company interested in benefiting from Chamber membership, please contact our account executive:
• Tom Lewis at 431-8629, pager: 582-2076

BellSouth announces their new Web Hosting Services designed to help small businesses use the Internet without having computer or Internet expertise. To learn more about BellSouth Web Hosting Services, visit www.bellsouth-hosting.net or call (800)313-6589.

Recently, REAL TRENDS, the Information Source for the Real Estate Industry, ranked **Roberts Brothers Inc.** 162 out of 450 brokerage firms in the U.S. The annual study ranks all firms by closed transaction sides, either publicly or privately owned, affiliated with a national franchise or unaffiliated.

QMS Inc. commemorated the shipment of the 5,000th QMS *magicolor 2* color laser printer in May. *PC Magazine* presented QMS with the coveted Editor's Choice award at a company celebration, making it first in color network printing.

Long's Human Resource Services announced the following additions to their staff: **Elizabeth Damson**, job development and placement counselor; **Samantha Smith**, account executive; **Jeannine Webb**, staff coordinator and **Lori Wells**, account executive.

Congratulations to **Janet N. Scott**, LMT, for passing the national board exam for the National Certification of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork. **Scott** does onsite chair massages for local businesses.

David D. Williams Appraisal Co. Inc. announced the opening of their new Baldwin County office at 318 Magnolia Ave. Ste. 5, Fairhope, Ala. 36532. In other news, **Pratt (Chip) Turner Jr.** joined the company as a real estate appraiser.

Geneva R. Johnson, Ph.D., dean of the **University of Mobile** Graduate School of Physical Therapy, has been appointed to serve on the Committee on History of the American Physical Therapy Assoc., headquartered in Alexandria, Va.

In other news, the **University of Mobile** is offering a new course designed for Licensed Practical Nurses looking for their way to turn their work experience into college credit and significantly reduce the amount of time it takes to earn an Associate Degree in Nursing. For more information, call **Dr. Rosemary Adams**, dean of the School of Nursing, at (334) 675-5990, ext. 227.

Infirmiry Health System's Marketing/Communications Department recently won top honors in the 1998 Annual Healthcare Advertising Awards. They received the Best of Show Award for their 1997 newspaper inserts. They were also awarded a Gold Award for Newspaper/Advertising and a Total Public Relations Program Merit Award for the Infirmiry-Eastern Shore Opening.

In other news, **Mobile Infirmiry** marked the 20th anniversary of the first open heart surgery.

USS ALABAMA Battleship Commission Chairman Andrew J. Cooper welcomed the ten millionth visitor to **Battleship Memorial Park**. The **Michael Reed** family, of Lake Charles, La., were recognized as being the lucky recipient of the honor and were made Honorary Admirals.

Karen Fendley, president of **Allied Retail Services Inc.**, has been named to the Regional Board of Directors for the Professional Retail Store Maintenance Association (PRSM). The director's mission is to advance industry awareness of retail facilities maintenance, while promoting professional and ethical standards.

Murphy High School students **Jamie Aldes**, **Roopa Dhawan** and **Pearl Flath**, along with their sponsor, **Wanda Griffis**, traveled to Ft. Worth, Texas, to participate in the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair. This is the first time the **Mobile County Public School System** has had three students compete at the International Fair.

Becky S. Tate, executive director of The PrimeHealth Companies announced the recent promotion of long time employee **Rae Lynn Dennis** to Claims Manager.

Thomas M. Hinds, chairman and CEO of **Regions Bank-Mobile** announced the promotions of **Margie B. Parson** to Branch Manager of the Grelot Office located in the Winn Dixie Marketplace and **Gary A. (Arnie) Nelson Jr.** to Loan Review Officer in the Main Office Loan Review Dept.

During the 97-98 season, members of the **Mobile Symphony** made 67 in-school appearances throughout Mobile, Baldwin and Washington counties, reaching more than 20,000 students. The final performance was held June 3 at Murphy High School where local opera singer **Linda Zoghby** and accompanist **Missy Powell** "wowed" students with the power and range of the human voice.

The **March of Dimes**, along with **Long's Human Resource Services**, is inviting area businesses to participate in the March of Dimes Blue Jeans for Babies fund raising campaign. This event is the annual casual day on Thursday, August 13. For a donation of \$10, people may wear their jeans and receive an official 1998 T-shirt or cap to wear on Blue Jeans for Babies day.

Spring Hill College honored nine employees at Service Recognition Celebration. The honorees are: **Dr. Charles Kargkeder**, division chair for languages and literature, 35 years; **Dr. Barbara Nolan**, vice president of academic affairs, 30 years; **Maxine Jackson**, custodian, 25 years; **Dr. Diane Thompson**, professor of psychology, 25 years; **Dr. Robert MacAleese**, professor of psychology, 20 years; **Dr. Larry Hall**, director and professor of psychology, 20 years; **Angela Strickland**, business office, 20 years; two long-time employees, **Dr. Pat Macnamara**, professor of biology, and **Dr. Jeanne Moon**, clinical psychologist in the Office of Student Development, were also recognized on the occasion of their retirement.

In other news, **Dr. Melvin J. Brandon**, professor and chair for the department of philosophy, was awarded the Reverend Edward B. Moody, S.J., Teacher of the Year Award during commencement ceremonies.

John F. Gresham, chairman and CEO of **SouthTrust Bank** announced the following promotions: **Gwen Akridge** to vice president; **Kathryn Stallworth Ellis** to vice president; **Tyronnda Bethune** to branch officer and manager of the Main Office; **Sandra James** to retail loan officer at the Government Blvd. Office; **Susan Sackett** to loan operations officer; **Kleasa Boozer** to real estate operations officer; **Jan Williams** to sales officer; in addition, **Shirley Sessions** will assume the responsibilities as CRA office and coordinator, she will transfer to the Airport/University office.

UniversalCom Inc. has acquired ST & T Communications Inc. of Mobile, giving the Destin-based company blanket coverage across the Gulf South region from Northwest Florida to central Louisiana.

South Alabama Bank of Mobile announced the following personnel changes: **Agnes H. Easley** joined the bank as assistant vice president and branch manager of the new Foley branch; **David R. Pruet Jr.** has been appointed Baldwin County president of the Baldwin County branches; and **Randall S. Adams** joined the bank as vice president and commercial loan officer.

Mercy Medical announced the newly-elected Executive committee for 1998-99. Those elected include: President **William J. Schulte M.D.**; President-Elect **Henry H. Davis III M.D.**; Secretary **Randall L. McKissack M.D.**; and at-large members, **Edward M. Schnitzer M.D.**, **William R. Parsons D.M.D.**, **William F. Sullivan M.D.**, **John A. Rodriguez-Feo M.D.** and **Nancy A. McLeod M.D.**; and **Alfred B. Chance Jr. M.D.**, Medical Director. **Mercy Medical**, a healthcare facility serving the Mobile and Baldwin County communities, is sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy.

Bill A. Mason, president of **Springhill Memorial Hospital**, was re-elected to serve on the 1998 National Board of Governors for the Federation of American Health Systems (FAHS).

In other news, **Christy E. Roberts** joined **Springhill Memorial Hospital** as Director of Medical Records.

Dennis C. Mortimer, president of **ABB-Associated Business Brokers Inc.**, was awarded the Certified Business Intermediary (CBI) designation at the International Business Brokers Association (IBBA) Education Convention. This designation is given to members who satisfy education requirements, a comprehensive exam and conform to the organization's ethical standards. Mortimer is the first person to earn the CBI designation in Southern Alabama.



Mortimer

STATE DOCKS, Continued from Page 1

Louisiana's gasoline tax provides annual funding of approximately \$20 million or 50 percent funding for capital improvements.

"Over the years, we've lost some opportunities because we didn't have the dock facilities we needed to handle the business," observed **Charlie Story**, vice president of governmental and public affairs for **Degussa**. "Could we have won Mercedes business? I don't know. But there's no doubt we need more modern facilities."

It's been estimated that \$100 million is needed to bring current State Docks facilities up to speed. Another \$100 million will build an intermodal facility—a central area for trucks, rail, barge and ocean-going vessels that would also be accessible to air freight from Brookley.

From 1988 through 1996, revenues were up by 33 percent.

During that same time, cargo increased by 31 percent, ship calls increased from 732 to 816, and railcar moves grew by more than 151 percent.

"In recent years, we've had more general cargo than we can handle," explained **Sarah Teague**, Manager of Public Affairs for the Alabama State Docks.

The success of **Gulf Bridge Ro-Ro**, the new ferry-trailer service from Mobile to Tuxpan, Mexico, has served as yet another example that more warehousing space is desperately needed. The cover photo shows edge to edge Dodge trucks and Ford minivans on a newly paved parking lot paid for by Gulf Bridge.

"The bottleneck at the border is getting worse and Gulf Bridge Ro-Ro is a prime example of how the Docks worked very hard to position Mobile as a North/South corridor," complimented **Tony van Aken**, the Chamber's director of trade and technology.

Jack Ravan, director and CEO of Alabama State Docks, anticipates the Docks will prosper and continue to compete with Gulf and Southern ports, but outside investment will determine to what extent. "We need to be in the competitive stage in the next five years or we will be left behind."

Alabama's seaport's central location on the northern Gulf of Mexico, its 45-ft.-deep ship channel and proximity to open water, along with the State Docks' excellent inland transportation network, are all strong assets. Mobile has comprehensive North/South and East/West Interstate coverage. In addition to the Docks' Terminal Railroad, Mobile is served by four national railroads: CSX, Illinois Central, Burlington Northern/Sante Fe, Norfolk Southern. The state offers 1,500 miles of navigable inland barge routes and is served by the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway which connects 16,000 miles of interstate rivers to the Port City.

The Alabama State Docks already has much of what is needed to be among the most competitive ports in the not too distant future. Additional investment would lock up the port's prime position as a major international seaport.

Gov. Fob James made his announcement that he would support a \$200 million package for State Docks improvements from the legislature next year. "I want the Port of Mobile to be a leader in serving North/South trade. We need to improve existing facilities and develop new facilities while becoming the bench mark for environmentally clean ports," he said.

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**

NEW MEMBERS

Clip and add these to your *Membership Directory*.

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 Marcus A. Skipper
 8105 One Mile Rd.
 Irvington, AL
 36544-3513
 (334) 957-1158

Advanced Wireless Systems Inc. Internet Provider
 Todd Parr
 4123A Government Blvd.
 Mobile, AL 36693-4807
 (334) 602-1000

Air-Heat Comfort Contractor Co. Inc. Air Conditioning & Heating Contractors
 Frederica Finizola
 614 Holcombe Ave.
 Mobile, AL 36606-4220
 (334) 479-6015,

American Parts & Equipment Supply Inc. Import/Export Brokers
 Roy Pate
 PO Box 3050
 Semmes, AL 36575-3050
 (334) 645-4485

Anders, Boyett & Brady, P.C. Attorneys
 J. David Brady Jr. ESQ
 3800 Airport Blvd.
 Suite 303
 Mobile, AL 36608-1663
 (334) 344-0880

Avon Cosmetics & Perfumes
 6128 Sauffley Pines Rd.
 Pensacola, FL 32526
 (850) 457-0690

Carole McCaffery Awards & Trophies Trophies & Awards
 Craig Manley
 50 N. Sage
 Mobile, AL 36607-2653
 (334) 476-3583

Bay Area Contracting Inc. Asphalt/Paving Contractors
 John E. Meacham
 354 Ridgelawn Dr. W.
 Mobile, AL
 36608-6109
 (334) 414-3113

Best Western Battleship Inn Motels
 John Word
 2701 Battleship Pkwy.
 Mobile, AL 36605
 (334) 433-3790

Blue Flame Credit Union Credit Unions
 Jeanette Keller
 2828 Dauphin St.
 Mobile, AL 36606-2457
 (334) 450-4804

R K Bodden Lumber Co. Inc. Exporters-Lumber
 Sandy Myers
 150 N Royal St.,
 Ste. 1001
 Mobile, AL 36602-3900
 (334) 433-2546

H Don Bowden - Architect PC Architects
 Don Bowden
 1657 Springhill Ave.
 Mobile, AL 36604-1404
 (334) 433-0704

BRI Medical Transcription Medical Transcription
 Bettye C. Mooney
 6343J Airport Blvd., Ste. B
 Mobile, AL 36608-3131
 (334) 414-5770

Bryant Product Inc. Seafood Processing Plant
 Beth Bryant
 153 Garland St.
 Bayou La Batre, AL
 36509-2016
 (334) 824-4351

C.A.B. Electric Co. Inc. Electric Contractors
 Charles A. Bordelon
 PO Box 850533
 Mobile, AL 36685-0533
 (334) 478-1577

Cannon Farms Farming
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 5751 McDonald Rd.
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 36582-4929
 (334) 666-8266

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

Civitan Club of Mobile Civic Organization
 Jo Shannon
 PO Box 160291
 Mobile, AL 36616-1291
 (334) 690-1525

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 1406 Dauphin St.
 Mobile, AL 36604-2124
 (334) 433-3968

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 36460-9671
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 2480B Government St.
 Mobile, AL 36606-1619
 (334) 476-2233

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 William Cox
 312 Marine St.
 Mobile, AL 36604
 (334) 432-4463

Crystal Mountain Inc. Water Companies-Bottle/Bulk/Etc
 A. Bryan Seibt
 831C Blackburn Dr.
 Mobile, AL 36608-9443
 (334) 634-1911

Dauphin Way Dental Arts Dentists
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 Scott McRae
 1754 Government St.
 Mobile, AL, 36604-1196
 (334) 471-1516

Daves Auto Sales Automobile Dealers-New
 Robert B. Daves
 4901 McDonald Rd.
 Theodore, AL
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Mike Dean Individuals
 Mike Dean
 3705 Scenic Dr.
 Mobile, AL 36605
 (334) 471-2804

Deep South Recovery of Dothan Inc. Recovery
 Gary N. Harbin
 1336 Hodgesville Rd.
 Dothan, AL 36301-5772
 (334) 793-1118

Feibelman and Terry Attorneys
 Russell S. Terry
 150 N Royal St.,
 Ste. 2082
 Mobile, AL 36652-2082
 (334) 433-1597

Ferdon Realty Real Estate
 Dorothy G. Ferdon
 6625 Nan Gray Davis Rd.
 Theodore, AL
 36582-8749
 (334) 653-5014

First Southern Mortgage Company Inc. Mortgages
 Charlene R. Schmidt
 2300C Airport Blvd.
 Mobile, AL 36606-1707
 (334) 470-1881

Ceresa M. Frenkel, PC Accountants-Certified Public
 Ceresa M. Frenkel
 413C Azalea Rd.
 Mobile, AL 36609-1681
 (334) 342-1097

Fresh Seafood Seafood & Meat Wholesale
 Stephen Miller
 9901 Milton Jones Rd.
 Daphne, AL 36526
 (334) 626-1106

Fun Stuff Productions Inc. Education Material
 Eleanor M.D. Reynolds
 1301 Azalea Rd.
 Mobile, AL 36693-4703
 (334) 665-0100

G.C. Specialties Inc. Contractors Equipment & Supply Dealers
 Steve Whitworth
 1274 Hutson Dr., Ste. D
 Mobile, AL 36609-1311
 (334) 316-0980

Gewin, Logan U. Investments
 Logan U. Gewin
 10070 Kearns Rd.
 Mobile, AL 36582
 (334) 973-0660

Steve Goraum & Associates Photographers-Commercial
 Steve Goraum
 4356 Midmost Dr.
 Mobile, AL 36609-5510
 (334) 343-5954

Great Southern Truck Co. Truck Sales & Service
 John L. Rider
 845 DeMaine
 Mobile, AL 36610-4715
 (334) 452-7360

Gulf Coast Intermodal Inc. Trucking-Local Cartage
 Gene Mezick
 5995 Middle Rd.
 Theodore, AL
 36582-1751
 (334) 653-1880

Robert P. Hall II P.C. Accountants-Certified Public
 Robert P. Hall II
 1765 Old Shell Rd.
 Mobile, AL 36604-1335
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Harmony Corporation Contractors-General
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 (334) 634-9928

Hillwood Properties Real Estate-Investment
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 (334) 633-6399

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 Kenny Hodges
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 Huntsville, AL
 35894-0001
 (256) 730-2000

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 Ste. 210
 Mobile, AL 36608-1662
 (334) 344-5115

JR's Smokehouse Restaurants/Caterers
 Chuck Bookout
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 Nancy Bunin
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 Ste. 827
 Mobile, AL 36604-2430
 (334) 433-8070

Michael Thomas Murphy Attorneys
 Michael T. Murphy
 209 N Joachim St.
 Mobile, AL 36603-6402
 (334) 431-6000

Norwest Mortgage Mortgages
 Linda & Tiffany McCoy
 1111 Hillcrest, Ste. 220
 Mobile, AL 36695-3952
 (334) 633-3456

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 Mobile, AL 36607-2501
 (334) 471-3368

Carroll J. Ogden Attorneys
 Carroll J. Ogden
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 Mobile, AL 36695
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