



THE VIEW

NOVEMBER 2000

MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOL. XXXII, No. 11

Remember to Vote Yes on Amendment #1 Because:

- 1** Our infrastructure needs help! You choose:
 - Don't fix it.
 - Raise taxes or
 - Vote YES on Amendment #1!**
- 2** **Amendment #1** invests a portion of the State's oil and gas revenues to fund infrastructure improvements in Alabama.
- 3** **Amendment #1** uses \$50 million of Alabama money to get \$200 million of Federal money for our roads & bridges.
- 4** **Amendment #1** invests \$100 million in the Port of Alabama to attract more jobs for us all.
- 5** **Amendment #1** funds research in agriculture & forestry for a more productive future in farming.

"The adoption of this constitutional amendment is as close to a 'free lunch' as possible. The alternative would be a massive tax increase just to keep Alabama moving ahead."

*Dr. David G. Bronner, CEO
The Retirement Systems of Alabama*

Chang Reflects on the Current State of the Economy and Gives a 2001 Outlook

For the last several years the area economy has been hot. Red hot. It has matched or exceeded the nation's unprecedented growth. For 2000, the growth was expected to continue, although not at the same rate. In the second half of the year, it was predicted that the economy would cool off somewhat. International Paper Company's recent announcement that they will shut down their Mobile Plant is an indication of that.

Preliminary Gross Domestic Product figures for the third quarter further indicate initial predictions were on target according to **Semoon Chang PhD**, director of the Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of South Alabama. He is quick to add the recent slowdown is temporary and expects to see that change by mid-2001.

For business owners and managers who have seen a hiccup in sales, Chang offers reassurance. "It's not your fault. The economy has slowed in the Mobile area, but many businesses don't know the slowdown is widespread."

Last year there was an undeniable shift in the retail tax base from the city to the police jurisdiction just outside the city limits — is what Chang likes to call the "Schillinger Road effect." The tremendous commercial investments on Schillinger Road cost the city approximately \$200 million in lost sales tax revenue last year. During the 1990s the average annual increase in sales tax revenue was 6.5 percent for the city and 5.8 percent for the county. When comparing 1998 to 1999 the city's increase slips to 3.7 percent and the county is 5.6 percent.

However, the numbers from 1999 compared to 2000, through August, already show a slowdown in both city and county sales. The city's sales tax revenue increase is 0.2 percent and in county's is -0.1 percent.

Sales tax revenue is the local area's main economic indicator and the latest numbers show there is a decline in consumer spending. The factors Chang believes that have contributed to this slow down are many, including the completion of the \$97 million expansion by the Mobile County School System, declining home sales, rising interest rates, increasing retail outlets like Target and Office Depot in Baldwin County and the fact that the novelty of the "Super" stores on Schillinger Road has worn off a bit.

The decrease in home sales was not surprising to Chang. There was a 12.4 percent increase in homes sold from 1998 to 1999, compared to a 8.7 percent average for the decade. Many people took advantage of lower interest rates especially during the last two years and home sales were at a level that could not have been maintained says Chang.

The 2001 Outlook

Coming back from a national economic conference held in Chicago recently, Chang says the consensus is the economy has hit an important turning point.

Diane Swonk, chief economist for Bank One and president of the National Association for Business Economics said recently, "We have moved from the first phase of the expansion to its second. The transition between phases does not signal the end of the expansion." In fact Swonk believes this expansion will continue to 2004 or beyond.

"Next year we are likely to see a slower growth in profits, rising prices and higher interest rates," says Chang. He outlines several

points to support his 2001 outlook.

- After a long period of low unemployment, businesses are being forced to increase wages and that will have an impact on the cost of products and services.



Semoon Chang PhD

- Unemployment will increase slightly, but is expected to remain below 5 percent.
- The overall economy measured in GDP will slow down, but according to Chang, not enough, and the Feds will again raise interest rates late next year.
- The inflation rate, which in 1999 was 2.2 percent, will hover around 3 percent. The falling value of the dollar, sustained productivity and changing oil prices may help or hurt the inflation picture.

- If passed, Chang says Amendment One would be a significant boost for the local economy. Monies released to the Port of Alabama would stimulate immediate growth.

Another factor expected to have a positive impact on the local economy is the number of businesses hiring. The list includes Hertz, Austal, IPSCO, Mobile Aerospace Engineering, Bender Shipyard and Atlantic Marine.

Good news for technology-related companies, Chang believes because of the growing need for their products, they will not be affected by the slowdown.

If passed, Chang says Amendment One would be a significant boost for the local economy. Monies released to the Port of Alabama would stimulate immediate growth.

Former Atlanta Mayor to Speak at Chamber Eagle Awards

Maynard H. Jackson, the first African-American to serve as mayor of Atlanta, will be the keynote speaker for the third annual Eagle Awards recognizing minority-owned businesses. The event is set for Thursday, Nov. 9 from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center.

Jackson was elected to three terms as mayor for the City of Atlanta serving for three decades. During this time, Jackson was repeatedly recognized for his influence and leadership on projects such as the construction of the Hartsfield Atlanta International Airport, the world's largest air terminal.

During his third administration, Jackson played a key role in securing the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games in Atlanta for which he was commended for

his hard work and dedication to bring the games to the United States.

After leaving politics in 1994, Jackson returned to private business, forming Jackson Securities. Under his guidance as CEO and Chairman, Jackson Securities, which specializes in municipal, structured and corporate finance as well as institutional equities and fixed-income trading, has grown from its base in Atlanta to offices in Houston, Miami, Los Angeles, Orlando and San Francisco.

In addition to his work with Jackson Securities, Jackson also finds time to give back to the city that gave him so much. He is the founder, chairman and principal teacher of the Maynard Jackson Youth Foundation — a multi-focused leadership training

program for low income Atlanta high school students, a national board member of the NAACP as well as a member of the Super Bowl XXXIV Host Committee, Georgia Chamber of Commerce, govWorks.com and the Urban Residential Development Corporation of the City of Atlanta.

A graduate of Morehouse College at the age of 18 with a bachelor's degree in political science and history, Jackson earned a Juris Doctor from the School of Law at North Carolina Central University. He is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and the recipient of seven honorary doctorate degrees.

Read about this year's Eagle Award winners on page 3.



Maynard Jackson

Capital Ideas from a Capitol City

◆ 2000 Leadership trip participants visit Richmond, Va.

All Richmond, Va., needed was a row of abandoned warehouses along the James River in their downtown area and a plan. Now there are nearly 15 contiguous blocks of upscale loft apartments, unique shops and cozy restaurants that are the rage among young professionals.

Projects like this one were highlighted at the Chamber's 2000 Leadership Trip where more than 125 business, government and civic leaders traveled to Richmond to study that city's successful initiatives.

"Each year, we come away inspired with new ideas," said Chamber Chairman Dianne Irby with Irby Strategic Services. "But equally important is our own sense of accomplishment when we compare ourselves to other forward-thinking communities like Richmond."

Another topic during the three-day trip was Richmond's new Bio-Tech Research Park under the direction of Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). The research park is a combination of two schools within the university — their

medical school and college of engineering. According to VCU President Eugene Trani, the park is the result of many business, government and university groups coming together to launch the project. It houses a company that holds the

computer registry of organ transplants for the entire country, a state of the art forensics department, a

French company that designs water treatment plants and a structural biology and drug company, to name just a few.

"The collection of these companies in one place has increased our ability to secure grants greatly," said Trani. "We are at the beginning of the revolution in life sciences and modern biology. It's the engine for economic development. We're setting in place four masters degrees in bio statistics, environmental education, bio-technology and forensics. . . We're not skating to the puck. We're skating to where the puck is going to be."

In addition to the various Richmond initiatives, participants were updated on Mobile's latest projects and discussed future ideas. The group pondered such topics as a rapid-rail system between Pensacola and Baton Rouge, locating a research facility in Mobile's downtown area, a proposed \$25 million cancer research center at the University of South Alabama

and the development of an arts center building downtown.

Leadership Trip participants will meet again this winter to review progress already underway as a result of the trip.



"We're not skating to the puck. We're skating to where the puck is going to be."
Eugene Trani PhD, VCU

Local Organizations Plan to Raise \$76 Million

From a \$50,000 employee assistance fund at Providence Hospital to a \$10 million capital endowment and technology upgrade project at the University of Mobile, a recent projection of the area's major fundraising projects shows local groups are hoping to raise \$76,183,000 through the private sector over the next two to three years. Of this amount, Baldwin County projects account for \$5.17 million.

The survey was conducted by the Mobile Community Foundation to address philanthropy goals outlined in Envision Mobile-Baldwin, the area's long-range strategic plan.

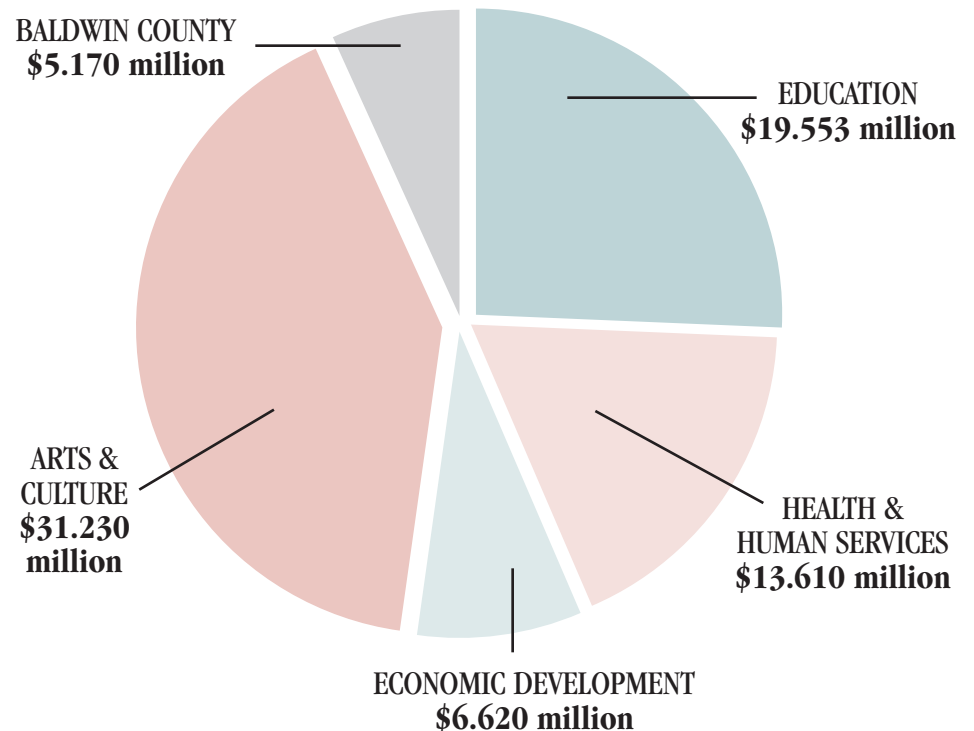
"We wanted to give the businesses and organizations that are constantly being asked for money the ability to look ahead and prioritize their

contributions," said Chamber Community Development Director Ginny Russell who coordinates Envision. "We purposely focused on large projects, mainly \$500,000 or more, though we've included a couple less than that. This was a report the business community has been asking for."

Since last year's survey, several large fundraisers have been completed such as \$1.8 million for the Mobile Area Education Foundation, \$2.3 million for the Ronald McDonald House, \$4.5 million for St. Ignatius Catholic School and \$2.9 million for St. Paul's Episcopal School.

For a copy of the "Community Scan of Planned Fundraising Campaigns," call the Chamber at 431-8621.

Estimates for Local Funding Efforts Conducted Over the Next 2-3 Years



Forum Alabama to be held November 28

On Tuesday, Nov. 28, the Chamber will hold its annual Forum Alabama luncheon, sponsored by Alabama Power Company, at the Mobile Convention Center. Keynote speaker for the meeting will be U.S. Chamber of Commerce Chairman Kelly N. Stanley.

Traveling across the country meeting with state and local Chambers and other business groups, Stanley is urging business leaders to support pro-business legislation. Several of this year's top policies are: electing a pro-business Congress, finding quality workers, opening new markets and promoting free trade, enacting environmental and regulatory reform and providing market-based health care and retirement security. During his luncheon speech, Stanley will be addressing these issues.

"The U.S. Chamber is widely recognized as a

trail-blazer and Mobile couldn't be more fortunate than to have Kelly Stanley come down here," said Chamber president Win Hallett. "Under the helm of (U.S. Chamber president) Tom Donohue, the

U.S. Chamber continues to become more of an advocate for business and Chambers across the country.

Stanley is president and CEO of Ontario Corporation based in Muncie, Ind. The corporation provides precision machining, welding and laboratory testing services, as well as computer hardware and software solutions for management. Prior to his tenure as chairman of the U.S. Chamber, he served on its board for seven years and was the mid-west regional vice chairman and chairman for both the audit

committee and the labor relations committee.

Tickets to Forum Alabama are \$20 per person. Reservations can be made by calling Pratt Vereen at 431-8638.



Photo by Jan Wiegand

Kelly N. Stanley



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www.mobilechamber.com



EAGLE

Awards

2000 WINNERS

On Thursday, Nov. 9 the Chamber will host the Second Annual Eagle Awards recognizing the accomplishments of 10 local minority-owned small businesses and their contributions to the area economy.

This year's Eagle Award recipients range from a chiropractic clinic to a children's learning center. Together they have a significant economic impact — they generate over \$5.1 million in sales annually and employ more than 100 people.

Owners list a variety of reasons for their success including quality, customer service, fairness, honesty and faith in God.

At an American Chamber of Commerce Executive Symposium held in Salt Lake City, Utah, earlier this year, **Tim Ayers** identified the growth in minority-owned business as an important trend to pay attention to. Ayers is executive director of the North Nashville Community Development Corp., an affiliate organization of the Nashville Chamber of Commerce.

There were 15.1 million minority-owned businesses as of 1999 in the U.S. These companies employ more than 31.9 million people and generate

in excess of \$3.6 trillion in sales. Between 1987 and 1999, sales alone increased 236 percent. During that same time frame employment increased 120 percent and the number of minority-owned firms more than doubled.

Top growth industries for this group were service-based businesses.

Minority-owned firms accounted for 23 percent of the businesses in the U.S. as of 1999. Throughout the world, minority-owned firms typically comprise between 25 — 30 percent of the business population.

In Alabama, there are over 130,200 minority and women-owned businesses employing more than 600,000 plus people.

Three judges selected this year's group of winners. Criteria used to determine winners were based on revenue and employee growth and projected growth for the next three years.

Here are the 2000 Eagle Award winners:

Alabama Injury & Pain Clinic Inc.

Chief: Dr. James Gordon
Established: 1997
Employees: 12
Location: 2172 St. Stephens Rd.

Helping put a little zip in their patients' steps, Alabama Injury and Pain Clinic is a health care clinic utilizing chiropractic and physiological therapies to treat accident victims. In addition to its main location on Saint Stephens Road, there are two other facilities on Dauphin Island Parkway and Ziegler Boulevard. With three locations serving the Mobile area, Clinic Director Dr. James Gordon is proud to be a preferred provider for several insurance companies. He sites fairness and honesty as two important keys to his success.

Alex White DDS

Chief: Alex White DDS
Established: 1995
Employees: 5
Location: 3805 Airport Blvd.

There's more to a beautiful smile than pearly white teeth. Dr. Alex White provides comprehensive patient care including general dentistry, restorations, crowns, bridges and other services. Over the past several years, he and his team of five employees have expanded services and have grown the business into a new location this past July. Being fair and finding employees who support the same philosophy has put many smiles on Dr. White's patients.

Carter Brandyburg PC

Chief: Jerome C. Carter
Established: 1999
Employees: 4
Location: 159 N. Conception St.

Forget all the negative things said about lawyers. The law firm of Carter Brandyburg PC is passionate about the field of law, and committed to its clients' best interests. Founded in 1999 as Jerome C. Carter PC, the firm has now partnered with James D. Brandyburg to create a full-service practice focusing on general litigation including personal injury cases, criminal defense, child and family custody cases and misdemeanor crimes. Assisting clients in South Alabama, the Carter Brandyburg staff of four relies on a strong belief that God will direct the firm's path in the future.

Hair Bazaar Beauty Salon & Exclusive-Cuts Barber Shop

Chief: Eugene Trotter Jr.
Established: 1980
Employees: 21
Location: 2964 Spring Hill Ave.

Growing by pins and curls, Owner Eugene Trotter Jr. is razor sharp when it comes to business. Founded in 1980, the Hair Bazaar Beauty Salon and Exclusive-Cuts Barber Shop employ 21 hairstyle professionals. In business for more than 20 years, Trotter has owned shops in Jackson, Thomasville, Monroeville, Bay Minette and Saraland. He prides himself on helping most of his employees become their own shop owners. The key to his success, Trotter says, is being a good steward over what God has blessed him with.

Kids' Quarters Learning & Development Center Inc.

Chief: Annie L. Williams
Established: 1994
Employees: 9
Location: 1725 Lott Rd.

Child's play has never been more serious business. To meet a community need to help parents with the positive growth and development of children, Kids' Quarters opened its doors in 1994. Serving Prichard, Mobile, Saraland, Citronelle and Mauvilla, the Center provides a safe and educational place for children while their parents are at work. According to Director Annie Williams, open communication between families and staff and maintaining staff development are just two reasons this community-based center has grown to include 75 children in its program.

Leaf and Petal Florist and Gift Shop

Chiefs: Robert and Maxine Bryant
Established: 1996
Employees: 4
Location: 3324 St. Stephens Rd.

From a simple bouquet of milk-white daisies to honor a daughter's sweet sixteen to a dozen long stem crimson-red roses that eloquently say, "I love you," to a bridal bouquet of bright purple and pink star-gazer lilies, baby's breath and plump tulips, Leaf and Petal Florist and Gift Shop has an impressive selection of fresh cut flowers for any occasion.

Devout in their faith in God, owners Maxine and Robert Bryant's staff create lasting memories. And if it's not flowers that seem right, they also offer gourmet and fruit baskets. In addition to their recognition as an Eagle Award winner, the Bryants' proof of success is in their customers who return time and time again.

Lovett's Funeral Chapel/ Ali-Lovett Inc.

Chief: Ronald Ali
Established: 1986
Employees: 5
Location: 404 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Ave.

Amidst all the turmoil and choices surrounding the grief that sets in following the death of a loved one, there is comfort in knowing that Lovett's Funeral Chapel is there to help. For more than 14 years, the staff at this funeral home on Dr. Martin Luther King Avenue has provided a shoulder for its customers to lean on when deciding the proper type of funeral and burial service. President Ronald Ali understands that providing death care to grief-stricken family and friends is so important and his well-trained staff is compassionate and respectful to a family's needs at an affordable price.

North Broad Street Auto Sales Inc.

Chief: John Peoples
Established: 1998
Employees: 2
Location: 425 N. Broad St.

Not until the customer drives away with a smile will the employees of North Broad Street Auto Sales be satisfied. It's that quality customer service, a good reputation and service after the sale that keeps customers returning to the dealership says Manager John Peoples. Opened in 1998 with only three vehicles on the lot and dreams of making it as a minority business owner, the company has grown to include an inventory of more than 30 cars. Peoples and his management team continue to attend auctions in three area cities to find quality vehicles to offer their customers.

Parker's Adult Foster Homes Inc.

Chiefs: Samuel and Carol Parker
Established: 1981
Employees: 24
Location: 671 Stanton Rd.

It's a difficult decision to place a child in day care, but what if the child was 30-years-old and mentally handicapped? Tough decisions like these are much easier knowing Parker's Adult Foster Home provides 24-hour services, supervision and care for mentally challenged and mentally-retarded adults. It's a comfort to many families knowing these services are provided in a residential and community setting. Established in 1981 with two locations by Samuel and Carol Parker, there are now eight homes throughout the city and county caring for these special needs adults and 24 full-time employees caring for them.

Saucy-Q Bar-B-Que

Chief: Elbert Wingfield
Established: 1990
Employees: 12
Location: 1252 Government St.

Ask any customer — and it won't be hard to find one — what makes Saucy-Q Bar-B-Que successful and undoubtedly the delicious food will be their answer. Owner Elbert Wingfield says to get that kind of response, his team has to ensure customers get what they expect every time. "Consistency, consistency, doing it well every time." Saucy-Q serves ribs, chicken, beef and pork seasoned with famous side dishes such as potato salad, collard greens and baked beans. With a team of 12 employees, the restaurant has been in business 10 years. Wingfield started at the Flea Market, then progressed to a take-out location and now has a restaurant in the Oakleigh District where they serve approximately 300 customers a day.



Honoring Minority-Owned Businesses

Featuring **Maynard Jackson**,
the first African-American mayor of Atlanta

Thursday, Nov. 9 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center

Tickets — \$30 each or \$300 for a table of 10

For reservations contact Brenda Rembert at 431-8607.

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Samuel Johnson PhD



Small Business of the Month

Centralite Systems

One of Mobile's most successful small businesses is enjoying rapid growth and all the excitement that comes with it. "Centralite Systems Inc. has the "feel" of another business I started a long time ago," says its president and CEO, James L. Busby, former president, CEO and Chairman of the Board of QMS Inc.

Busby and his son, Jimmy Busby, developed and founded Centralite when the younger Busby graduated from the University of Alabama in 1997. The idea originated with the centralized lighting control system Jim built and installed in his west Mobile home in 1989.

"It's a big house," he explains. "I built two large electrical boxes and wired all the lighting to them so they could be centrally controlled." Nearly eight years later, the idea for Centralite was born.

As the Busbys researched and planned, they discovered only three other companies offering similar systems. "These systems were unbelievably expensive," Busby says. "We knew we could offer a less expensive product at a fraction of our competitors' cost."

Using existing electrical technology combined with advanced computerized capabilities, they developed Centralite, which offers the homeowner a centralized lighting system allowing operation of any light from any location in the home or from a single switch or even from the car using a key-chain remote control. "It's convenient, offers security and is designed with the future in mind," says Jimmy, Centralite's executive vice president for sales, marketing and operations.

Centralite's biggest challenge now is to build awareness for its product through trade shows and advertising. And their strategy is working. Centralite products are installed in 30 states, mostly in new homes. The Busby men install most of the systems themselves, but as they establish more relationships, they are training custom electronic dealers to install their products.



The Centralite team: front row from left, Jimmy Busby, Will Jarrell, Paula Rhea, James Counselman, Lance Hartley and Charlotte Keel; second row, Dottie Hartley, Heather Dolbear, Bryson Hollowell, Adel Sakla and Jim Busby.

The company's 13 full-time and seven part-time employees work hard but have fun, says Busby. "We get to meet the homeowners and see how excited they are with our products," he said. "That's rewarding."

Centralite is getting more calls from Mobile builders, many of whom have already installed the products in more than 50 new homes. Busby doesn't want to limit the products' use to new construction. He's developing a retrofit, which can be installed in existing homes or businesses and will be completed within a year.

For more information about Centralite call 607-9119 or visit them at 6414 Hillcrest Park Ct.

Guidelines for the Small Business of the Month selection:

- ◆ Current chamber member
- ◆ Fewer than 100 employees
- ◆ Apparent solid financial base
- ◆ Considered successful by peers
- ◆ Expanding number of employees
- ◆ Sales growth and/or profit growth
- ◆ Outstanding public service contribution
- ◆ In business a minimum of a year
- ◆ New product line



Cochrane Africatown USA Bridge

Volkert Continues to Build A Future on 75 Years of Success

Few companies achieve the level of success of Mobile-based Volkert & Associates Inc. An award-winning and nationally top-ranked engineering, architectural, planning and environmental consulting firm, Volkert celebrates its 75th anniversary this year.

It was the decade of the Roaring Twenties when America prospered and its citizens were optimistic that the company first opened its doors in 1925 as Doullut & Ewin, which later became Volkert. From a small, New Orleans-based, waterfront construction firm, Volkert evolved into a multi-million dollar business with 500 employees who operate from 12 design offices and eight field offices throughout the Southeastern and Atlantic states.

In 1946, one of Waterman Steamship's subsidiary companies, Southern Industries, acquired Doullut & Ewin, reorganized the firm as J.P. Ewin Inc., and moved it to Mobile. With it came Southern Industries President David G. Volkert, a professional engineer and graduate of Cornell University. In 1954, Volkert acquired controlling interest in the company and moved the firm to Savannah Street. Renamed David Volkert & Associates in 1963, the firm moved to the current offices at 3809 Moffett Rd. in 1965.

From its beginning, Volkert has been involved in important, highly visible projects. During World War II, the firm played a major role in the production of the "Liberty Ships" which contributed greatly to the war effort. The firm's design of floating dry dock facilities for the U. S. Navy was another significant contribution.

Over the decades, Volkert has become an integral part of the Mobile community with its involvement in the construction of Ladd Stadium, projects at Alabama State Docks, the Grand Hotel at Point Clear, the Battle House Hotel, Mobile Municipal Airport Terminal and Hank Aaron Baseball Stadium. In addition the company has participated in the design of numerous streets for the city and roads for Mobile County.

Numerous company projects earned recognition from organizations such as The National Society of Professional Engineers and the Federal Highway Administration. Among the most notable of Volkert's bridge design projects to Mobilians are the Cochrane/Africatown USA Bridge over Mobile River and the I-10 bridges over Mobile Bay, which were honored by the State of Alabama Engineering Hall of Fame.

Under the leadership of President and CEO T. Keith King PE, Volkert has continued to compile "an impressive record" in the design of award-winning bridges, highways and various projects. According to King, they have accomplished much because Volkert has progressed with the profession's design and technological changes.



I-10 over Mobile Bay

"This millennium year brings many technological advances to the practice of engineering, architecture, environmental science, surveying and planning," King said. "Volkert emphasizes the importance of professional licensure and training to keep pace with these advances."

King credits Volkert employees for the successful completion of the firm's many impressive and memorable projects. He is fond of saying that quality employees build quality into the job. "At Volkert, we are totally committed to customer satisfaction and improving the quality of life in our community," King says.

Ladd-Peebles Stadium



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How to Lead in a Rapidly Changing World

There's no question that technology and the Internet are driving rapid change, but how do executives maintain their leadership roles in these fast-changing times? Sheila Murray Bethel, president of the Bethel Institute in Burlingame, Calif., offered some tips at an American Chamber of Commerce Executives' Management Symposium earlier this year.

"For the last few decades, most of us have been over-managed and under-led," said Bethel. "We learned to manage objects and procedures, money and time, equipment and machinery, but somewhere along the way we lost the emphasis on leadership. In leading, executives have to help (others) think, act and perceive events and issues from a global perspective so that they can function and progress in the challenging years ahead."

Three 21st Century Leadership Drivers

According to Bethel, there are three key drivers behind leadership success in the 21st century, including change, the fostering of partnerships and alliances and a commitment to customers.

Drive #1: Change

Did you know that during the last year America experienced more change than in the previous 10? That in the next 50 years, we will experience more change than in the past 500?

"As leaders, we need to learn how to refrain, refocus and restructure on a continual basis," she explained. "We must master change so that we master the ability to turn on a dime and show (others) how to embrace the skills to do the same. The key to mastering change is a commitment to learning.

"As leaders in our business communities, it is our role to be on the edge, to be out front embracing new technologies, understanding the trends and helping prepare (others) for what lies ahead," she said. "We cannot slow down, because if we stop learning, we stop leading."

So how do executives stay on the edge? Bethel recommends that they continually sharpen their skills to maximize their natural leadership talents. Executives should challenge themselves with new disciplines, concepts and theories to stretch their minds. Most of all, executives must sharpen their curiosity, reinforce their commitment to making a

difference and continually seek new solutions to problems and challenges.

"Yesterday's solutions do not solve today's problems. Executives must shake themselves out of their comfort zones and challenge their (employees) to do the same."

Driver #2: Building Partnerships/Alliances

Bethel believes that executives can better meet the challenges of a fast-changing world, by partnering and forming alliances with a variety of different individuals and groups.

"Executives need to continually look for opportunities to network with others who can introduce them to new skills and knowledge."

Drive #3: Customer Focus vs. Customer Service

Businesses need to understand the difference between traditional customer service and a deep and genuine focus on the customer.

"Customer service is ensuring that our staff provides a nice smile and helps members do their jobs well, but customer focus goes much deeper. Customer focus operates at a very personal level. It involves putting yourself into your customers' shoes and asking, 'What would I want if I were dealing with me?' or 'How do I make it easy to do business with me?'"

Bethel gave an example of shopping at a department store that was across the street from a recently opened Nordstrom's Department Store. The sales assistant serviced her needs and directed her to the right area, but after she purchased the product and began to leave, the sales assistant called out, "Wait, come back here!" The assistant then asked for her receipt and wrote on the words "Thank You." The clerk explained, "We have to do that now because Nordstrom's does it."

"This is a perfect example of the sales assistant providing customer service without in any way understanding my needs or my reaction to her gesture," said Bethel. "Executives need to not only walk in the shoes of their customers, but ensure that everyone on the staff does the same and feels a sense of personal accountability and responsibility for every customer, starting with one of the most important people in your company: the receptionist who answers the phone!"

Bethel said that customer focus is approaching every member on a one-to-one basis and not as a group. "When you send out a letter, answer a question or attend an event with a customer you must interact in a way that suggests he or she is an individual to you, that you understand his or her individual needs and that those needs are important to you. Only when executives and their staffs contribute their time, emotions, energy and effort can they have a real impact on people and problems."

The Twelve Qualities of Leadership

Ms. Bethel said executives can lead, enjoy a fulfilling life and make a difference in their home, job and community by building and enhancing the following twelve success qualities:

1. **Have a Mission that Matters** – Your life's goal is at the core of your success.
2. **Be a Big Thinker** – See people, places and things bigger and better than they are.
3. **Have High Ethics** – True success means having and expecting high ethics.
4. **Be a Change Master** – Create your own future by being flexible and innovative.
5. **Be Sensitive** – Build loyalty by being sensitive to other's needs, wants and values.
6. **Be a Risk Taker** – Remember, anything worth doing is worth doing poorly at first.
7. **Be a Decision Maker** – Every decision you make releases more of your potential energy to succeed.
8. **Use Power Wisely** – Remember, the higher up you go the more gently down you reach.
9. **Be an Effective Communicator** – The key to productive relationship lies in your ability to communicate.
10. **Be a Team Builder** – True success means having and expecting high ethics.
11. **Be Courageous** – Every act of courage strengthens your resolve.
12. **Be Committed** – Commitment is the glue to your success. It is the difference between the winners and the losers.

Reprinted with permission from the American Chamber of Commerce Executives magazine.

Business Spotlight of the Month Gateway Country

The commercials fill the television airways. Can Gateway Country really do what they say for individuals and businesses? The answer is yes.

Unique to the Gateway Country store, computers are set up so customers can sit down and experiment with a variety of software features, even hop on the Internet. The trained staff is there to answer questions and explain how each computer works. "You wouldn't want to buy a car if you couldn't drive it. We feel the same way about computers. So we offer customers the chance to sit down and spend some time at a computer," said store Manager Dan Garrett. "Our sales people speak in every day language explaining the functions of computers as opposed to gigs, megs and processors," he added.

For those who want to decide what hardware and software go into their computer, Gateway offers customers the freedom to build their own. For example, if someone is starting a business and needs accounting and word processing capabilities, then Gateway can add the software needed for those skills. On the other hand, if a student needs reference materials and software for school reports, then Gateway offers a reference package and Internet service.

Along with creating a personalized computer, Gateway offers a variety of 20-minute clinics as well as in-depth training classes to demonstrate new software and Internet applications. The clinics are free and there are several to choose from including the most popular clinic, "Your First PC" and another on digital photography.

Another perk for qualifying customers is a Gateway program, YourWare, that allows owners after two years to get what Garrett calls "blue book" value for their computer, making it easier for customers to keep up with the latest technology. There are several different ways to qualify and Garrett encourages those interested in the program



Dan Garrett and Eric Kieffer are Mobile's Gateway experts ready to work for Mobile and its businesses.

to talk to him or someone at the store.

Open since November 1998, Mobile's Gateway Country store is hard to miss on Airport Boulevard – it's the one painted with the black and white cow spots near I-65. The cow and barn motifs are carried inside as well. The décor serves as a reminder of the company's Midwestern roots. Gateway was founded back in 1985 by Ted Waitt on his family's cattle farm in Iowa. Values like hard work, honesty, friendliness and quality support the company's mission to humanize the digital revolution.

Go by and visit Garrett and his staff at 3653 Airport Blvd. or call them at 304-0189. To learn even more about the Gateway company, visit their Web site at www.gateway.com.

Business Spotlight of the Month is selected from a random drawing of business cards collected at the prior month's Business After Hours event.

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Regional Partnerships Continue to Develop

Top business leaders from Pensacola to Baton Rouge met in New Orleans recently for the second annual meeting of the Gulf Coast Regional Chamber Coalition. The coalition was established in 1999 to create a four-state partnership in areas such as economic development, environment, transportation and government representation.

"As global markets grow, we must project a larger presence in that arena," said Mobile Chamber President **Win Hallett**. "Mobile probably doesn't even show up on the map of world-wide trade and tourism centers, but I guarantee that the Gulf Coast area does. If we don't band together and work as a group, we lose our best chance of attracting international business and investments."

Topics during the two-day meeting included international trade opportunities, modeling ozone formation and transport, high-speed rail and how various communities are growing and attracting high-tech companies.

A highlight of the meeting was a presentation on opportunities for regional collaboration by **Michael Gallis** with Michael Gallis & Associates of Charlotte, NC. He believes that regions are naturally interdependent. Looking at a map of the Gulf Coast region, one would see dozens of lines representing transportation routes, employee commutes, and business and shopping activity. It would quickly show centers for air traffic, health care, retail trade and jobs – and none of these activities would have anything to do with state, county or city borders. The lines would cross back and forth as if no boundaries exist.

According to Gallis, these types of studies give regions a true picture of what is already taking place. He contends cities are psychologically hamstrung by their city limits or their state lines. Governments further hinder this myopic view by tending only to their citizens instead of including other areas in their plans and activities. Yet the world sees no borders and certainly does not want to be hindered by such.

According to Hallett, several participants in the conference expressed an interest in having Gallis conduct a study specifically for the Gulf Coast Regional Chamber Coalition.

"Michael certainly piqued our interest in seeing what our regional map would look like, he concluded. "It would indeed point out our strengths and provide a visual compass to guide us in our future strategies." The next step is making sure we have buy in from all the communities we represented.

"Michael certainly piqued our interest in seeing what our regional map would look like, he concluded. "It would indeed point out our strengths and provide a visual compass to guide us in our future strategies." The next step is making sure we have buy in from all the communities we represented.



Chamber Chair Dianne Irby, Irby Strategic Services, with Michael Gallis, an expert on regionalism with Gallis and Associates.

Diplomat of the Month Chrissie Bowles



Chrissie Bowles, an account executive for Manpower Professionals, is no stranger to the Chamber's Diplomat program. Bowles was chosen Diplomat of the Month in December 1999, and is excited about being chosen the Diplomat of the Month again.

A Diplomat for two years, Bowles has been a part of this group of ambassadors since Manpower Professionals joined the Chamber. She joined the program to get involved with the Chamber's activities and the community. "I have really enjoyed the networking opportunities (that the Chamber has opened), and so far this has really been a fun year."

Bowles recently co-captained the Diplomat Team #3 for Chamber Chase and helped raise more than \$35,000 during the drive. When asked about being an active participant in the Chamber activities and how she feels they have helped her, she replied "you

get out what you put into it." She says that she definitely sees a difference in the networking opportunities for her and her company, "and we will continue to participate in every event we can."

Bowles works with information technology, engineering and professional employment in Manpower's Alabama and Mississippi region.

For more information about the Diplomat program, contact Reeda Taylor at 431-8649.

SCORE

Successful Entrepreneurs Know When To Ask for Help

Entrepreneurs are independent by nature. Sometimes too independent for their own good, fears **Bob Kirby**, former chairman and counselor for SCORE (the Senior Corp of Retired Executives).

Typically, business owners take the risk of starting their own companies because they have good ideas plus the skills and determination to get the job done.

"In addition, they have a great need to be on their own and masters of their own fate," adds Kirby.

Kirby says he understands, even admires, these traits as long as it isn't carried too far. The successful entrepreneur knows when to ask for help. "While it is admirable to do it alone, it makes good sense to call on others for help, especially if it means the difference between sinking and swimming or if it can mean greater success."

One of the resources available to small businesses is SCORE. A team of 12 local volunteers, who as professionals have succeeded in business and are committed to sharing their real-world knowledge with others. "That commitment is why we can offer these services for free," he says.

According to Kirby counselors bring extensive business backgrounds to the table and can assist in accounting, finance, human resources, law and marketing issues.

"Their expertise is donated to help you bring more resources to your business without adding expenses," he adds. "Sometimes you'll need to pay for advice of consultants and experts," says Kirby. And when needed, a SCORE counselor will suggest you do that.

Located on the Chamber's second floor, SCORE is staffed by 12 local volunteer counselors available Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to noon. When you would like to discuss business issues, call the office at 431-8614.

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Windows of Opportunity

◆ Chamber Annual Meeting Set for Jan. 16

Over and over again it's been said that Mobile is on the verge of great things happening – the Port of Alabama, education, Mobile Regional Airport and Brookley Field, regionalism, environment, downtown redevelopment and annexation. There have been many "Windows of Opportunity" to keep the area successful. On Tuesday, Jan. 16, the Chamber will host its 165th Annual Meeting at the Mobile Civic Center, beginning at 5:30 p.m. Make plans to attend this evening highlighted by area accomplishments, business advice and networking.

Outgoing Chair **Dianne Irby**, Irby Strategic Services, will officially pass the gavel to 2001 Chair **John Turner Jr.**, Whitney National Bank. Both will present a brief overview of their priorities for Chamber programs.

The featured speaker, presented by **Minolta-QMS**, will be **Dr. Russell Ackoff**, nationally recognized consultant, author and professor. His keynote address will emphasize a different way of approaching business.

"From all accounts of his impact in other areas, we fully expect him to provide an awakening for our business and community leaders as we revisit our respective and collective visions and missions," said Irby.

Ackoff's unique style and no-nonsense approach to business issues has piqued the interest of thousands of business managers. Among his more than 350 corporation and governmental clients are American

Airlines, IBM, the Internal Revenue Service, U.S. Army and Air Force and General Electric.

An author and co-author of more than 200 articles and 22 books, Ackoff's most recent novels, *The Democratic Corporation*, *Ackoff's Best* and *Re-Creating the Corporation* are used by businesses around the world as a blueprint for operations.

He is professor of Management Science at the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania, which was recently named the nation's top business school by *Business Week* magazine. Bestowed with honorary degrees from England, Peru and schools across the United States, Ackoff has also been elected as a member of the Academy of Natural Sciences of the Russian Federation.

Tickets for the 2000 Annual Meeting are now available. Individual tickets are \$40 and tables of 10 are \$375 and include a champagne reception prior to the meeting and a networking reception featuring hors d'oeuvres from 12 of the area's finest restaurants.

Sponsors for this year's meeting are Adelpia Business Solutions, Alabama Power Company, AllTel, Integrity Inc., Isle of Capri Casino, ITC^ DeltaCom, Long's Human Resource Services, Manpower Professional, Mobile Gas Service Corp. and Thompson Engineering. For tickets or additional

information, call 431-8606 or 431-8623.



"Transforming organizations requires leadership, knowledge and insight. Dr. Ackoff's focus on the future and the role of business place tremendous importance on a systems perspective applied to effective planning. He teaches an appreciation of systems thinking as business leaders try to make a difference within and outside of their organizations."

Dianne Irby

There's Music in the Air

Notes of excitement marked the opening of the Mobile Symphony's season on September 30. Music goers couldn't wait to hear the influence of **Scott Speck's** personality, the organization's first music director, on this year's performances. And they weren't disappointed. With a record crowd of 1500, attendees heard a "Speck"-tacular performance.

Known for his innovative programming, Speck has a list of credentials longer than Beethoven's 9th Symphony. He has led numerous orchestras including those in Baltimore, New Orleans, Honolulu, Savannah, and Santa Cruz, as well as the Baltimore Chamber Orchestra, the Japanese-American Matsuri Festival Orchestra and the China Film Philharmonic.

Previously, Speck was associate conductor of the Alabama Symphony and music advisor and conductor of the Honolulu Symphony. Also he was formerly associate conductor of the Alabama Symphony and conductor of the San Francisco Ballet.

Born in Boston, Speck received his bachelor's degree in Music from Yale University. There he studied with Otto-Werner Mueller and founded and directed Berkeley Chamber Orchestra, which continues to perform.

In 1996, the local Symphony board decided that to truly serve the educational, quality of life and economic development needs of the community, it must create a local Mobile Symphony Orchestra, utilizing and developing local professional musicians. Thus, the planning and development of the local orchestra began.

Jerome Shannon served as principal guest conductor for two years while the board conducted the search for its first music director. During this time, new education programs for young people were developed and expanded, and two free outdoor concerts were added to its regular

concert season. In addition, Mobile Symphony officially became the orchestra for Mobile Opera



Scott Speck's personality gives new beat to the community's local symphony.

and Mobile Ballet productions. The Symphony also began re-broadcasting its concerts on the local public radio station, WHIL - FM.

However the organization has in no way hit its crescendo. New programs are being planned for 2001. On key is a summer pops series of concerts, an after school strings school, and the hiring of a resident string quartet to perform in the orchestra.

For more information contact Amy Oliver at 431-2010 or for ticket information contact the Saenger box office at 433-2087.

Mobile Symphony's 2000-2001 Season

Beethoven & Blue Jeans – Nov. 11
A Classical Christmas – Dec. 2
Music From the Heart – Feb. 10
Dynamic Duo – March 10
Roaring Twenties – April 21

Wanted: Good Corporate Citizens

◆ Applications now being taken for Annual Corporate Community Service Award

In an emotionally-charged response to an impressive list of volunteer activities, a crowd of more than 1,000 people stood up and cheered as Kellogg Brown & Root received the first Corporate Community Service Award at the Chamber's Annual Meeting earlier this year.

The search is now on for the second round of applicants for this prestigious award. Under the Envision Mobile-Baldwin long-range strategic plan, the Corporate Community Leadership Award is a project of the Chamber and Volunteer Mobile. It seeks out and recognizes companies making a substantial commitment to the community through volunteer efforts.

"We're looking for companies that have created an environment which inspires and enables employees to volunteer," said Volunteer Mobile Executive Director Penny Dendy.

Companies interested in applying for the award, or those who want to nominate a company, contact the Chamber's Community Development Department at 431-8621.

New E-marketplace Partnership to Benefit Chamber Members

The Chamber has entered into a partnership to offer members a number of new benefits. Through the Chamber's Web site, www.mobilechamber.com, members can link to Onvia.com for discounted goods, services, information and business tools.

At a single Internet site, members will be able to buy and sell products, participate in auctions, access productivity tools, forms and worksheets and receive breaking news and expert advice. In addition, Onvia will give businesses both the opportunity to request quotes and respond to bid requests free of charge. After the introductory period, there will be a \$3 fee to respond to each request.

Chamber members who register with Onvia will receive free shipping, and to launch the service, Onvia is offering a Lexmark color printer for \$9.99.

Early this month a post card will be mailed to members with the special registration number needed to take advantage of this offer.

According to **Joe Mareno**, the Chamber's vice president of finance, Onvia will offer members a "special deal" three or four times a year.

Onvia.com is headquartered in Seattle, Wash., and is a business-to-business e-marketplace for small business buyers and sellers. The organization's mission is to save time and money for entrepreneurs by providing them with a single point on the Internet to buy products and services that are critical to the success of their business.

For more information, log on to www.mobilechamber.com/onvia.com.



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Switching Places

◆ Area business owner shadows school principal for a day.

If Baker Elementary Principal Susan McRae was running a for-profit business as opposed to an elementary school, she'd definitely be operating a Fortune 500 company. That's the impression she made on Brian Hall with MesaStaff when he volunteered to be principal for a day.

Last month Hall was one of 25 business and

civic leaders who spent a day shadowing principals in a Mobile County public school. He said he was impressed with the tremendous responsibility she has and the ease in which she moves from issue to issue throughout the day. "You can't plan a principal's day. Teachers are knocking at your door, children need to be seen and the phone is a never ending source of interruptions."

While Hall steered away from some of the more serious school business, he did listen with a sense of awe at how quick McRae explained to a caller how she could spend a \$3,000 legislative grant. "She knew her priorities." For three years, McRae has been working on updating maps and globes for her teachers. This latest grant should complete the project and allow her to direct future funding to the next thing on her list.

When asked if he felt that he could switch his skills as a business owner and manager to elementary principal, Hall answered emphatically, "No! We have similar challenges at our respective

locations, for example motivating people to perform at their best," he said, "but I could not do what she does."

An eye opening experience, Hall walked away with a much different picture of area schools, and believes most are facing the same issues. "Not having the funding, resources and facilities to accomplish your goals only makes a challenge harder to achieve." Hall vowed he would take a more active role in the Partners in Education program this academic year.

There are more than 650 businesses, civic organizations and churches that partner with schools throughout the county. Collectively, partners contributed more than \$1.1 million in resources including 49,184 hours of time by 2,333 volunteers to public schools last year.

For more information on becoming a Partner in Education, contact Mary Ann Napper at 476-0002.

The 2000 Outstanding Partners in Education

- Dupont – Caldecaver Elementary
- Kellog Brown and Root – Caldecaver Elementary
- ELF Atochem North America – Rosa Lott Elementary
- First Baptist Church of North Mobile – Saraland Elementary
- Godfather's Pizza (Airport & Hillcrest) – Tanner Williams Elementary & Cranford Burns Middle
- Sam's Club – Davidson High
- University of South Alabama Athletes – Eight Mile Elementary
- Volkert & Associates – Forest Hill Elementary
- West Mobile Rotary Club – Mertz Elementary
- World Omni – Scarborough Middle
- Zeneca Corp. – E. T. Belsaw - Mt. Vernon Elementary



Baker Elementary Principal Susan McRae offers no suggestions for Brian Hall with MesaStaff who was principal for a day. Pictured with Hall are: Ashley Betts and Sharion Gordon, and on the right, James Murray and Stephen Hoit.

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Surviving Export Regulations

The good news is that statistics indicate U.S. exports are continuing to rise yearly. The bad news is violations of export laws are also on the rise, particularly among the technology sector.

Within the last five years, more than 200 companies or individuals have received either civil or criminal penalties for violation of export laws ranging from \$10,000 in fines to suspension of export privileges to imprisonment. These penalties along with other export restraints each year cost U.S. businesses billions of dollars.

Most agree that export control laws are quite complex and expensive to navigate. However, companies such as Gateway Inc. have found it is easier and less costly to review these laws before exporting.

One of the primary reasons export laws have become more complex is due to the broadening of the country list of export sanctions. A few years ago this list only included embargoed countries such as Iraq, Iran and Cuba. Currently, different levels of restrictions have been imposed for close to 50 countries including China, areas of the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, India and Pakistan. In addition to countries, an estimated 5,000 specific entities or individuals are banned from export activity.

The Bureau of Export Administration, (BXA), a division of the U.S. Department of Commerce, regulates the export and re-export of items having commercial uses but also have possible military applications (dual use items). There are four primary reasons that BXA places export controls on certain items:

- National security
- Foreign policy
- Prevention of the spread of weapons for mass destruction and
- Commodities that are in short supply in the U.S.

All U.S. exports require some sort of authorization, however only 5 percent require an export license. Shipments to U.S. territories are not considered exports and most sales to Canada are excluded from licensing requirements. Before attempting to determine if a license is required to export a product, the BXA suggests asking the following questions:

What are you exporting? Identify the item by its Export Control Classification Number (ECCN).

What is the final destination of the item? Any stopping points of the item are of course important, but the final destination is what may determine if a license is required.

Who will receive the item? Several lists are published by the BXA to help determine if a license is needed. Included are Denied Persons List, Entity List and Embargo Lists.

Once the item is received what will be the end-use?

When these questions are answered, it should be easier to determine if an export license is required. The next steps include reviewing the ECCN to see if it is controlled and the country of destination chart. Both are found in the Export Administration Regulations. If it is determined a license is needed, the average processing time for BXA to process the license is 33 days.

Another primary U.S. government document is the Shipper's Export Declaration (SED), which is used to control exports and compile trade statistics. This document must be prepared and submitted to customs for shipments valued over \$2,500. On occasion the customer may ask the exporter to list a lesser value than the actual value of the shipment. Reasoning behind this request is so the receiver can pay less duty fees. It is important to note that this practice is illegal and exporters should take care in listing the correct value of their shipment.

Use these Web sites to find information on exporting:

Bureau of Export Administration:
www.bxa.doc.gov

U.S. Department of State:
www.state.gov

U.S. Department of Agriculture:
www.fas.usda.gov

U.S. Treasury Department:
www.itds.treas.gov

U.S. Census Bureau:
www.census.gov/foreign-trade/www

You Can Go Home Again

◆ Ad campaign launched this month aimed at bringing technology workers home to work in Mobile

What's the best way to bring home friends and family? Through friends and family already here. That's the basis of a new ad campaign being launched this month by the Gulf Coast Technology Council.

The group, comprised of more than 35 representatives from Mobile's high-tech industry and coordinated by the Chamber, is premiering its first official strategy in hopes that it will bring former Mobilians with high-tech skills back home.

This month, a series of ads spearheaded by Sullivan St. Clair Advertising Public Relations will begin appearing in the *Mobile Register*. Sullivan St. Clair has contributed its creative time to develop the idea for the campaign which features photography by Steve Gorham.

Drawing on Mobile's unique assets, the ads will remind "lost technicians" about all the things they loved about Mobile. One of the ads, for example, will feature a man in his mid-20's kicked back in a boat sur-

rounded by water and working on his laptop computer. The headline reads, "High Tech - Low Pressure," explained Chris Teague with Sullivan St. Clair.

"Mobile's quality of life will draw people back home. We just need to give them a reason to come back," said Jim Apple, the Chamber's vice president of economic development. "And that reason is jobs."

"For all the young people who, when they graduated from college, had to look for jobs in other cities, we want friends and family to help spread the word that there are high-tech good paying jobs right here," explains Kevin Mapp, an economic development project manager for the Chamber.

The response the Council is expecting is that parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, even friends, will tear the ad right out of the newspaper and send it to their displaced loved one. There will also be companion pieces to each ad - post cards that friends and family can send featuring the mixed imagery of the ads and promoting the Council's Web site.

For more information on the Council, log on to www.gulfcoasttechnology.com or call Apple at 431-8650.



Gulf Coast Technology Council

TRADE Bulletin Board

More and more companies worldwide are including the Internet as a tool in their global sales and marketing plan. The Chamber's website, www.mobcham.org, features a number of resources including foreign buyers and contacts, trade shows and international websites. Here are a few recent Internet trade leads:

A Czech manufacturer and exporter of plastic, aluminum and steel windows and doors is interested in importing their products to the U.S. For more information, contact Josef Skalicky at info@stako.cz

An industrial valves manufacturer in India is looking for additional U.S. buyers. The company is pursuing ISO 9002 certification. Their products include 2 - 24 inch pressure class 150 to 1500 made in materials including cast carbon steel, cast stainless steel and cast alloy steel. For more information contact Paras Doshi at metal@bol.net.in.

Italian agent is interested in plywood 9mm 1220x2280 or 1220 x 2440 and block boards 40 mm 1220 x 2220. Contact Serafini Ermanno at serafini@migamma.it.

A Chinese hand-made rug manufacturer is exploring opportunities to import Chinese, Persian and modern design rugs. Oriental Carpets and Rugs Company Ltd. specializes in a variety of hand-tufted rugs, hooked rugs and hand-knotted rugs made from silk or wool. For more information contact Francis Chang at Tel/Fax: 86-25-4613762, by e-mail at b4613762@jlonline.com or go to home-pages.xaonline.com/~francis/index.htm.

China-Solar has a variety of solar products it is looking to export to the U.S. from garden lights to aircraft warning lights to radios and fans. Detailed product information can be viewed from on-line catalogues at www.bangtai.com. For more information contact Henry Hsia at info@bangtai.com.

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The Spirit of Christmas Comes Alive Again in the Streets of Downtown

Keeping in step with cities around the country, Mobile will bring back the time-honored tradition of a Christmas parade on Saturday, Dec. 16 at 1:30 p.m. on the streets in downtown Mobile. Main Street Mobile will sponsor the parade aimed at bringing families downtown on the last weekend before Christmas.

Featuring massive hot air balloons from San Diego and floats brought in from North Carolina, all sponsored by local businesses, the parade will also include marching bands from Murphy, Vigor, St. Paul's, Williamson and McIntosh High Schools. The traditional Christmas parade, once a staple in the Mobile community, has not been held in over 30 years, according to Rhonda Davis with Main Street Mobile.

"The Christmas parade is different than anything people have ever seen before," says Davis. Jesika Henderson, America's Junior Miss will serve as grand marshal and Mayor Mike Dow is honorary grand marshal. The parade will be televised and families are encouraged to come down and get into the festive spirit.

In addition to the bands, floats and balloons, area arts groups, such as Mobile Ballet, the Scottish Society, Mobile Kennel Club and the Bay Area Riding Club will all be performing or walking in the parade.

A rain date has been set for Sunday Dec. 17 at 2 p.m. For more information about the Christmas parade, contact Davis at 208-7540.



The Nutcracker will be one of the balloons on loan for Mobile's Christmas parade.



Mining Gold From Customer Feedback

Some businesses consider customer feedback to be a necessary but costly evil, taking up valuable employee time and resources.

But the Internet holds the potential to turn customer feedback into gold by providing customers quick, easy and powerful way to communicate with companies.

"Astute businesses in today's Internet economy understand the need to treat consumer feedback like gold, a rich commodity to be valued and mined," said James Heskett, professor emeritus at Harvard Business School and co-author of the book, *The Service Profit Chain*.

He said companies on the cutting edge will be prepared to listen, respond and react to consumer feedback with better products and improved service.

Source: USChamber.com, June 2000

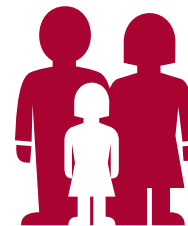


Getting the News

Earlier this year *USA TODAY* surveyed people identified as those who are most likely to vote, about where they get their news on political campaigns. Sixty percent of the respondents said from their daily newspaper; 56 percent chose network TV news; local news ranked close behind with 55 percent and Cable TV news followed with 46 percent.

All in the Family

Family Business Magazine has expanded its Web site to address a number of issues critical to family businesses. In addition to 10 years of articles in a searchable archive, the database includes news, planning tips, featured columnists and a directory of national professional service firms, financial institutions, academic organizations and consultants that specifically serve family firms.



A sample of the articles available are succession; estate planning; how to work with spouses, children, parents and non-family managers; and how to choose advisors, insurers, accountants and lawyers — many written by family business experts and owners.

To access this on-line resource, go to www.familybusinessmagazine.com.

Source: *Alabama Today*, published by the Business Council of Alabama.

New Mural for the New Millennium

The Chamber commissioned local photographer Steve Goraum of Studio G! to create a mural for its atrium. Over four-feet tall and 10-feet wide, the mural now on display is a panoramic photograph of Mobile's waterfront. The photograph was taken on a clear morning and highlights the Port City's activities along the ship canal from Interstate-10 to the Cochran-Africatown Bridge.

UM Trustee and 'Truth' Inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame

The Mobile-based, internationally known contemporary Christian music group "Truth" and its founder, Roger Breland, were among eight music greats inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame by the Gospel Music Association on Oct. 30 in Franklin, Tenn.

Breland, who serves as a member of the University of Mobile Board of Trustees, will be inducted along with The Oak Ridge Boys, Petra, Kingsmen Quartet, Shirley Caesar, Robert T. "Bob" Mackenzie, Edwin Hawkins Singers and Fisk Jubilee Singers.

He is a 1961 graduate of Vigor High School and a graduate of Troy State University. Breland started his career as a music minister and later served Spring Hill Baptist Church. In 1971 he left the church, recruited 15 young adults and began a music ministry.



Nearly three decades later, Truth has recorded more than 50 top-selling albums, performed for over 10 million people in more than 8,000 concerts in all 50 states and 22 nations. The group still tours and performs an average of 260 concerts a year.

The GMA Gospel Music Hall of Fame was established in 1971 and has inducted 114 members since inception, including Andrae Crouch, Tennessee Ernie Ford, Mahalia Jackson, Thomas A. Dorsey, the Fairfield Four, Billy Graham and the Jordanaires. Selection into the Hall of Fame is made by approximately 300 members of the GMA Gospel Music Hall of Fame electorate, who each have at least 10 years in the gospel music field.

A Matter of Time

When someone hands you a business card, immediately make a note on the back of it to remember why you have their card — send press kit, add to database, interested in new product or simply, met at convention.

When it comes to writing reports, be sure to include a brief, information-packed summary with every lengthy report. According to one source, here are the parts of a report managers read:

- Summary — 100 percent of the time
- Introduction — 65 percent of the time
- Body — 22 percent of the time
- Conclusion — 55 percent of the time
- Appendix — 15 percent of the time

An article in *PC Week*, quoted by Ann Douglass, in her book, *Samity Savers*, indicated that only 59 percent of the 5.5 billion paper documents produced in the U.S. each year are actually used over the subsequent 12 months. If in doubt, throw it out (recycle). Keep as little paperwork as possible.

These are three recent time saving tips sent to subscribers of Taylor's Time Tips, a weekly on-line publication by Harold Taylor. For more information e-mail Taylor at TaylorOnTime.com or call 416-491-0777.

When Everything Is Urgent

Here's some help on setting priorities when several colleagues want something from you yesterday:

Don't scrap your priority list to cater to the one who screams the loudest. If you do, others will catch on and everyone will scream. And don't play favorites. That just gives others reason to complain.

Insist that each request be specific. Example: "Does next Thursday mean for internal review only or ready for the client?"

Pin down those who tell you they need it "ASAP." Say, "That means I'll complete this according to my schedule, right?"


Post your project status list in a prominent place. That will show everyone the challenges you face because of the many projects you're handling. And they can quickly see where theirs is on your list.

Negotiate deadlines if you can. Offer to complete part of the project by a certain date, for example. But be diplomatic: Say you realize how important the project is and that you want to produce something they'll be proud of.

Offer frequent status reports to calm those who are impatient. But don't exaggerate your progress. That will only cause problems later on.

Source: Reprinted from *Communication Briefings*, 1101 King St., Ste. 110, Alexandria, Va. 22314, (703) 548-3800.





Are cramped quarters causing you to look for larger office space? The buildings and sites database located at www.mobilechamber.com is the area's most up-to-date and comprehensive listing of business property in Mobile and Baldwin counties.

...and then the boss said to me

"I've got this great idea for our new business location, but it'll need to be in just the right town with just the right site, and it should have a unique design and little shops all around it — make it happen"...

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Tips Offered for Using Interpreters for the Deaf

At a conference promoting National Deaf Awareness Week last month, the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind's Regional Center in Mobile offered these "Dos and Don'ts" in using interpreters:

Do

- Obtain two interpreters if the assignment is longer than two hours and requires constant interpreting, for example, for training programs or long meetings. One interpreter will not be able to physically handle interpreting for this length of time.
- Provide interpreters with breaks as needed, depending on the nature of the assignment. Interpreting work can be both mentally and physically exhausting. Check with the interpreter to see how often he or she needs a break.
- Speak directly to the deaf person, not to the interpreter.
- Make sure in a meeting, only one person at a time is talking.
- Expect the interpreter to act professionally and be dressed appropriately for the situation.
- Ask the interpreter to arrive at least 15 minutes early before a program or meeting to explain what will be covered and to discuss the room set up.
- Provide a small light to illuminate the interpreter if the situation requires darkening the room to view a slide show, video tapes or films.

- Speak clearly and in a normal tone when working with an interpreter. The interpreter or the deaf person may ask the speaker to slow down or repeat a word or sentence for clarification.

Don't

- Place the interpreter in front of a window or complicated wall covering. This will greatly hinder the deaf person from being able to see the interpreter's signs.
- Assume the deaf person is experienced in using interpreters in the workplace
- Say "tell him that..." Look at and speak directly to the deaf person.
- Talk about the deaf person or say things you don't want the deaf person to hear. The interpreter will sign everything you say, event when you talk to the interpreter.
- Ask co-workers who might know some sign language to act as "interpreters."
- Expect the interpreter to be a participant in the meeting or situation. The interpreter is there only to facilitate communication.

When looking for Interpreter Services contact: Alabama Dept. of Rehabilitation Services, 479-8611, Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind Regional Center, 432-7777, Independent Living Center, 460-0301, Mobile Deaf and Hard of Hearing Center, 666-4431.

Alabama's Dirty Dozen









The follow items comprise 70 percent of debris collected. This dirty dozen was identified by the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Coastal Programs Office (formally the Alabama Department of Community Affairs Coastal Programs Office):

1. cigarette butts
2. cardboard
3. foamed plastic pieces
4. beverage cans
5. plastic beverage bottles
6. plastic pieces
7. plastic caps, lids
8. glass beverage bottles
9. plastic food bags/wrappers
10. foamed plastic cups
11. paper pieces
12. lumber pieces



In September 3,729 volunteers participated locally in the Annual Alabama Coastal Cleanup. In 25 zones throughout Mobile and Baldwin counties, volunteers scoured 293 miles of beaches, oceans and waterways collecting a whopping more than 94,000 lbs. of trash. An additional 600 volunteers joined this year world's largest marine trash haul and collected an additional 40,000 lbs. of debris.

Comparative Economic Indicators August '00 vs August '99

Unemployment Rates Mobile/Baldwin counties		4.8% August '00
		4.7% August '99
Business Licenses Mobile County		289 August '00
		215 August '99
Homes Sold Mobile County		416 August '00
		422 August '99
Air Passengers From Mobile Mobile Area		33,541 August '00
		28,422 August '99

Double Your Brain Power

You probably sometimes wish that you could think faster, grasp new information quickly and recall more of what you read and hear. If so, you'll find the help you've yearned for in *Double Your Brain Power*, by Jean Marie Stine. Here are a few examples:

- Tackle information you want to commit to your short-term memory in the morning. Reason: The brain section that stores short-term memory items performs about 15 percent more efficiently in the morning. But switch to the afternoon for items you want to keep in your long-term memory because that part of your memory bank hits its stride later in the day.
- "Reverse and rephrase" to overcome negative thoughts about your ability to learn something new. Example: Instead of saying, "I won't remember what I'm learning," tell your brain, "I've already learned to recall many things — names, dates, computer commands. So I can and will remember this."
- Plan for an upcoming learning event by selecting a reward you'll give yourself afterward. Pick something you wouldn't usually buy or do. Picture yourself enjoying the reward just before the learning event starts. Repeat the process whenever you feel anxious about learning the information.

Note: No matter how things turn out, give yourself the reward.

- Answer these questions after you read something you want to remember. What was it about? What parts of it were most important? What opinions, if any, did it contain? What's my opinion of it? What element makes it unique? Note: Do this mentally or in writing — whichever works best for you.
- Rely on graphic devices to increase your reading speed and to help you zero in on the main points in books and other publications. Examples: italics, boldface, underlining, bulleted lists, charts, graphs, etc. As you go through pages, ignore regular text and scan only for these devices. When you find one, slow down and read those sections more carefully.
- Boost your thinking power by taking the time to really think about the answers to these questions about a situation, some information or a problem: What seems to be the key idea here? Does this resemble or parallel anything I've learned or experienced? Do I still have a nagging question about any part of this? When I put everything together, what do I see as most important?

Reprinted with permission from *Communications Briefings*, 1101 King St., Ste. 110, Alexandria, Va. 22314, (703) 548-3800. Source: *Double Your Brain Power: Increase Your Memory by Using All of Your Brain All the Time*, by Jean Marie Stine, Prentice Hall, 240 Frisch Ct., Paramus, NJ 07652.

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(1) Paid/requested outside-county mail subscriptions	377	377
(2) Paid in county subscriptions	3,157	3,157
(3) Sales through dealers, carriers, street vendors, counter sales	none	none
(4) Other classes mailed	none	none
Total Paid and/or requested circulation	3,534	3,534
Free Distribution by mail	none	none
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(17) Signature and title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager or Owner & Date:

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including multiple damages and civil penalties).

Area Children Need Help for a Happy Christmas

Few adults think about Christmas with as much anticipation as children. But more than 6,000 area children need the help of the Salvation Army Angel Tree. Created to encourage good-hearted citizens to "adopt" a special child's Christmas, volunteers provide clothing and gifts to those who would otherwise be without.

Last year, volunteers helped to provide a happy holiday to 4,070 children. Unfortunately, 1,917 children weren't adopted, and that means they received one gift from the Salvation Army's Toy Shop. The majority of the kids not being "adopted," says Ron Reams, director of community and public relations for the Salvation Army, are 7 to 12 years old. "And for those older kids, it's even more painful when school starts back and everyone is talking about what they got for Christmas."

Each eligible family applies for assistance with the Salvation Army during October and is screened to ensure they are in need of help. The organization also checks with other assistance programs like Catholic Social Services to make sure efforts are not being duplicated.

This year Angel Trees will be located at Springdale and Colonial - Bel Air malls, area Quincy's Restaurants and Wal-Mart Super Centers in Mobile County. There are also numerous volunteer jobs including registration, manning the Angel Tree booths and helping at the distribution center. In all the organization needs 1,000 volunteers. For more information call 438-1625.



State Trooper Sergeant Chris Williams delivers a donation to Major Glenn Fite during last year's drive.

Spirit of Giving Lead Again by NBC15

In its first year the Spirit of Giving program moved people in the NBC15 viewing area to donate: 7,605 lbs. of food and 1,300 lbs. of clothes; 1,558 toys and \$9,149. Everything collected was distributed to the Salvation Army to needy families during the holidays last year.

Again the station is working toward another spirit-filled day. A team will be broadcasting live from WPMI and selected area Delchamps on Friday, Dec. 1 from 7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. To keep the spirit flowing bands, choirs, cheerleaders, dancers and more will appear on the various segments. Also participating groups and companies can make presentations on the air.

Viewers will be asked to bring canned food, new unwrapped toys, blankets, water and new clothing to the location nearest them. If you're interested in participating, call Talma Carstarphen, director of special events at WPMI at 602-1500.

GMAC Mobile Alabama Bowl Set for Dec. 20

Amid the hustle and bustle of the Christmas season, horned toads and pirates took over the streets of downtown Mobile last year for a week and no one really seemed to mind. Sounds like a chapter out of a Winston Groom novel? Actually the horned toads and pirates were mascots for the football teams of University of East Carolina and Texas Christian University that played in the first Mobile Alabama Bowl.

GMAC was recruited to sponsor this year's game that will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 20 at Ladd Peebles Stadium. Invited teams representing Conference USA, which includes East Carolina, University of Louisville and University of Southern Mississippi, and the Western Athletic Conference, which includes Fresno State, Texas Christian and Rice, will be participating in a week's worth of activities leading up to the game. ESPN2 will televise the game and it will also be broadcast on the National Radio Network. Kickoff is 7 p.m.

Approximately 30,000 people traveled to the Port City for last year's event, and Mobile put on a great show to keep tourists coming back year after year. Lucy Arnold, public relations director for the

Mobile Convention and Visitors Corporation, has worked with bowl officials to package and promote the city as a destination for each team's fans. "We're convinced they're going to love what they see here in Mobile," believes Arnold.

In addition to the game, players, fans and Mobilians have an opportunity to participate in a wide variety of activities in honor of bowl week. Once again, the city's Mardi Gras associations will parade on Tuesday, Dec. 19 beginning at 6 p.m.

For fans who come early, the Christmas Parade in Downtown Mobile will be on Saturday, Dec. 16. That same evening, the Coors Classic Basketball Doubleheader will be held at the Mitchell Center on the campus of University of South Alabama. At 6:35 p.m. USA takes on Louisville, and at 9 p.m. Alabama challenges North Texas.

Bowl game tickets are now on sale. Sideline seats are \$45 with end zone seats only \$15. Tickets will be available at any SouthTrust Bank, Thos Sporting Goods, Springdale Travel, the GMAC Mobile Alabama Bowl office at 6159 Omni Park Drive, Suite B, or by calling 635-0011.



Community Gears Up for the GMAC Mobile Alabama Bowl

The fans who attended last year's inaugural Mobile Alabama Bowl could not say enough about the festivities and warm welcome they received. Here are the events scheduled for this year bowl game:

Saturday, Dec. 16

Great Southern Wood Basketball Luncheon

Mark Gottfried, head basketball coach for the University of Alabama will be the featured speaker at a luncheon honoring bowl sponsors, basketball tournament players and special guests. Tickets are \$20 each or \$200 for a table of 10.

Coors Classic Basketball Doubleheader

Local and statewide favorites, the University of South Alabama and University of Alabama as well as North Texas University and University of Louisville will participate in this basketball tournament at the Mitchell Center on the campus of USA. Tickets are \$25 for lower deck seating and \$20 for upper deck seating.

Sunday, December 17

Kenny Rodgers Roasters Team Luncheon and Tour of the USS ALABAMA

Each participating football team and their traveling party and invited guests will be treated to a luncheon on the USS ALABAMA.

GMAC Candy Christmas Concert

Nationally known Christian singer, Candy Christmas will headline a musical performance at the Saenger Theater beginning at 7 p.m.

Monday, December 18

Wives Day Out

Wives of players and coaches for the two GMAC Mobile Alabama Bowl teams will be treated to a day of fun in Mobile to include visits to Bellingrath Gardens and Home and Oakleigh Manor.

HealthSouth Fellowship of Christian Athletes Breakfast

Members of both bowl teams, city officials, sponsors, local FCA groups and the public are invited to hear a nationally recognized coach speak on the importance of athletics. A limited number of tickets are available to the public. Tickets are \$12 each or \$120 for a table of 10

Mobile Mystics Hockey Game

All bowl team members, traveling parties, university bands and the public are invited to see the Mobile Mystics play at the Civic Center arena at 7 p.m. This wildly popular game was one of the highlights of last year's bowl week activities.

Tuesday, December 19

GMAC Financial Service Mayor's Luncheon

Mayor Mike Dow will be the guest speaker at this luncheon honoring nationally known American athletes. Held at the Mobile Convention Center at noon, guests will include city officials, media, corporate sponsors, traveling parties of each bowl team and the general public. Like in 1999, this event is sure to be a sellout. Tickets are \$30 each or \$300 for a table of 10.

Greer's Food Tiger Mardi Gras Parade

For the fans and visitors in town for the GMAC Mobile Alabama Bowl, a Mardi Gras parade will be held in the streets of downtown Mobile beginning at 6:30 p.m. All 16 Mardi Gras societies will be represented with floats and throws and several university and high school bands will entertain the crowd. More than 50,000 people are expected for the parade, which will be followed by a street party and pep rally for the two teams on Dauphin Street.

Wednesday, December 20

GMAC Mobile Alabama Bowl

Televised on ESPN2 at 7 p.m., the Western Athletic Conference champion will take on the second selection from Conference USA for the first bowl game of the year. Additionally, National Radio Network will broadcast the game throughout the country. Tickets for the bowl game are \$45 for sideline seats and \$15 for end zone seats.

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OCTOBER HOME GAMES

Saturday, Oct. 14	vs. Florida	7:30 p.m.
Sunday, Oct. 22	vs. Pensacola	4:00 p.m.
Friday *Oct. 27	vs. Tallahassee	7:30 p.m.
Sunday Oct. 29	vs. Mississippi	4:00 p.m.

*Season Ticket Trade-In Date

Individual tickets are available at the box office or by calling 208-PUCK.

PUBLIC ICE SKATING SESSIONS

Get a player's eye view from the ice rink at the Mobile Civic Center.

Sunday, Oct. 15 4:00 p.m.

Friday, Oct. 20 7:30 p.m.
9:30 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 21 8:00 a.m. - Learn to Skate

Saturday, Oct. 28 7:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$7.00 with skate rental and \$5.00 without.



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CALENDAR VIEW

November **7**
Member Reception and Briefing

Time: 5 - 7 p.m.
Place: Chamber McGowin Room
Cost: FREE to new members
Call: Pratt Vereen at 431-8638

November **9**
Eagle Awards

Time: 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Place: Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center
Cost: \$30 per person/\$300 per table of 10
Call: Brenda Rembert at 431-8607

November **10**
Veterans Day Parade and Luncheon

Time: 10 a.m. – parade, Noon – luncheon
Place: Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center
Cost: \$15 per person/\$120 for table of eight
Call: Shelly Mattingly at 431-8612

November **14**
Noon Marketing Meeting

Time: Noon - 1 p.m.
Place: Chamber McGowin Room
Cost: \$6 and includes lunch
Call: Pratt Vereen at 431-8638

November **16**
Business After Hours

Time: 5:30 - 7 p.m.
Place: Bienville Club, 34th floor AmSouth Bank Bldg.
Cost: \$2 for members/\$5 for potential members

November **28**
Forum Alabama

Time: Noon - 1:30 p.m.
Place: Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center
Cost: \$20 per person/\$160 for table of 8
Call: Pratt Vereen at 431-8638

COMING IN DECEMBER

December **1**
First Friday

Time: 7:45 - 8:45 a.m.
Place: Sam's Club, 1100 S. Beltline Hwy.
Cost: \$2 for members/\$5 for potential members
Call: Pratt Vereen at 431-8638

December **11**
Sonny Callahan Luncheon

Time: Noon
Place: International Trade Club, 250 N. Water St.
Cost: \$15 per person/\$120 for table of 8
Call: Shelly Mattingly at 431-8612

Sonny Callahan Luncheon

Congressional luncheon and update at Noon on Dec. 11, featuring Congressman Sonny Callahan at the International Trade Club, located at 250 N. Water St.
 Cost to attend is \$15 per person or \$120 for table of 8. Contact Shelly Mattingly at 431-8612 for reservations

Business After Hours

Come by and relax after a hard day's work at the November Business After Hours held at the Bienville Club, located on the 34th floor of the AmSouth Bank Building. From 5:30 – 7 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 16 enjoy the view of the city below and develop new business contacts.
 The cost to attend is \$2 for members and \$5 for potential members.



Noon Marketing Meeting

The Chamber is offering another opportunity for businesses to refine their marketing skills, this time at the Noon Marketing Meeting sponsored by Frank R. Wade Office Equipment. Join us on Tuesday, Nov. 14 at the Chamber McGowin room from Noon until 1 p.m. Attendees can once again give two-minute presentations about their company.

For reservations, contact Pratt Vereen at 431-8638.

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First Friday

Sam's Club at 1100 S Beltline Highway is hosting December's First Friday on Dec. 1. Come by any time between 7:45 and 8:45 a.m. and enjoy a continental breakfast, while shopping at Sam's enormous warehouse.

No reservations are necessary. The cost to attend is \$2 for members and \$5 for potential members.



Veteran's Day Parade and Luncheon

On Nov. 10, the Chamber's Military Affairs Department will present the Veterans Day Parade at 10 a.m. with a luncheon to follow at Noon at the Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center. Jack Edwards, former U.S. Congressman, has been named Patriot of the Year and will be the guest speaker.

The cost of the luncheon is \$15 per person or \$120 for a table of eight. For reservations, contact Shelly Mattingly at 431-8612.

Member Reception and Briefing

Sponsored by New South Communications, this reception allows new members of the Chamber to meet with other new members to get to know each other and the Chamber. Held on Nov. 7 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Chamber McGowin room, come by and start networking!

Call Pratt Vereen for reservations at 431-8638.



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

- Melody Lipscomb at 431-8627/pgr: 371-9634
- Nancy Hughes at 431-8647/pgr: 582-1999
- Tom Lewis at 431-8629/pgr: 582-2076

WHO'S NEW?

Cherry, Bekaert & Holland LLP recently announced two promotions. David A. Gautreau was promoted to senior accountant. He is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi. Sherri L. Gibson, was also promoted to senior accountant. She is University of South Alabama graduate.

Amy Wilson was recently hired for a newly created position of project manager for TeleVox Software Inc.'s dental division. She will oversee the division's direct mailings and focus on the creation of strategic marketing campaigns. Previously, she was the marketing assistant for McConnell Automotive.



Wilson

Jason Burrell joined the company as graphic artist. He will handle the daily in-house graphic needs of TeleVox's corporate office. Burrell recently served as a production artist at Denson & Reed Marketing.



Burrell

The University of Mobile added four new faculty members this academic year: Larry Turner PhD, associate professor of education, holds a bachelor's and master's degree from the University of Alabama and a doctorate from Harvard University; Adele Hermann, instructor in English, holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Mobile and a master's from Spring Hill College;



Turner



Hermann



Russ

Jennifer Russ, instructor in computer information systems, has a bachelor's degree from the University of Mississippi and a master's from George Washington University; and Mary E. Stovall, instructor in Spanish, has a bachelor's degree from Texas Christian University, a master's from Florida State University and is completing doctoral studies at Ohio State University.



Stovall

Matthew E. Serda was promoted to loan officer with Regions Bank. He joined the bank in 1999 as a management trainee and was assigned to the Middle Market Banking department. Serda received his degree in finance from Boston University in 1993.

The Ramada Plaza Hotel and Conference Center announced its new management team. Patrick Rogers is the general manager. With 15 years expertise in the hospitality industry, he was previously the director of operations for the Toronto Colony Hotel in Canada. Charlie Davison was promoted to operations manager and will oversee the day-to-day operations of the hotel. Prior to joining the Ramada, he was director of housekeeping and security at the Plantation Resort Management Inc. in Gulf Shores. As sales manager, Noelle Peloux will assist in the development of travel, tour and motor coach business. A graduate from the University of South Alabama, she has a bachelor's degree in Leisure Services. Previously, she served Towne Place Suites by Marriott in a similar position.

MEMBER NEWS

Also hired as sales manager is Linda Wherle. She will specialize in sports and military contracts as well as other key accounts. Formerly she was sales manager with the Lafayette Plaza Hotel.

BUSINESS ENDEAVORS

Mobile Pulley Marine Services recently received a contract to build 12 pontoon tanks for Norfolk Dredging. The tanks allow the dredge material to be transported to a designated area efficiently.

Atlantic Marine Inc. received a contract for a second articulated tug and barge (ATB) vessel to be built for Reinauer Transportation Companies. When complete, the tug will be able to push a loaded barge at approximately 11 knots, up to 35 percent faster than traditional towed barges.

The Alabama Chapter of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society opened a Gulf Coast Satellite Office in Mobile. The office is located in the Kellogg, Brown and Root building off Cottage Hill Rd. Call 472-8123 for more information.

The United States Sports Academy sent two of its faculty to the African country of Botswana on a teaching assignment. Arthur Ogden and Jim Vicory will conduct classes in the International Certification of Sports Coaching and International Certification of Sports Management programs.

TeleVox and Actel entered into a location agreement where Actel will house the TeleVox data center. The transition occurred late last month. The two companies have also developed a new software that will identify doctor's offices when using a T1 line currently registering as an unknown caller.

In addition, TeleVox introduced an interactive business card offering doctors an opportunity to promote their practice to potential and current patients who don't have Internet access. Close to the size of a typical business card, information is loaded on to a miniature CD and can be played an unlimited number of times. For more information call 633-9252.

The Ramada Plaza Hotel and Conference Center located at 600 S. Beltline Hwy. is undergoing a \$1.4 million dollar renovation. The project is expected to be completed by year end and will include all 236 rooms, expansion and renovation of meeting space and refurbishing of the atrium lobby, outdoor swimming pool and the grounds. For more information call 344-8030 or 1-800-752-0398.

WELL DONE!

The University of Mobile was again recognized on the list of America's Best Christian Colleges. One of 96 colleges and universities named, the distinction highlights those institutions providing the highest quality in education in a Christian environment.

This is the fourth consecutive year the University has been included in the national program. Selection is based on high school grade point averages and/or SAT/ACT scores of entering freshman. In addition, schools selected must offer full-service residential facilities with room and board, be an accredited four-year institution offering bachelor degrees and be affiliated with a recognized Christian denomination or interdenominational institution.

Equity Technologies Corp. celebrated its 10th anniversary last month. To thank their clients, the company hosted a shrimp boil.

Ram Tool & Supply Company Inc. ranked 240 on Working Woman's list of Top 500 Women-Owned Businesses. The company has offices in Mobile, Montgomery and Huntsville, and was one of three Alabama-based companies selected.

Advertising created by Forward Consulting recently received top scores on a campaign produced for Bush Hog agricultural products published in Progressive Farmer magazine.

The American Board of Certification announced Lawrence B. Voit with Silver, Voit and Thompson, completed his recertification requirements in business bankruptcy law. Participants must practice law for at least five years, be in good standing with the state bar, devote at least 30 percent of time and 400 hours to bankruptcy related matters, document involvement in business bankruptcy cases and earn at least 60 hours of continuing legal education.

Compass Bank named Gene Tillman, Tillman Builders and Eastern Shore Mobile Home Village, to its Baldwin County board of directors recently.

Childbirth educator Jamie Cordeiro at Mobile Infirmary Medical Center was one of six national winners for Johnson & Johnson's Childbirth Educator Award for Community Service 2000. Winners were judged on the impact they and their programs had on the maternal community.

Michael Bolt RN received the 2000 Vincentian Award at Providence Hospital recently. The award is presented annually to one employee who has demonstrated the hospital's core values of service. An employee of the Hospital since 1986, Bolt was honored for his volunteer work with hospital and community programs.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Sister Mary Frances Loftin DC was appointed chairman of the boards of Providence Hospital and Seton Health Corporation of South Alabama. Most recently she was chancellor for the Birmingham Diocese. A graduate of Providence School of Nursing, she has served as a member of the Hospital's finance committee and as vice-chairman of the board of directors.



Loftin

Sister Mary Elizabeth Cullen DC was appointed vice president of the Hospital. She has served as outreach services coordinator and developed numerous programs for the Mobile area while in that position. She holds a master's in Pastoral Studies from Loyola University, Chicago.



Cullen

"American Leather," a movie about high school football started shooting in Mobile last month. Mobile scenes will be shot at Independent Methodist School (IMS) and Mobile Christian.

Bishop State Community College was awarded a \$183,858 grant by the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department to address information technology needs within its immediate service area. The award is part of a \$10.4 million grant to 38 Historically Black Colleges and Universities that demonstrate a commitment and ability to produce successful local programs.

Bishop State, in partnership with the Boys and Girls Clubs of South Alabama, will initiate and coordinate projects to help youths from low-income families understand and access information technology.

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@mobilechamber.org

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Senior Citizens Services is taking orders for its annual poinsettia sale. The flowers come in 8-inch pots and feature 12 to 18 blooms in traditional red or white. The cost is \$15 each. Pick up dates are Nov. 30 and Dec. 1. Proceeds benefit senior programs and services promoting health, independence and self-esteem. For more information, call Sissy Cunningham at 478-3311.

"Thanks for the Memories," a new fundraiser benefiting Goodwill Easter Seals, will commemorate the memories at the Battle House. Sponsored by Springhill Memorial Hospital, the special day of thanks will be Wednesday, Nov. 22. The two organizations are encouraging people to purchase buttons, \$5 each, or T-shirts featuring B. Sumrall's original rendition of the Battle House for \$10 each. Package deals include a tote bag for \$25, and for \$35 the limited edition gold and brass Christmas ornament of the Battle House also designed by Sumrall is included. Company team captains will receive a free T-shirt when they register their company to participate. For more information call 471-1581.

Sponsored by AARP and the Radney Family of Funeral Homes, the Widowed Persons Service scheduled its "Hope for the Holiday" dinner and candlelight program for Friday, Nov. 17. Other events include a Christmas Lights Tour to the Biltmore Estate and Callaway Gardens. The group will leave Wednesday, Nov. 29 and return Saturday, Dec. 2. For more information, call Mary Yarber at 479-4547.

Junior League of Mobile presents Christmas Jubilee 2000 Thursday, Nov. 9 – Saturday Nov. 11. Hours are 9:30 a.m. – 8 p.m. on Thursday and Friday; 9:30 a.m. – 6 p.m. on Saturday. Tickets are \$5 and children 11 and under are admitted free. Proceeds from the event are used in their entirety to fund community programs supporting the League's focus on at risk youth.

The Second Annual Mobile by Candlelight Event will be held Dec. 9. Residents are asked to display luminaries on that night in preparation of encouraging participation for the city's Tricentennial. Call Herb Scott at 470-7730 for more information.

Cumulus Broadcasting of Mobile is sponsoring a free seminar on how to develop effective local advertising strategies. Nationally recognized speaker Chris Lytle of Apex Performance Systems will present "The Crash Course in Advertising Results" on Nov. 9 at the Clarion Hotel from 8:30 – 11:30 a.m. Seating is limited. For a reservation call 652-2000.



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