



THE VIEW

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MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Hertz Selects Mobile for Worldwide Reservation Center

End of the year headlines made big news when Hertz Corporation announced its plans to open a new worldwide reservations center in the Mobile County community of Saraland. Initially, the Fortune 100 company will employ more than 500 reservation agents, and company officials expect, within the first five years of operations to hire as many as 1,000.

The center will be open this Spring, and including computers, telephone systems, operations and renovations, the initial investment by Hertz will be approximately \$10 million. It will be the company's second reservation center. The other facility is located in Oklahoma City.

Gov. Don Siegelman was on hand for the announcement. "Mobile County is a vital part of our state's economy, and I look forward to a prosperous working relationship with Hertz."

The decision to open a second facility was prompted by continued growth and expansion the company is experiencing in car rental volume, according to Wayne Bowman, staff vice president, Worldwide Reservations for Hertz.

The reservations center will take residence in the former Wal-Mart shopping center at 727 U.S. Highway 43 South in Saraland.

With \$10 million in capital investments, Jim Apple, vice president of economic development for the Chamber, anticipates an initial annual payroll estimated at \$10 million.

Apple believes area residents will fill almost every job at the new reservation center. Job wages are planned to begin at \$8 an hour and there will be full-time as well as part-time opportunities.

"Hertz is one of those companies every city would love to have," said John Davis, president and CEO of Mobile Gas Service Corp. and last year's Chamber board chairman. "It has instant name



A number of Hertz representatives were on hand for the announcement of the company's second reservation center. Wayne Bowman, second from the left, who is staff vice president for Hertz, announced the new project.

recognition, good wages and will provide a large number of jobs to our area. That kind of combination is unbeatable."

Apple agrees that Hertz will be great for Mobile and fits well into the Chamber's target market plan, which identifies the types of companies and corporations the Chamber focuses its recruiting efforts on. As with all projects, many area companies and governments came together to work on bringing Hertz to Saraland.

With the helping hand of Millennium Fund investors, companies and individuals who pledge financial support to the Chamber's economic development efforts, this is the kind of

project we can recruit to Mobile, added Apple. In addition to the City of Saraland, Mobile County and the Chamber partnership, several companies and state offices such as Alabama Power Company, BellSouth, the Alabama Development Office, Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, Alabama Department of Transportation and Wal-Mart participated in the process to recruit Hertz.

In a prepared release by Hertz, officials noted Mobile County's ability to best suit the company's growing needs and labor pool needs as reasons for its selection of this area. Hertz operates more than 6,300 locations in more than 140 countries.

Dianne Irby Elected 2000 Board Chairman

If you ask Dianne Irby of Irby Strategic Services how she feels about being the first woman to chair the Chamber in its 163-year history, she's quick to downplay that fact, but adds it's the position itself that holds the honor.

"I'm fortunate to be coming into this chairmanship with such a solid foundation, especially following John Davis, the most recent in a succession of strong, forward-thinking Chamber leaders," she said at the Chamber's Annual Meeting on Jan. 18.

As head of this 2,500-member organization, Irby will be dealing with a multitude of issues, but she has outlined three in which she will be most interested.

Because of her background in corporate structure and strategic planning, Irby will spend considerable time making sure the organization is on the cutting edge of its development — a Chamber of the future, as she put it.

"First, Chambers must broaden their constituencies and focus on partnerships," Irby explained. "Whether we seek alliances with other local groups and governments on projects or we work with Baldwin County or the Gulf Coast states, partnerships are ultimately the most effective way to conduct Chamber business."

Irby added that, while the Chamber continues to support its core programs — economic, community and small business development — the successful Chamber of the future will need to rethink how it executes these functions. Technology, for example, will play a big role as the organization seeks to communicate more information to more people who are further and further away. In addition, while performing all the basic services to businesses here at home, the Chamber will have to incorporate global perspectives in advancing the interests of its members.

Of major concern, according to Irby, are the increasing workforce needs of local business. "I still remember the reaction last Fall on our Chamber Leadership Trip to Charleston when Ronnie Koh with Mobile Aerospace Engineering told us his company had to turn down a \$100 million contract because he couldn't find enough workers," she explained. "Over the past year, several groups and individuals have worked to create a more systematic approach of workforce development and job training. The Chamber has been at the forefront, ensuring that business concerns are heard."

And, finally, Irby is interested in enhancing small business development services. She pointed out that about 85 percent of the Chamber's membership comes from businesses with fewer than 50 employees. Yet, a larger share of the funding, volunteer time and resources to the Chamber come from the larger businesses.

"Our continuing challenge is to balance the longer-term interests of big business with the often more immediate needs of the small business members," she said.

Irby concluded with a quote from President Franklin Roosevelt who, in 1942 said, "Never before have we had so little time in which to do so much." "I guess some things don't change after all," she concluded.

Area Will Host Annual World Trade Conference



Top-notch experts will be on hand to show Gulf Coast businesses how to successfully market and sell their goods and services in four of Europe's most economically prominent countries — Germany France, Italy and Spain. On May 1-2, the Chamber will host the 8th Annual World Trade Conference, a regional Gulf Coast initiative among North Florida, Southern Alabama and Southern Mississippi. The two-day event at the Grand Hotel, shown above, will feature seminars, technical breakout sessions and opportunities to meet one-on-one with trade representatives and exporting specialists.

The event will kick-off with opening remarks from Mayor Mike Dow, recently appointed by Gov. Don Siegelman as vice chairman of the Alabama Commerce Commission. Alabama Congressman Sonny Callahan, chairman of the U.S. Congressional Subcommittee for Foreign Operations and Export-Related Issues, will be the keynote speaker. Additionally, Callahan will present awards to businesses that have demonstrated a commitment to promoting trade throughout the Gulf Coast region.

On day two, conference participants will have the unique opportunity to meet with foreign commercial service officers and expert panelists who will offer advice on key export issues such as transportation, finance, legalities and marketing. According to Tony van Aken, director of Trade and Technology for the Mobile Area Chamber, this portion of the conference pro-

vides a tremendous opportunity for beginning and intermediate level exporters. "Companies will have access to high level experts from target export markets without assuming the hefty costs of traveling abroad and the time that it takes to actually find them," said van Aken.

Other conference highlights will include presentations on "The Emergence of a New Europe," from the European Commission, and specifics of "Introducing and Distributing Your Product in the European Union," by Robert Munisteri of Masland Carpets and "Pricing Strategies and the New Euro," by Al McDonald of Regions Bank.

Conference registration is due by April 1, the fee for all participants is \$175, which includes scheduled meals, the international reception, breaks, seminars and registration materials.

The Marriott Grand Hotel has a block of rooms reserved at a special rate and can be accessed by calling 1-800-544-9933.

For more information, contact Sara Graf at (334) 694-0702 or email sara@mobilechamber.org.

New Millennium New Logo

Over the past few years, the Chamber has worked hard to become a facilitator in the region, bringing together individuals, groups, communities and even states to address common issues and develop plans. That, coupled with the start of a new millennium symbolizing a fresh start and new opportunities, was the inspiration for the Chamber's updated logo.

Designed by Townsend Barney & Patrick, the logo features three rings representing the Chamber's role in linking together people with mutual goals. With a closer look at the rings, however, one discovers that they actually form the letters "C O C" for Chamber of Commerce.

"The new logo represents our interconnectedness and partnerships," said Chamber President Win Hallett. "One of the ways we judge success in our organization is by how many groups we've brought to the table on a project."

The design of the logo is sleeker and simpler. It downplays the name of the organization while emphasizing the rings symbolizing partnerships. In fact, one treatment of the logo carries the position statement "Stronger Together."

"The more groups you have working together, the more resources there are. The more resources,

the more you have to offer and the more competitive and successful you can be. As we move increasingly into the global marketplace, this becomes a vital component," said Hallett. "Those who try to do it alone will be one in a million. We want to increase our presence, our political muscle, our products and services, our financial resources, our



creativity and our impact. And we understand that to be stronger, we have to work together."

Hallett added his appreciation to Townsend, Barney & Patrick whose staff donated their time and talents to create the logo. "We can do so much more in this organization because our members pitch in to help," he said. "This was a great contribution."

American-Australian Joint Venture Brings Jobs to Mobile



With its new partnership with Australian shipbuilder Austal, Mobile-based Bender Shipbuilding and Repair landed a multi-million dollar investment and as many as 1,000 new jobs for the area.

The two companies created a new venture, Austal USA, to build passenger ferries with a sophisticated technology not presently available in the US. Austal is a world leading designer and manufacturer of aluminum vessels. Bender will have 30 percent interest in the company, with Austal maintaining 70 percent.

A new shipyard located on 10 acres on Blakely Island, directly across Mobile River from the foot of Government St., is where Austal USA will begin building the aluminum high-speed ferries that have become a popular mode of transportation in Europe and on the Pacific Rim. It is expected that the facility will be completed this year and hiring will begin in just a few months.

From the smaller ferry that moves at 35 mph and carries 100 passengers to the largest – a 300 ft. ferry that can travel over 50 mph with nearly 200 cars and more than a 1,000 passengers – officials from both organizations believe their ships will be well received.

"With Austal's leading-edge technology, and world leadership in the design and production of high performance aluminum vessels, coupled with Bender's comprehensive capabilities and domestic knowledge, we will revolutionize light weight, high speed shipbuilding in the USA," said John Rothwell, Austal's Chairman.

Spurring the expansion of the Australian company is a federal law prohibiting foreign-built

vessels from operating on domestic routes. However, once the decision to find a U.S. partner was made, Rothwell looked coast to coast.

What he found in Mobile was a good parcel of land, a competitively priced labor force and Bender Shipbuilding, described in a company media release as a leading and highly professional domestic shipyard.

Bender's recent completion of a steel plate laser cutting facility – the first of its kind to be used in a U.S. shipyard – was another plus. According to Tom Bender, president of Bender, the new facility should add up to sizeable cost savings for Austal USA in building these ships.

Bender believes, in addition to the laser facility, the company has much to contribute to the project. "With our knowledge of the US market, experience in hiring and retaining skilled shipyard workers and expertise in purchasing material and equipment, we expect to contribute significantly to the venture."

The Chamber, along with Alabama Industrial Development Training, the Alabama Development Office, the City and the State, assisted Bender with recruiting the project. With the financial backing of Millennium Fund investors, supporting economic development efforts, the Chamber coordinated city and state efforts that helped Bender clinch the deal.

"This projects puts Mobile on the map in the high-tech transportation arena and is proof that our waterfront will continue to be an economic driver in the new century," said Jim Apple, the Chamber's vice president of economic development.



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New Benefit Added to Chamber Insurance

◆ Open enrollment set for April and May

One benefit small businesses often struggle to provide for their employees and themselves is health insurance. *Chamber Advantage*, a discounted health and dental insurance program offered through Health Partners of Alabama, has set April and May as this year's open enrollment period, with an effective date of June 1.

A new Long Term Care program through PFL Life Insurance Company is an addition to Chamber Advantage and will offer members discounts and preferred underwriting.

Chamber Advantage is available to current Mobile Area Chamber member businesses with 1-99 employees. For more information or a quote for your business, call Vicky Hager at 1-800-543-3153.

Where We're Headed

◆ Envision Annual Meeting will outline accomplishments

If you haven't signed up, don't miss the opportunity to attend the Envision Mobile-Baldwin Annual Meeting on Wednesday, March 1. Registration is at 7:30 a.m. and the meeting begins at 8 a.m. at the new Daphne Civic Center on Hwy 98.

Even if you haven't been involved in Envision projects, this is a great opportunity to find out what's been accomplished through this long-range strategic plan. Join mayors and commissioners from both counties, as well as representatives of business and civic organizations as they report on projects related to education, quality of life, infrastructure (mass transit, state docks, housing, etc.), economic development, government and community leadership.



You'll also be privy to the results of the new *Progress Indicators for Coastal Alabama Report* which tracks statistics on everything from the number of high school drop-outs to crime and infant mortality rates to environmental and economic development data.

Event sponsors are Mobile Gas, Creanova, AT&T Communications, Prior Energy, Thames Batré Mattei Beville & Ison Insurance and Saunders Engine. Last year's meeting boasted a packed crowd, so sign up today. Cost for the meeting is \$7 which includes a full breakfast.

Reservations can be made by calling Angela Erwin at 431-8621.

Small Business of the Month Condé Systems Inc.



February's Small Business of the Month, Condé Systems Inc. is a technology developer and distributor of color printers and supplies worldwide. "As a growing multi-million dollar corporation, we are a premier source for printers and printing technologies serving the graphic art, photography, prepress and desktop publishing industries," said David Gross, president and CEO.

The mission of the company is to provide customers with high quality useful products, which meet and exceed industry expectations. "We are recognized as a leader in providing innovative products in five key markets: on demand specialty imprinting, pre-press output, signage/wide-format output, color solutions for businesses, and ID card production," Gross added.

Gross began Condé Systems in January, 1992, when he became interested in digital color printing. "We are now semi-famous for the latest digital decorating technique called sublimation transfer. This is when a heat press actually imprints the color image into the interior of the item or product," he said.

Condé Systems Inc. sells this technology to other sign and printing companies worldwide.

David Gross masters the sublimation transfer technique at his 12,000 sq. ft. facility in Mobile off Schillingers Rd.

"This technique offers a timely, environmentally friendly, and affordable means to create photographic quality customized items that can build sales for sign makers," Gross added.

"We insist on total customer satisfaction and provide free technical support with everything we sell from the product selection to the post sale," he concluded.

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

Diplomat of the Month Chrissie Bowles

This month's Diplomat of the Month, Chrissie Bowles, a technical recruiter for Manpower Professional, has been a Diplomat since her division joined the Chamber in 1998. She has been recruiting for information technology and engineering clients for more than two years.

"Being a part of the Chamber Diplomat program allows me to access the resources I need to help recruit professionals to the Mobile area," Bowles said.

In addition to being an active member in both the Mobile and Mississippi Gulf Coast Chambers, she also participates in the Gulf Coast National Technical Services Association and Mobile Society for Human Resource Management.

"I enjoy the various community activities and meeting new people at the Chamber functions. As a native Mobilian and graduate of the University



of South Alabama, I'm excited about being actively involved in the development of our community," Bowles concluded.

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	Maximum Benefit Per Covered Person For:	Plan A		Plan B		Plan C	
		\$2,000	\$10,000	\$1,000,000			
	Any Provider	In-Network	Out-of-Network	In-Network	Out-of-Network		
Individual Deductible (Per Person)		\$250	\$750	\$250	\$750		
Family Deductible (Aggregate)		\$500	\$1,000	\$500	\$1,000		
Out-of-Pocket Expense Limit/Cal. Year: Individual		\$2,000		\$2,000			
Out-of-Pocket Expense Limit/Cal. Year: Family (Agg.)		\$5,000		\$5,000			
Office Visit	\$20 copay, then 100% to \$150 per encounter	100% after \$20 copay	100% after \$40 copay	100% after \$20 copay	100% after \$40 copay		
Oral Exam and Cleaning	\$20 copay, limited to twice per year	\$20 copay, limited to twice per year		\$20 copay, limited to twice per year			
Dental Type 2 and Type 3 Procedures		50% after member has had the health plan for 1 year, after \$20 copay		50% after member has had the health plan for 1 year, after \$20 copay			
Inpatient Services	\$250 copay, then 100% to \$500 per encounter	80% after 250 copay	Not Covered	80% after \$250 copay	Not Covered		
Outpatient Services	\$250 copay, then 100% to \$500 per encounter	100% after \$50 copay	Not Covered	100% after \$50 copay	Not Covered		
Outpatient Surgery & Inpatient Hospital		80% after \$250 copay	50% after \$500 copay	80% after \$250 copay	50% after \$500 copay		
Emergency Room Services	\$75 copay, then 100% to \$300 encounter	100% after \$75 copay	50% after \$150 copay	100% after \$75 copay	50% after \$150 copay		
Physician, Occupational, Speech Therapy		100% after \$250 copay	50% after \$500 copay	100% after \$250 copay	50% after \$500 copay		
Tubal Ligation, Vasectomy		100% after \$250 copay	No Coverage	100% after \$250 copay	No Coverage		
Vision		100% after \$20 copay	100% after \$40 copay	100% after \$20 copay	100% after \$40 copay		
Eyewear Allowance (per year):		\$80		\$80			
Maximum Benefit Per Covered Person/Cal. Year For:							
Home Health Care		40 visits		40 visits			
Inpatient Mental & Nervous		30 days		30 days			
Outpatient Mental & Nervous		20 visits		20 visits			
Inpatient Chemical Dependency		30 days		30 days			
Podiatry		12 visits		12 visits			
Extended Care Facility		60 days		60 days			
Prescription Drug Card Copay (30 day supply)							
Generic:	\$5 copay	\$5 copay		\$5 copay			
Brand Name Birth Control	\$15 copay	\$15 copay		\$15 copay			
All Other Brand Names	PCS Discount	PCS Discount		PCS Discount			
	Employee	\$69.34	Employee	\$119.97	Employee	\$157.90	
	Employee + 1	\$134.47	Employee + 1	\$242.43	Employee + 1	\$321.23	
	Employee + 2	\$191.43	Employee + 2	\$332.41	Family	\$439.89	
	Family	\$245.45	Family	\$390.88			

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Watch Your Mail for the Census Questionnaire

◆ 100% participation ensures maximum federal funding

With the amazing amount of mail that people receive at home and at the office, it's understandable how something vitally important could be missed. That's why the Chamber is helping to spread the message that the countdown to Census 2000 has begun.

Every 10 years, the Constitution directs the Census Bureau to conduct a complete accounting of every resident in the United States. The questionnaire for this year's census will arrive in the mail April 1. People who answer the census help their communities obtain state and federal funding, as well as provide valuable information for planning schools, hospitals and roads.

Statistics are also important to area businesses when deciding where to locate new offices, branches, retail shops, manufacturing centers and distribution points. This information is needed to evaluate potential markets and analyze labor markets, using data on age, occupation, education and transportation.

The initial 1990 Census count for Alabama was 73,000 below the final "approved" figure. Locally that original figure increased more than 4,900 above an earlier figure of 201,181. This year, the area has set a 100 percent census participation goal. If 5,000 people, for example, did not respond this time around, it could cost Mobile \$7.5 million in federal funding over the next 10 years.

All information on individuals is held strictly confidential. For additional information about Census 2000 visit the Census Bureau's Internet site at www.census.gov.



United States
Census
2000

Businesses Are Vital in Promoting Census 2000

- Endorse Census 2000 by making a public statement supporting the census.
- Identify an individual in your company to work closely with the Census Bureau.
- Place census messages on your products, bags, sales bulletins and other communications.
- Place census messages in your company newsletter and in payroll envelopes.
- Encourage employees to take part in the census and remind them when it's time to fill out their forms or open their doors to census workers.
- Post recruitment and promotion materials in your place of business. Interested job applicants should call 1-888-325-7733.
- Use reproducible inserts and drop-in articles that the Census Bureau can supply. Call 404-331-0573.
- Sponsor community events to promote participation in the census.
- Put Census 2000 on the agenda at annual meetings, conventions and professional conferences.
- Contact your city's or county's Complete Count Committee and get involved in local activities to promote the census.

Featured Profiles Advisors

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



Henry R. Seawell III

Henry R. Seawell III is a professional engineer, and serves as chairman and CEO of TCO Inc., an Architectural and Engineering design and consulting holding company based in Mobile. He also serves as president and CEO of TCO's principal subsidiary, Thompson Engineering, an employee-owned company of more than 175 engineers, scientists and technicians. This multi-disciplinary service group is currently working in 26 states, Central America and the Asian realm. Seawell received undergraduate and graduate degrees in civil engineering at Auburn University. He has authored numerous technical publications for national distribution, and currently serves on Auburn University's Technical Advisory Board and many trade associations and civic organizations.



Michael Coleman

Michael Coleman is president, CEO and co-founder of Integrity Incorporated, the largest publicly-traded Christian music company in the United States. Integrity Incorporated sells its products in over 140 nations through its own international subsidiaries and licensed distributors.

It has international offices in England, Australia and Singapore. The company was founded in 1987, and employs approximately 120 individuals at its Mobile headquarters. Integrity Incorporated is a leading producer and publisher of Christian music including praise and worship, children's music and gospel.

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MOBILLENNIUM

A Thousand Years of Opportunity

Pritchett Challenges Businesses to Embrace Change

The Chamber's Annual Meeting speaker had executives and public officials jotting down notes in their programs. **Dr. Price Pritchett** is chairman and CEO of Pritchett and Associates, a consulting firm working with Fortune 500 companies for more than 20 years including IBM, 3M and BellSouth.

His speech outlined how the tentacles of change will continually impact us all and motivated the audience to embrace change quickly. Here is a brief summary of his remarks.

"Where are you going?" initially asked Pritchett. "Have you changed as much as the world is changed? Are you leading differently than you did in the past?"

Driving Change

Driving this continuous pattern of change Pritchett sees three key drivers: population growth (because it's people who cause change), technology and the increase in information and knowledge. These drivers guarantee the rate of change will continue to accelerate, projects Pritchett. "Even if we are keeping up now, we will fall behind in effectively managing the situation unless we accelerate our adaptive abilities."

Attitude & Mind Set

Pritchett described how attitudes and the mind-set about change have themselves shifted over the years. Back in the middle 80s, he saw a victim mentality when companies would announce they

we're going through a major change. By the end of the 80s, there was more of an adjustment mentality – "you've got to adapt to change." In the early 90s he observed another shift – the need to exploit change – what he calls an opportunity mentality.

There's been yet another shift in the last two to three years said Pritchett, a need to create change. "This is where we need to get ourselves, our organizations, our community – to the possibilities mentality," urged

Pritchett. "It's a mind set of optimism, adventure, challenge and exploration."

It is at this point where Pritchett said there is a new level of energy. And the organizations and communities that have reached this level perform profoundly different than those that are back in the early stages of change.

Energy – the most critical factor

"The question is where do we find the energy to keep up?" Pritchett believes that energy level is one



Bill Seifert, AmSouth, poses with Dr. Price Pritchett at a sponsor's reception before the Chamber's Annual Meeting.

of the most important factors for success and he warned the audience that, "Speed doesn't come for free. Going faster gets expensive when you consider the fuel consumption that's involved."

He made the point that when you discuss speed in terms of physics that doubling speed requires

more than twice the energy. "I think as leaders, we have to start thinking about three key responsibilities that no one is talking about," challenged Pritchett.

"What can we do to generate more fuel or pump up the energy supply? What can we do to conserve energy? And how do we channel or focus that energy?" asked Pritchett. "It all comes down to talking about what we're going to give to our people, to our organizations, to our society."

Pritchett's Challenge

When talking about the local area, Pritchett advised leaders to broaden boundaries, think about how things connect on a wider scale and pursue the future faster. "Let me guarantee you something. In a world of high velocity change, offensive wins and you get killed playing defense," said Pritchett. "Times like these are absolutely astounding in terms of the opportunity they provide. But they are ruthless for those who won't play by the rules and for those who don't grasp the fact that it is a dramatically different environment we live in and it calls for dramatically different behavior from us."

Pritchett concluded his remarks with the quote from Charles Darwin, "It's not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change."

1999 Chamber Names Award Winners

At each Annual Meeting the Chamber honors a local manufacturer, small business and Chamber Diplomat. Award winners are chosen for outstanding business achievements along with contributions to the community and the Chamber.

This year, for the first time, the Chamber, in partnership with Envision Mobile-Baldwin and Volunteer Mobile presented a Corporate Community Service Award. Created to recognize a company's community service projects, as well as program policies and corporate vision that support each volunteer activity, the award honors companies that have made the employee volunteer effort an important part of its operations, and enjoys ongoing support from company management.

Corporate Community Service Award

The first recipient of the Corporate Community Service Award is **Kellogg Brown & Root** for its Volunteer Council. The council which was created in 1989 is compiled of Kellogg Brown & Root employees who are charged with working for the good of the community through volunteer involvement.

Through more than a dozen projects, including American Red Cross blood drives, Junior Achievement, March of Dimes and the Waterfront

Rescue Mission, the Volunteer Council not only works together as a team to participate in community fundraising efforts, but its members also respond to calls for help from needy individuals and charities in the community.

Last year, the company boasted 100 percent participation by its 300 employees in some type of volunteer project.

Manufacturer of the Year

Bender Shipbuilding & Repair Company Inc. is the 1999 Manufacturer of the Year. It is a Mobile-based, family-owned operation servicing the Gulf Coast since 1918. With the explosion of a global economy, the company has aggressively competed for shipbuilding and repair dollars around the world.

Bender has a stable employment base of over 600, and during major projects employs up to one-thousand.

What makes this company stand out is its ability to attract new business and companies to Mobile, and its recently completed steel plate laser cutting facility. The new facility, the first of its kind to be used in the industry in the U.S., along with the company's far-sighted thinking, helped land a new project for Mobile. Austal USA, a manufacturer



Bender Shipbuilding & Repair Company

of high speed ferries partnered with Bender and will provide as many as 1,000 new jobs.

Small Business of the Year

This year's Small Business of the Year is **AirInc.** The Fairhope-based company overhauls and repairs commercial aircraft materials such as instruments, electronics, hydraulics and pneumatic accessories. It has grown from a one-man operation in 1990 to 63 full-time employees and grosses over \$7 million annually.

Stan Waters, the company president believes the key to his business' success is customer satisfaction. His company prides itself on the ability to routinely deliver an excellent product on time and at a reasonable cost to customers across the globe.

This year's award winner was recently recognized as one of Mobile's fastest growing

companies at the Chamber's Future 30 banquet.

1999 Diplomat of the Year

Myrinda McCarron is the Chamber's 1999

Diplomat of the Year. She recently acquired Remedy Intelligent Staffing and is the new owner.

Chosen for her group participation, she has represented the Chamber at numerous ribbon cuttings, and networking events like Business After-Hours and First Friday. As an active volunteer in Chamber Chase, a total resource development and membership campaign, she was team captain of one of the Diplomat teams, which met and exceeded their goal.

A Diplomat for nearly two years, McCarron has already earned the Diplomat of the Month distinction twice.



Myrinda McCarron



Kellogg Brown & Root

Thanks to Annual Meeting Supporters

A special thanks to the individuals and organizations who along with Annual Meeting sponsors, made this year's event successful.

Beverages

Coca-Cola Bottling Company
Community Coffee
CC's Gourmet Coffee House

Champagne

Malcolm Pirmie Inc.

Entertainment

Robert Holm
Ron Reams, The Compact Disc Jockey
Barry Silverman, Soundworks
Tom Oglesby

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The Rose Bud
Zimlich Patio & Garden

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Alabama School of Math and Science
Azalea Trail Maids
Catt Sirten Photography
Chamber Diplomats
C & G Video
DESKTOP designs
Enterprise Rent-a-Car
Bay Area Tours
Gwin's Printing and Engraving
Judi Gullede
Malaga Inn

Mobile Civic Center
Motion and Graphics Image Corporation (MAGIC)
The Party Basket
Rev. Albert S. Kennington
Office of Special Events
Senior Citizens Services
Sharron Melton, NBC15
Signs Now
Spring Hill College Springhillians
Templeton Gallery and Framing
Townsend Barney & Patrick Advertising and Public Relations
Unisource
WKRK – Channel 5
WPMI – NBC15

Restaurants

Adam's Mark Hotel
Alec Naman's Catering
Atlanta Bread Company
Banana Docks Café
Bienville Club
CC's Gourmet Coffee House
Community Coffee
Copeland's New Orleans
The Dessert Cart
Everything And More
Lassere's Catering and Cajun Seafood Shop
Ruth's Chris Steakhouse
Sonnier's Fine Dining
The Wilton Caterer

ANNUAL MEETING TASK FORCE

René Darden Eiland
Darden Enterprises

Carmen Brown
Gulf Coast Exploreum

Dan Dealy
Thompson Engineering

Betty Gurley
NBC 15-WPMI/WJTC-UPN 44

Chanté Hendrix
Spring Hill College

Catherine Korte
Mobile Gas Service Corp.

Jayne Meaut
Foreign Trade Zone Commission

Charlene Patterson
Townsend, Barney & Patrick Advertising and Public Relations

Marie Stephenson
Long's Human Resource Services

Linda Wherle
Holiday Inn Historic District



Chamber Chase Chairman Scotty Waters, and top campaign producers are awarded by 1999 Board Chairman John Davis, Mobile Gas.

Join Us For OSHA EXPO 2000

March 28 • Mobile Convention Center • 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Expo 2000 presented by

- Mobile Area Occupational Safety and Health Administration Office (OSHA)
- Mobile Bay Area Section of the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA)
- Mobile Chapter of the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE)
- Mobile Occupational Health Nurses (MOHN)
- Gulf Coast Maritime Safety Association (GCMSA)
- Alabama Chapter National Safety Council

Features over 12 technical breakout sessions on topics such as:

- OSHA's New Forklift Standard
- Basic Ergonomics
- How to Implement an Effective Safety and Health Program

The cost of the Expo is \$80 per person. Lunch is provided. Registration form provided below. Further information is available by calling the Occupational Safety and Health Administration at 441-5483.

2000 Central Gulf Coast Safety and Health Seminar and Expo Registration

Mail to: EXPO 2000, 1301 Azalea Road, Mobile, AL 36693

Make checks payable to: AIHA/EXPO 2000

SORRY, NO CREDIT CARDS, PURCHASE ORDERS OR INVOICES. NOTE: Payment must be postmarked no later than March 14, thereafter the registration fee is \$100.00 and must be paid at the conference.

Name _____ Company _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

_____ \$80 PREPAID (Payment postmarked by March 14)

MOBILLENNIUM

A Momentous Time in History When Mobile Collides with the New Millennium

◆ 1999 brings numerous successes

On the crest of one of the most prosperous waves was in recent history, Mobilians marked the countdown to 2000 with yet another round of growth and expansion. For a more detailed and thorough account of 1999 accomplishments watch for the Chamber's upcoming annual report.

It's still the economy!

As a community, our eyes have been focused on the future, and 1999 proved to be a successful launching pad into the new millennium. Our economy remains strong – recognized again as a leader on the Gulf Coast and in the region by POLICOM Corporation, an independent research firm based in Jupiter, Fla. One significant reason the local economy keeps going strong is the financial commitment of hundreds of companies and individuals that partnered with the city and county to support the Chamber's newest economic development fund. Nearly \$6 million was pledged to The Millennium Fund, a five-year initiative launched by the Chamber, will provide the resources needed to keep Mobile a viable location and a competitive international player.



New Jobs & Company Expansions

While the area's unemployment rate continued to drop, the number of new jobs exceeded both state and national increases. Recent announcements like the Hertz Reservation Center, along with area company expansions at Cintas, SpillTech and Mitsubishi, to name a few, will ensure a strong local economy for many years. Also, the Chamber assisted in bringing ACE Hardware to the area. Continuous partnerships with our Baldwin County neighbors will bring even more jobs and investments.

A Commitment to the Environment



But growth is not without a conscience in Mobile. The Chamber spearheaded a task force of several organizations to evaluate our air quality. A major endeavor kicked-off last year was the Ground Level Ozone Reduction Initiative – this group began looking at ways to reduce ground-level ozone. Local media joined the effort to build awareness by including ozone alerts and warnings in their daily weather forecasts.

Reform!

On the Capital front, the legislature passed one of the most important bills on Tort Reform, placing a cap on punitive damage awards – an issue lobbied by the Chamber and other state wide business groups for four years. Other legislative victories included funding for the Alabama Aviation and Technical College (recently renamed the Wallace Community College Aviation Center in Mobile), teacher training and background checks and a bill allowing citizens to vote on the public school tax.

Education

It was evident there is substantial support for schools even though the tax referendum didn't pass. The Chamber for example, continued to move forward with efforts impacting local education by helping the state win a 24-million dollar federal School-to-Work grant – of that \$410,000 will come to Mobile. Also the Chamber is helping create the Workforce Development Board – mobilizing the business community to oversee all work-related education and training programs.

Second Time Around

The Chamber's Annual Leadership Trip always ranks as an important highlight. A regional economic development program, the Port and downtown redevelopment were just samples of topics local community leaders studied in Charleston last year. A lot had changed since the last time a group of Mobilians went to Charleston in 1988 and again, lessons proved invaluable.

Developing Partnerships

The Chamber continued to pursue regional partnerships in 1999 by organizing the first Gulf Coast Issues Conference drawing 125 of the Central Gulf Coast's top leaders from Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Biloxi-Gulfport, Mobile and Pensacola. The group studied the region's economy, transportation resources, the environment and its Washington influence. Follow-up sessions are forming a regional agenda.

Other valuable partnerships extended outside U.S. borders. Between trade missions, expositions and visiting dignitaries, the Chamber offered its members opportunities to learn about doing business in 16 countries including Chile, Costa Rica, Brazil, Argentina, Singapore, France, Cuba, Canada, Mexico and several African nations. Last year, reports also pointed to Alabama as the leader in the Southeast for export increases.

Envision Mobile-Baldwin

The area's strategic plan, Envision Mobile-Baldwin, recruited two additional chairs from Baldwin County. Daphne Mayor Harry Brown and County Commission President Frank Burt joined a force of 330 businesses and organizations

coordinating efforts to achieve strategies in six major categories critical to both counties. Next month's Envision Annual Meeting will highlight the significant accomplishments achieved by this unprecedented effort. (See story on page 3.)



In the News

The best news of the year came when Good Morning America decided to broadcast live from Bellingrath Gardens during one of its road tours. The Chamber served as the lead organization assisting ABC as millions of people watched Dianne Sawyer, Charlie Gibson and Faith Hill against a backdrop of a spectacular sunrise over Dog River and a cascade of spring colors. More good news about our area came when the Chamber paired up with the Mobile Convention and Visitors Center to meet with Atlanta media sources. Several stories recognizing our progress were a direct result of the trip.

Professional Development

The Chamber offered a variety of seminars and speakers that kept members up-to-date. From the Small Business Network's new web site (Net Gain home page) to the Franchise Tax Forum to Working with Generation X to the Magical Management of Disney – there were topics to suit most every business interest.

In the Right Direction

"Throw me something mister." With that cry Mobile Mardi Gras landed in the American Bus Association's Top 100 events of the year. Other successful "throws" resulted in touchdowns when we landed the new Mobile Alabama Bowl and the Admirals, the area's first professional football team. And now you can even toss a plastic jug in the city's new Recycling Center.

Other community kudos included new air service with direct flights to Chicago, Washington and Cincinnati by United Express and Delta, the world renowned Nicholas and Alexandra Exhibit, a falling crime rate, a successful United Way campaign and the ceremony launching the restoration of the GM&O building.

And so...

The energy that is driving Mobile is hitting warp speed. And while many neighboring cities are looking for a strategic path, our area is already on course. What's ahead for the next 100 years? The next 1000 years? No one really knows for sure but predictions are that whatever it is, our community will continue to embrace opportunity as well as its challenges.

In Order To Show You Just How Big Our Large Format Prints Are, We'd Have To Buy

A MUCH BIGGER AD.

With Gwin's/Copy Graphics new DisplayMaker 6100 large format printer, we can take your big ideas and make them a reality - all in vibrant, accurate, high-resolution color. From promoting a product to selling an idea, we can help you get your message across in sizes up to 60" wide and printed on a variety of media. Plus, the DisplayMaker's revolutionary eight-color printing process produces images with a continuous tone quality that looks great - even up close!

Come in today for the whole picture.

**410 Saint Francis Street
Mobile, AL 36602
334.438.2226**



1999 Board Chairman, John Davis with Mobile Gas (right), 2000 Chair Dianne Irby with Irby Strategic Services (center) and Annual Meeting speaker Dr. Price Pritchett.

Annual Meeting Sponsors

Thanks to AmSouth, the keynote speaker sponsor, and the 10 companies that sponsored the Chamber's Annual Meeting last month. With their financial support, the Chamber was able to highlight 1999 accomplishments and bring Dr. Price Pritchett, Pritchett and Associates Consulting, to discuss work habits for the new millennium.

Profiled below are the companies that sponsored the Annual Meeting. Again, a special thanks goes to AmSouth Bank for underwriting Dr. Pritchett's keynote address.

AmSouth has served the banking needs of Mobile area businesses and families for more than 130 years and has grown into the 20th largest banking institution in the nation. Headquartered in Alabama, the company has \$43.54 billion in assets and serves customers through approximately 660 branch banking offices and 1,365 ATMs in nine Southeastern states.

AmSouth has leading market positions in Alabama, Tennessee, Florida, and Mississippi, and

a presence in Georgia, Louisiana, Arkansas, Kentucky and Virginia. AmSouth is a leader among regional banks in the Southeast in several key business segments, including consumer and commercial banking, small business banking, mortgage lending, equipment leasing, annuity and mutual fund sales and trust asset management.

The company pioneered the "relationship" banking concept in its markets and

AmSouth employees are committed to building strong customer relationships by understanding customers' needs and then meeting those needs.

A SOUTHERN COMPANY

Alabama Power provides reliable, low-cost electricity to homes, businesses and industries in the southern two-thirds of the state. The company's 1.3 million customers enjoy electricity prices that are among the lowest in the nation. In fact, the average retail price is about the same as it was 10 years ago while national electricity prices have risen 6 percent.

Alabama Power is prepared to meet competitive challenges as industry restructuring is taking place across the nation. Also, in a recent survey of 16 peer utilities, Alabama Power ranked no. 1 in customer satisfaction. Company employees are continuously working to put the customer first, cut costs and find more efficient ways to do business, all of which help keep prices low and customer service levels high.

Southern Company, the nation's largest producer of electricity, owns Alabama Power and four other U.S. utilities including Georgia Power, Gulf Power, Mississippi Power and Savannah Electric. Other subsidiaries and affiliates include Southern Company Services, Southern Energy Inc., Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Southern Company Energy Solutions, and Southern Communications Services (Southern LINC).



Bringing the convenience and mobility of wireless voice paging and data communications to more than 4.5 million customers in 17 states, GTE also markets wireless long distance and Internet access service, allowing users to get a single

monthly statement for all of their wireless charges.

The GTE Wireless service area covers 73 metropolitan statistical areas,

three major trading areas (MTAs) and 53 rural service areas (RSAs), bringing wireless communications to more than 61 million people.

During 2000, GTE Wireless will continue the transition of its digital-ready networks to full digital capacity, and has selected Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA), which provides enhanced voice quality, features, privacy and increased network capacity.

Constant linking all GTE Wireless activities is the commitment of its more than 9,300 employees, who also work to provide excellent customer service and simple, easy-to-use solutions to America's wireless communications needs.



"Helping people worldwide experience the manifest presence of God." That's been the idea behind everything at Integrity Incorporated. Since its inception in 1987, Integrity has become one of the industry's biggest success stories with sales over 40 million units, international distribution to over 140 countries and subsidiary offices in Europe, Australia and Singapore.

Integrity has also seen 16 of its albums or videos certified "gold" by the Recording Industry Association of America (sales of 500,000 per record-

ing or 50,000 per video), one platinum video and numerous awards and nominations.

While Christian music has grown larger than jazz and classical, Integrity has become the undisputed leader in "praise and worship" music, the fastest-growing segment of the Christian music industry.

Integrity Incorporated is looking to the 21st century with a goal of being a total communications company – using music, software, video, print music and other media to enhance relationships with the Father.



In the summer of 1992, two riverboats destined to become the Isle of Capri Casino sailed in on a wave of excitement. As the boats charted down the Mississippi River into the waters of the Gulf of Mexico, the people of Biloxi prepared for the arrival of the South's first casinos.

After only eight successful months of operation, the property, located on Biloxi's historic Point Cadet, introduced a new, state-of-the-art, multi-level gaming pavilion.

Today the Isle of Capri Casino Crowne Plaza Resort has evolved into a full-service Caribbean style resort featuring a state-of-the-art casino, three sensational restaurants including Farraday's serving dishes with an international flare and Calypso's Buffet, offering an all-you-care-to-eat selection with fresh seafood, live entertainment and an award-winning 370-room hotel with magnificent Gulf views.

The Isle of Capri is a leader in the dockside gaming industry. From the flagship casino in Southern Mississippi, Isle of Capri Casinos Inc., the company has expanded to Vicksburg and Tunica, Miss., Bossier City and Lake Charles, La., Black Hawk, Colo., as well as a cruise ship, the Enchanted Capri, sailing out of the Port of New Orleans.



Headquartered in West Point, Georgia, ITC-DeltaCom provides integrated telecommunications services to mid-size and major regional providers of wholesale, long-haul services to other communications companies.

The Company's business communication services include local exchange service, long distance, enhanced data, Internet, operator services, and the sale and maintenance of customer premise equipment. The company operates 22 branch locations in eight states, and its 10-state, 6,970-mile fiber optic network reaches more than 70 points of presence.

The company has an interconnection agreement with BellSouth Corporation for resale and access to unbundled network elements, and is a certified Competitive Local Exchange Carrier (CLEC) in all nine BellSouth states.

Chamber members using ITC-DeltaCom enjoy exclusive discounts offered only to members of professional/trade associations that endorse ITC-DeltaCom.

ITC-DeltaCom was selected based on competitive pricing, as well as its commitment to personalized customer service, simplicity of billing statements, unique ability to customize business long distance

accounts, and a live, friendly response to callers 24 hours a day.

Planning for the future and growth are not new experiences for Long's. Founded in 1948 as a small private employment agency, it grew to a five-branch operation with 25 recruiters by the mid-1960s. Considering the size of Mobile 39 years ago, this was no small accomplishment.

Today's concepts of "strategic partners" and "employment skills training" fit neatly into Long's five-year strategic plan that calls for complete recruiting, assessment, training, management services and exit strategies for more than 500 clients and hundreds of full-time staff in the office and field.

Leading-edge concepts and services such as 100 percent drug testing, a state-licensed computer training facility, a national award-winning Safety and Risk Program, and information technology staffing have propelled Long's into the local and national spotlight on many occasions.

By making large investments in equipment and intellectual capital the company is positioned to offer unique and exclusive training and placement programs. A model for high technology firms, Long's Human Resource Services still delivers a personal touch to each client and employee.



What separates a champion from the ordinary athlete and drives him or her to success? It is the spirit of excellence.

Like the athlete, the spirit of excellence at EnergySouth starts long before the competition begins. It starts with preparation – understanding our customers' needs, formulating a plan, and grasping those opportunities that will make us a stronger force in the next millennium.

The company builds on this tradition of excellence every day by enhancing customer service, developing new business opportunities, introducing innovative engineering designs, and improving our product for the customer.

From the executive team to the crews in the field, building on a tradition of excellence means creating greater value for customers and shareholders. It means blending the company's history of superb craftsmanship with the new technologies of today, and meeting, and even exceeding what our customers expect from us.

At Energy South, building on a tradition of excellence is the key to the future, and as we build on that tradition, we will unlock all the possibilities.



For the past five decades, The Mitchell Group has been a unique catalyst in the dynamically expanding real estate market of the Sunbelt. Recognized throughout the region for its vast experience and active development history, The Mitchell Company has become known as a one-of-a-kind

enterprise capable of acting in multiple roles. Broad and varied, the roles include developer or properties, builder of single-family homes and condominiums, resort properties, manufactured homes communities, apartments, warehouses and office buildings, real estate manager and advisor, investor, and provider of facilities management and support.

The Mitchell Company's executive offices are located in Mobile with branch offices in Jackson and Biloxi, Miss., Pensacola, Orlando and Ocala, Fla. and Orange Beach/Gulf Shores.

The Mitchell Group is comprised of the numerous divisions and companies including Island Vacations, Anchor Self-Storage Facilities, Mitchell Homes, Monticello Homes, Banyan Homes, Magnolia Point Manufactured Home Communities and Mitchell Equities.



Believing its strong commitment to the community is the key to this company's long-term success, NBC 15 News maintains it is the driving force behind everything they do and is why they constantly strive to find new ways to serve the viewers.

Covering the Coast from Mississippi through Mobile to Florida with the best local news, sports and weather. NBC 15 NEWS says if you watch, you will see the difference in their team – Dave Straker, consumer watchdog; Sharron Melton, education focus; Leon Petite, Baldwin County; Natalie Tysdal, news anchor and host of Medical Milestones. Plus, NBC NEWS is proud to welcome Darwin Singleton to its team. His "Here's Darwin" segments have become a favorite of viewers up and down the Gulf Coast.

NBC 15 NEWS also has teamed up with local Clear Channel radio stations and the Mobile Register to form the Gulf Coast Storm Alert Network. When a hurricane threatens the Gulf Coast, Meteorologist David Glenn and the unequalled resources of the Gulf Coast Storm Alert team go to work for you.



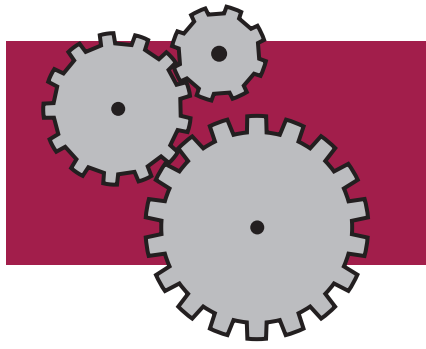
Established in 1953 by Vester J. Thompson Jr., and purchased as an Employee Stock Ownership Program (ESOP) in 1996, Thompson Engineering is a full-service engineering consulting and design firm. Its staff totals approximately 200 people in five offices throughout Alabama and Mississippi.

In its 47-year history, Thompson Engineering has assisted in the development of the Mobile-Baldwin commercial, residential and industrial growth.

As an employee-owned company and a community stakeholder, Thompson Engineering promotes and operates within the principles of "Sustainable Development" and hope to affect the engineering and environmental standards by which they will manage the growth of the Mobile-Baldwin area in the next millennium.

The company's supporting philosophy is to provide the highest value in services to its clients, create career opportunities for employees, and to be an active leader in the Mobile-Baldwin community.

The Chamber At Work For You



A Place Called Home

Under the Envision Mobile-Baldwin strategic plan, volunteers met and discussed ways to provide more affordable housing. The group is collaborating on a housing fair that will be held in April where financial institutions and affordable housing agencies can educate potential homeowners.

Possibilities

On behalf of the Mobile County School System, the Chamber convened a planning group to evaluate the possibility of a joint school system-business partnership that would create a technical magnet high school. The program would provide students with training opportunities that would fit the needs of local businesses.

Exploring Partnerships

Looking for more opportunities to partner with the South Regions Minority Business Council, Chamber staff met with the organization's executive director. The Council works to promote and assist minority-owned businesses.

Mobile In Numbers

The Chamber's Research Dept. staff begin compiling 1999 statistics. Many of the statistics will be found in the upcoming *1999 Annual Report*. For more information contact Ginny Morris, 431-8656.

The Leading Edge

Recently plans were made to update and publish a 2000 edition of *The Leading Edge: A Directory of Minority Leaders*. In 1998, the Chamber offered the first directory that identifies minority leaders willing to serve on committees and boards.

Account Executive Team Recruits Julie Carter

Julie Carter recently joined the Chamber's membership team. She is an account executive and will assist in recruiting new members along with helping existing members get involved in the organization.



Hertz Reservation Center." "My job will be to get the word out about what the Chamber does and what it can do for your business," she added.

One thing that will make Carter successful is that she already believes in what the Chamber is doing, said Carolyn Golson, the Chamber's vice president of membership. "Her enthusiasm and personality will

blend well with our team." You can reach Carter by calling 431-8647 or by her pager, 582-1899.



Fish for Food

A new partnership between the state and private enterprises will provide more food to less fortunate people. The Fish for Food program recently announced by Gov. Don Siegelman will have the help of the Alabama Seafood Association and its members along with gill-net fishermen, the Marine Resources Division of the state department of Conservation and Natural Resources and various seafood processors.

Under the newly created program, mullet which is not currently utilized will be processed into skinless, boneless filets and packaged to be distributed under the new program.

Local company's participating are Bryant Products, P.J.'s Seafood, Captain Jackie's, Southern Fish and Oysters and Safe Harbor Seafood.

Dig Yourself Out

If you ever said, "I'm too busy to get organized," or just needed a reason to stay motivated in your New Year's resolution to be more organized – then take note. Don Wetmore of the Productivity Institute claims that a person who works with a messy desk spends on average, 1 1/2 hours per day looking for things. That's 7 1/2 hours per week.

Source: Harold Taylor Time Consultants Inc., (416) 491-0777, Harold@TaylorOnTime.com.

Retail Sales Up, Wholesale Prices Steady

– this seems to be the consistent formula for a healthy national economy. On Jan. 14 *USA Today* released adjusted figures from the Commerce Department showing shoppers spent \$259.6 billion in December, along with the Labor Department's "glacial 0.9 percent" increase in producer prices for finished goods (excludes food and energy costs).

Many financial gurus are anticipating another increase in interest rates this month and predict that when the Federal Reserve meets again on March 21 rates will rise again in efforts of slowing down the economy.

Alabama Gets ADA Representative

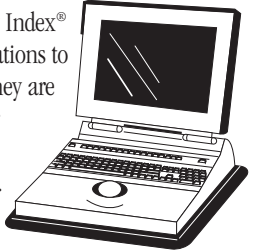
Based in Atlanta, the Southeast Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center has a helpline and materials to inform people and businesses about the American With Disabilities Act (ADA), passed in 1990.

To contact the organization for assistance call 1-800-942-4232 or write to the Center at 490 Tenth St., Atlanta, Ga. 30318. There is an area representative for Alabama, P.J. Magik, who can be reached at (205) 387-0159.

What if...?

A recent study revealed that heavy computer users from both the public and private sectors are ill-equipped to handle a general technology disruption and are "woefully inadequate" in their recovery plans should Internet-based applications fail.

The 1999 Vulnerability Index[®] surveyed 200 U.S. organizations to determine how prepared they are in the event that computer systems, critical data and applications are shutdown.



Sponsored by Comdisco, BellSouth and Oracle, the study indicates that despite the explosive growth of Internet business applications, only 30 percent of organizations have recovery programs in place for their Internet applications, and a little over half, 54 percent, have instituted plans for their overall network.

Other key findings include:

- 30 percent don't have any business continuity plans in place;
- 50 percent have applications that require 99 percent or greater availability;
- 13 percent do nothing to ensure that level of availability;
- Nearly one in four Local Area Networks is completely vulnerable to disaster or disruption; and
- 64 percent don't have an effective plan to protect Wide Area Networks.

2000 Membership Directory Out Soon

The finishing touches have been completed on the *2000 Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce Membership Directory* and Buyer's Guide. The awaited annual publication is scheduled to be mailed this month.

The directory and addendum, in addition to an alphabetical listing and classified section of the 2,500 Chamber members (as of December 1999), includes statistical and historical information about the area.

It is produced locally by printers, writers, artists and photographers and is supported by advertisements from Chamber members.

Special thanks to the companies that contributed to the directory's production – International Paper, S.D. Warren Company, Tom Mason Communications, Interstate Printing and member advertisers.

One copy of the directory is free to Chamber member companies. Additional copies are available for \$10 to members and \$30 to non-members. For information on ordering a directory or next year's advertising opportunities, call Karen Turner at 431-8638.

Comparative Economic Indicators November '99 vs November '98

Unemployment Rates		4.2%	November '99
		3.6%	November '98
Business Licenses		240	November '99
		168	November '98
Homes Sold		331	November '99
		307	November '98
Air Passengers From Mobile		30,845	November '99
		28,996	November '98

Out Our New Year's Special

Large one bedroom with washer/dryer connections.

Regularly \$515-525 for only \$450.00

Limited Time - Select Units

Cimarron Ridge Apartments
633-2233



METZGER'S is your source for
MARDI GRAS TAILS

A reasonable investment in fine tails and accessories expertly tailored for a perfect fit means years of enjoyment on many special occasions.

(334) 342-6336
3704 Dauphin St. at I-65
Monday - Saturday 9:30 to 6:00

METZGER'S

CALENDAR VIEW

COMING IN MARCH



Net Gain: Health Risk Management and Injury Prevention Seminar

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



Business After Hours

Time: 5:30 - 7 p.m.
Place: 851 S. Beltline Hwy. (Atrium of Union Planters Bank Bldg.)
Cost: \$2 for members, \$5 for potential members
Sponsored by: DIGIPH PCS



Envision Mobile-Baldwin Annual Meeting

Time: 8 - 10 a.m.
Place: Daphne Civic Center (Hwy. 98)
Cost: \$7, includes breakfast
Call: Angela Erwin at 431-8621
Sponsored by: ATel Communications, Creanova, Mobile Gas, Prior Energy, Saunders Engine Co., Thames Batre et. al Insurance



First Friday

Time: 7:45 - 8:45 p.m.
Place: 5558 Old Shell Rd.
Cost: \$2 for members, \$5 for potential members
Co-Sponsored by: Cadence 120 Bicycle Works and Broadway Bagels



Noon Marketing Meeting

Time: Noon - 1 p.m.
Place: Chamber McGowin Room
Cost: \$5, includes lunch
Call: Karen Turner at 431-8638
Sponsored by: Professional Sales Recruiters

Net Gain: Health Risk Management and Injury Prevention Seminar

Corporate America is facing profit losses due to escalating health care costs and worker's compensation claims. This Health Risk Management and Injury Prevention seminar on Thursday, Feb. 17 from 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. in the Chamber McGowin Room, focuses on health and safety issues shared by business owners, executive management, human resource and benefits managers and corporate safety directors. The speaker, C. Vincent Niette is president of Corpora-Fit Inc., a Mobile based company. Come learn ways to maintain the health and safety of your employee workforce, and thus reduce health risk problems and work-related injuries that can make a difference in the financial success of your company.

The cost to attend this seminar is \$15 and includes lunch. Call Brenda Rembart at 431-8607 for reservations today.



February's Business After Hours

Come enjoy a relaxing evening of networking with complimentary hors d'oeuvres at February's Business After Hours on Thursday, Feb. 24 from 5:30 - 7 p.m. in the Atrium of Union Planters Bank, 851 S. Beltline Hwy. sponsored by DIGIPH PCS. Take advantage of this great opportunity to introduce yourself to business contacts. Bring your business cards to share among the crowd.

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



Celebrating Success, Outlining the Future

◆ Annual State of the City and County luncheon set for March 29

Curious about the prospective cruise ship terminal? What have you heard lately about road improvements? It seems like every day there's news about a project or improvement needed in Mobile. Even after announcements are made, it's sometimes months before progress is visible.

Well here's a chance to hear first hand the answers to these questions and more from Mobile Mayor Mike Dow and County



Mayor Mike Dow

Commission President Sam Jones at the 2000 State of the City and County luncheon. The annual event, hosted by the Chamber is set for Wednesday, March 29 at the Mobile Convention Center from noon until 1:30 p.m.

Offering both an interesting recap of what's happened in the area last year and a rare opportunity to hear forecasts about future projects, the

event also provides an opportunity to ask questions of local leaders.

Agenda topics will include updates on such projects as the Water Street cruise terminal, economic development and environmental issues, infrastructure improvements as well as exciting upcoming plans.

This year's event is sponsored by Alabama Power Company, Compass Bank, The Cronus Group, IPSCO, Mitchell Company, Mitsubishi



County Commission President Sam Jones

Polysilicon, Mobile Gas, Prudential Securities, TC Broome Construction Company and Whitney Bank.

With the generosity of corporate sponsors, ticket prices are held to \$10 per person. The event is usually a

sell-out, so make your reservation early by calling the Chamber's Governmental Affairs Department at 431-8612.

7th Annual Spring Golf Tournament

Friday, March 31 8:30 a.m.



TimberCreek Golf Course
Hole sponsorships \$800
Individual tickets \$150

(includes green fees, cart fees, continental breakfast, rangeballs, tee favors, complimentary beverages and post-tournament reception)

Prizes include:
1st, 2nd & 3rd place
Closest to the pin
Longest drive

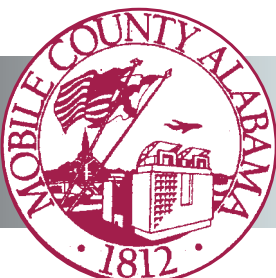


And great door prizes

Awards Ceremony Sponsored by Cock of the Walk

For more information on sponsorships and tickets, call **Karen Turner** in the Chamber's Membership Department at **431-8638**.

Sign up to play, this tournament sells out quickly!



ATTENTION MEMBERS!

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

- Melody Lipscomb at 431-8627/pg: 371-9634
- Julie Carter at 431-8647/pg: 582-1899
- Tom Lewis at 431-8629/pg: 582-2076

WHO'S NEW?

Dr. William E. Barrick is the new executive director of Bellingrath Gardens. Previously, he was with Callaway Gardens in Georgia.

Whitney Bank recently announced the promotion of Patrick B. Ladd to assistant vice president. Before this advancement, he was a private banking officer with the bank.



Ladd



Burns

Charles F. Burns was appointed to vice president of marketing and business development for Strachan Shipping Agency. Burns will be headquartered in the Northeast and will focus on Strachan's countrywide non-liner activities.

Angela L. Gardner was promoted to assistant vice president and regional training manager at Regions Bank. She joined the bank in 1981 and prior to her regional training assignment, she was a customer service representative.

Remedy Intelligent Staffing reported the addition of Shelly Middleton as staffing manager. She will be responsible for recruiting, employee staffing and client services. Middleton recently worked on fundraising campaigns with the Mobile Area Chamber and the Mobile Area Education Foundation.

Sullivan-St. Clair Advertising/Public Relations announced the addition of Traci Schexnayder as senior art director. Previously, she was an art director with TLW Productions in New Orleans and Mezzina-Brown in New York. Also announced are the promotions of Ronda Burns to Senior Art Director, and Willie Waite to traffic coordinator.



Schexhayder



Burns



Waite

Roberts Brothers added several new agents to its real estate team: Becky Edwards and Tina Summers joined the Airport Square branch; Joe McDonald and Joel I. Tanner joined the Dauphin Square branch; and Van Pham joined the Cottage Hill West branch.

Dale Chappell joined the sales team at RE/MAX Real Estate Partners in Mobile. He has been active in the Mobile real estate market for several years.

William J. Bose MD joined the Orthopaedic Group PC. Bose graduated from the Louisiana State University of Medicine and served his internship and residency at the University of South Alabama (USA). He is also an assistant professor in the Dept. of Orthopaedic Surgery at USA.

The Warranty Group announced the promotion of Claude Thompson to executive vice president and chief operations officer. He started with the company in 1996.

MEMBER NEWS

BUSINESS ENDEAVORS

Bodiford's Automotive Service Inc. relocated its import repair service facility to 7064 Airport Blvd., at the intersection of Airport and Cody Rd. Call 341-5020.

The Alabama Healthcare Council (AHC) is now offering United Healthcare Coverage as an option for members. In addition, AHC created a health care insurance option to address the needs of small businesses. For more information, call 205-995-9922.

QMS teamed up with IBM, which will provide warranty and service support for QMS/Minolta printers. The new agreement is the latest step in QMS' strategy to focus on channel distribution and technology development.

ERA Marie McConnell Realty was recently named co-principal broker for Cendant Mobility for the greater Mobile area. More than 300 real estate transactions occurred through Cendant Mobility in this area last year. Rich Beauchamp will oversee the program.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Spring Hill College has launched a corporate fund-raising effort to enhance scholarship opportunities for students in the Gulf Coast area. Led by John Lewis, Lewis Communications, the college is aiming for a \$25,000 goal. Call Karen Edwards at 414-3205 or e-mail kedwards@shc.edu.

Ground breaking ceremonies marked the start of a Live Oak Instructional Laboratory at the Bryant Career Technical Center. A \$6,075 federal grant will fund the building of a greenhouse where students will grow live oaks for the Mobile community.

The Ronald McDonald House of Mobile was awarded a \$150,000 "Challenge Grant" from The Kresge Foundation to assist in the completion of its \$2.3 million capital campaign. Call Brian Hartzell at 694-6873 for more information.

NEED TO KNOW

Applications for aviation technology scholarships are due by March 15. The J.L. Bedsole Foundation developed the program for Southwest Alabama students pursuing an Associate in Applied Science degree in Airframe and Powerplant Technology through Wallace Community College Aviation Center in Mobile. For more information about available scholarships, contact Meghan Stacey, 432-1134.

Last month we printed an incorrect e-mail address for Patricia Wheat at EAP Lifestyle Management. To contact the company call 344-5843, 1-800-788-2077 or e-mail EAPLfstyl@aol.com.

For a free copy of the updated and expanded Alabama Vacation Guide call 1-800-ALABAMA.

Professional Sales Recruiters Inc. is the new name of the company formerly known as Professional Sales Consultants. Contact Patsy Case at 461-0708 or visit the company web site at www.prosalesrecruiters.com for career opportunities.

The Gulf Coast Exploreum announced new Saturday hours, from 10 a.m. – 9 p.m. The Museum is open Monday – Thursday from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. and on Friday is open until 9 p.m. Sunday hours are noon to 5 p.m.

Bishop State Community College has a new Small Business Resource Library that can help individuals research how to start a business. Located in the Minority Technology and Entrepreneurial Center on the Main campus at 351 N. Broad St., the library is open from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. For more information, contact Lorie Sanders at 690-6938.

WELL DONE!

Mobile Infirmery Medical Center announced the annual winners of its Ernest G. DeBakey awards. They are: Anita Hubbard RN; Ashley Glen RN; Dorothy Carter Smith, instrument technician; Demitrin Eric Palmer, operating room technician; and Mary Stewart Roberds Stephens, divisional secretary. Winners were selected by Surgery Department employees, and demonstrated exemplary responsiveness to patient/family needs, professionalism and a positive attitude.

Also, Curtis M. Graf MD was elected president of the Infirmery's medical staff. Other elected officers were: G. Douglas Hungerford MD, president-elect, and J. Donald Kirby MD, secretary-treasurer.

More good news at the Infirmery, it was recently granted accreditation by the American Association of Blood Banks.

George K. "Chip" Noland Jr., Noland Construction Company, was named "1999 Remodeler of the Year" by the Home Builders Association of Metro Mobile. Noland was cited for his successful effort to increase the professionalism of the remodeling industry and contributing to increased consumer education and protection. It was also noted that under his guidance as the association's president, the local council had become the largest in the U.S.

The Substitute Teacher Training program at Arlington Staff Development is receiving national recognition in the March issue of *Cable in the Classroom*, a periodical sent to school districts through the United States.

The story of civil rights pioneer John LeFlore gained national attention when a recent documentary about him earned a regional Emmy Award. The one-hour documentary was produced at LeFlore High School's Television Production Center by John Beebee, Davy Cook and several students. The program aired last summer of Alabama Public Television.

Employees of Data Services & Systems received certifications in Peachtree Accounting software: David Black Chaffe, Peachtree 2000, Peachtree Complete and Peachtree Office; Vidmer Greer Benbow CPA, Peachtree Complete Accounting for DOS, version 11; and Melissa James and John Bayer, Peachtree Complete for Windows, release 7.0. In addition, Alex Frezell holds certification in MicroSoft, Windows '95, '98, 2000 Artisoft and 3COM.

Molly Taylor, with ERA Marie McConnell Realty, completed the Accredited Buyers Representation course offered by the National Association of Realtors, and earned her ABR designation.

In other news, Dana Scott, owner/broker of ERA Marie McConnell Realty, was awarded the 1999 David D. Roberts Memorial Scholarship Award for exceptional service to the real estate industry and to the Mobile community.

Thomas Hospital received the Green Award from Mobile United's Natural Resources and Conservation Committee. The hospital earned the award by restoring the abandoned Wal-Mart to develop a medical center.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

On Feb. 20, Raymond Dobard, co-author of *Hidden in Plain View: The Secret Story About Quilts and The Underground Railroad* will speak at the Mobile Museum of Art's downtown gallery. His book describes how quilts were hung on clotheslines along the path to freedom, and used as coded instructions giving direction for safe passage. The public is invited to bring in quilts for Dobard to evaluate from 3 – 5 p.m.

An exhibit featuring 25 contemporary African-American craft artists is currently on display at the downtown gallery through March 26.

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