

THE VIEW

NOVEMBER 2001

MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Proponents Withdraw West Mobile Incorporation Petition, But Vow to Continue

An effort to keep West Mobile from becoming a newly incorporated city was temporarily halted last month, only one week before the vote was to be held on Oct. 16. In court, proponents of the proposed new city withdrew their petition to hold a vote after a tract of land was discovered to have no residents living within its boundaries.

Prior to the petition being withdrawn, Chamber volunteers and staff studied both sides of the issue and determined incorporation did not make good business sense. Jim Apple, vice president of economic development for the Chamber, said no other comparable city in the state of Alabama operates on less money than the proposed new city has budgeted.

"We looked at the proposed budget, and it's just not possible to provide residences and businesses with police and fire protection for as little money as they've budgeted," he said. "Public safety is a critical issue for us, and we're not willing to sacrifice the welfare of any resident for more bureaucracy."

Currently, much of the proposed incorporation area falls within the City of Mobile police jurisdiction, and a 2 percent sales tax is levied in this area to pay for fire and police services. If West Mobile incorporates, Chamber officials believe public safety, fire ratings, increased taxes and less services will be critical issues, with no clear answers.

From its research, the Chamber decided to support an anti-incorporation effort made up of West Mobile business owners and residents who were concerned there were not enough specifics being offered about what incorporation would mean in the long term.

Here are just a few of the facts learned about what a proposed new city would mean to residents in West Mobile:

- West Mobile will spend less money per person than any other city in Mobile County, although proponents claim they will be able to offer services like those in cities such as Saraland, Chickasaw, Satsuma and Prichard;

- There is no guarantee that property and sales taxes will not increase, and though proponents say they won't, it would be up to newly-elected officials to make that decision. The new city would have the ability to enact new taxes without a vote of the people according to the current Alabama Constitution;

- Currently most residents in the proposed area enjoy an Insurance Services Office Inc. (ISO) fire rating of 3. There is no guarantee that ISO ratings will not increase to a 7, 8 or 9, which could increase homeowners' insurance rates 50 percent or more;



Based on proposed boundaries, this McDonald's at Schillinger Road and Airport would fall in the new city of West Mobile if approved by voters.

REASONS TO VOTE AGAINST A NEW CITY

"AS IS"

- 2 percent city sales tax
NO city property tax
- Fire insurance rating of 3 for most homeowners, which means...
- Stable insurance rates
- Optional garbage pick-up
- **NO INCREASES IN TAXES**

INCORPORATION

- 2 percent new city tax with unlimited potential increases **WITHOUT** a vote of the people
- Up to 5-mills property tax increase **WITHOUT** a vote of the people
- Likely fire insurance rating increase of 7, 8, 9, or even 10 for homeowners, which means...
- Assured insurance rate increases ranging from \$100 to \$1,000+ per home. Call your agent for details!
- **MANDATORY** participation in a city garbage service – approximately \$150 per year; taxes or fees – your choice!
- Potential insurance and garbage increased costs of up to \$1,500 per year, **PLUS** additional taxes are possible **WITHOUT** a vote of the people

CITY OF WEST MOBILE = MORE TAXES & LESS SERVICE

For more information contact the No New City Committee Jim Bozonelos, 421-7005, 7161 Windmill Place, Mobile, AL 36695

- Fire and police protection cost money. The proposed budget submitted by the Committee to Incorporate West Mobile offers only \$1.7 million for fire protection and \$2.2 million for police protection. Building one fire station could cost \$1 million alone, and does not include fire trucks, personnel and equipment.

The Chamber is committed to educating businesses and individuals about the potential challenges incorporating West Mobile would bring. "Benefits of incorporating into a new city are limited at best, and while many people feel there's no choice other than incorporating, that's simply not true," said Apple.

Voting no to incorporation will allow West Mobilians to continue enjoying the quality services the City of Mobile has afforded them, without an increase in taxes or the duplication of administrative services a new city will require.

More Than Luck Drives Ball to Success



Photo by Davis Photography

"Work hard, be honest and have faith in what you do." It's a philosophy that's worked for Clarence Ball Jr., for the past 18 years. Since 1983, his Mobile-based Ball HealthCare Services has grown from one local nursing home to 11 skilled facilities and a medical supply company spread throughout Alabama and Florida.

reimbursements and staff shortages squeeze some facilities right out of business. Ball HealthCare not only stays afloat, but has expanded, building three new nursing homes in the past two years.

"Ball HealthCare has the same challenges as others in this industry, plus its own – growth," the chief executive officer says. Occupancy of the com-

"As a young man, I used to say I was lucky. Now I say I'm blessed. I get to work in a field I love, and I get to work with people, which I enjoy," Ball says.

All industries face challenges, but the healthcare industry's woes are particularly tough at a time when the demand for healthcare has never been higher. Increasing regulation, liability lawsuits, shrinking

pany's 990 beds usually runs high, but the market is somewhat softer these days due to the active building programs of nursing homes across the state.

Another challenge Ball faces is how to manage and retain a workforce of more than 1,100 people when disenchantment and burnout are rampant among healthcare workers.

"There are staff shortages. Fewer people want to be nurses and we compete with hotels and restaurants for non-nursing staff," he says. Ball fights back with a competitive wage and benefits package and some extra incentives to keep workers happy on the job.

"We try to provide a cheerful atmosphere for people to work in as well as for our residents to convalesce. Our Healthcare Hospitality program provides environmental enrichment with aspects taken from the hospitality industry. And we train our managers to be sensitive to the needs of our employees," he said.

Ball believes the workplace should provide opportunities for professional and social growth. It's a responsibility he fulfills through training programs and scholarships, including assistance for minorities to earn a graduate degree at the Center for Studies in Aging at North Texas State University, Ball's alma mater.

"I like to see people's skills develop. I'm a good trainer and a hands-on manager," Ball says. He won't allow corporate duties to keep him from walking the corridors of his nursing homes. "I'm in and out of the facilities all the time. The people on the floor know who the president of their company is."

Ball is a native of New Braunfels, Texas. He received a bachelor's degree in sociology from Southwest Texas State in 1972 and a master's in long-term-care administration from North Texas State University in 1975. Ball worked with Vari-Care in Tuskegee for 10 years before founding Ball HealthCare in Mobile. Additionally, he has interests in other enterprises, serving as president of Old Shell Properties (a real estate company), vice president of Gulf Federal Bank and treasurer of ALTC Insurance Company.

Ball lends his leadership abilities to industry and community agencies such as the Chamber, Mobile Industrial Development Board, Volunteers of America and 100 Black Men of Greater Mobile.

He is married to Charlesetta Ball and is the father of three children.

Mobile Not Threatened By Its New Neighbor



Front row: Jim Henderson Jr. and Jim Henderson Sr. Back row: Rick Galimore, Bob Yarbrough and Ken Weed

A set of pictures in Jim Henderson Jr.'s office at Mobile Lumber depicts one reason why this locally-owned building supply store continues to thrive. The photos show a competitor's truck leaving its store with a few pieces of lumber and that same truck leaving Mobile Lumber's facility with a full load.

But it's more than quantity that has kept this company in business since 1975, says Henderson, senior vice president for Mobile Lumber. It's experience, knowledge and competitive prices.

So, does a company with these qualities quiver when superstore giant Lowe's gets ready to move next door? Of course not, but a little polish doesn't hurt either. The store just completed a \$500,000 renovation last month.

While Henderson admits Lowe's was a small factor in the decision process to update the store, he says it had more to do with wear and tear from Hurricane Georges and the fact that 93 percent of his business comes from contractors who seldom, if ever, come into Mobile Lumber. Retail sales account for the remaining 7 percent.

Scheduled to open next spring, the new Lowe's, will have a contractor division, like all the stores, says Chris Ahearn, Lowe's director of public relations.

Lowe's, which focuses on the retail customer, has 22 stores in Alabama and the new operation at Highway 90 and Rangeline Road will be the third in Mobile. "Mobile is a vibrant growing city where people take pride in their homes. We wanted to be a convenient location," says Ahearn.

As part of the renovations, Mobile Lumber increased its retail inventory to accommodate the remodeling contractor. "Before (the changes) we

were forcing the remodeler to go other places. Now we can offer them more of the same great service and convenience."

The company added between 5,000 and 6,000 items including Dewalt power tools, a Do it Best Paint line, manufactured by Sherwin Williams, Thomas Lighting, bathroom fixtures and electrical supplies.

Besides lumber, the store's inventory also includes windows, siding, insulation, cabinets, roofing materials, hardware and electrical and plumbing materials.

After moving to Mobile to work with Malcom McClane's Diamond Head Corp., Jim Henderson Sr. decided he liked Mobile and wanted to build a business of his own. Originally from Georgia, he spent a number of years with then U.S. Plywood (now Champion), including six in New Orleans. He still works seven days a week and spends much of his time managing the company's rental property and associated construction projects.

Located in Mobile on Highway 90 just west of Knollwood, the company employs 140 and has wholesale operations in Daphne and Pensacola that serve established commercial and residential builders.

"In an average week, we ship in excess of a half-million feet of wood," says Henderson. That's enough to rank this Mobile-based company among the Top 400 independent lumber dealers in the U.S. In addition, the store was a Top 10 lumber dealer while it was affiliated with TruServ for nine years (True Value with 8,000 dealers nationwide) and is currently affiliated with Do It Best Corp. (4,000 dealer owned co-op nationally).

Moving Forward With Caution

By GayNell A. Palmisano CRPC

Americans have never felt so vulnerable as in the past few months. We are known to be strong in times of crisis. Now we are facing fears that require prudent judgment when making decisions on every aspect of our daily lives. At times of crisis, especially when our money loses value, some of us deny long-term plans and make emotional decisions that will have lasting effects.

For more than 25 years, most of us have heard the merits of long term investing. Historical evidence can help us stay focused by looking back to Pearl Harbor, the Cuban Missile Crisis, Vietnam and the Gulf War.

Investment decisions based on long-term financial goals usually turn out to be right, while current event-driven speculation on the next zig or zag in the market is usually wrong. Many people's lifetime plans never recover from the effects of making emotional choices.

If history is any indication, long-term investment capital is not protected by removing it from the equity market but by leaving it in — thereby allowing the healing power of time and the resilience of the U.S. economy and the markets which reflect it to recover. For more than 49 years, November, December and January provided the

highest average monthly gains. People are admitting they are panicking out of their long-term investment plans at cyclically low prices in a market that is already down 30 percent or more. That is a decision they are likely to regret sooner or later.

What the current situation demands of us all is perspective. Those who see this situation as unique and unprecedented will be more likely to make a big mistake. Those who see this as part of a chain of challenges that a free society has always had to face will feel more comfortable giving this wound time to heal, as such wounds always have.

Real life returns are not driven as much by investment performance as by investor behavior. Now is the best time to renew your commitment to your goals. If choices were not based on a core plan, then it may be time to seek the help of a financial planner who can help you put goals on paper and develop a strategy to keep you on track. In perspective, you could see that these may be times of opportunity to help put your financial future on the right track.

GayNell Palmisano is a Certified Retirement Planning Consultant (CRPC) and president of Heritage Planning Group PC. She can be reached at 476-8011 or gaynell@heritageplanning.com.

Leading Economist Addresses Regional Chamber Coalition

Reinforcing a recurring message to port cities across the Gulf Coast region, national economist Donald Ratajczak PhD told members of the Gulf Coast Regional Chamber Coalition (GCRCC) they must make better use of south-to-north trade routes. He believes future international trade partners will include Cuba and much of Mexico.

"We're buying more than we're selling in South and Central America," added Tony van Aken, the Chamber's director of trade. "Alabama's number one trading partner for well over 15 years has been Canada, but clearly the population trends show South and Central America are growing markets. We need to find ways to maximize that potential for the health of our economy."

Ratajczak emphasized that recognizing the real value of importing and exporting would likely have an effect on a city's ability to compete for jobs and new industry.

For example, much of Mobile's growth over the city's 300-year history has stemmed from its port. "We know a strong trade program is the cornerstone for a solid Mobile economy," said van Aken.

Ratajczak also shared his views on what he believes the next year will hold for Gulf Coast states. For example, he predicts Alabama will progress in changing its industry base. With two new automobile plants, he believes more auto parts facilities will move into the state. He expressed some concern about not seeing as much diversification in Southwest Alabama.

Already in the works for Mobile are infrastructure improvements at the State Docks and Wallace College's aviation training facility and the recently announced RSA Office Tower explained Jim Apple, the Chamber's vice president of economic development.

"There are also plans underway to help capitalize on the growth in the northern part of the state to make it as economical and timely as possible for Mercedes, Toyota and Honda to ship through the State Docks," said Apple.

For Louisiana, Ratajczak challenged businesses and officials to face the issue of migration head-on, and for Mississippi, the top issue was continuing smart growth with the influence gaming has had on the state.

Ratajczak also addressed the national economy saying companies could play a role in the economic recovery following Sept. 11 by not being paralyzed by these events and aggressively pursuing business



Donald Ratajczak PhD was one of several speakers that addressed members of the Gulf Coast Regional Chamber Coalition in September.

as usual. Although the terrorism was aimed at disabling the American economy, he forecasted that once again the country will rally and the stock market will become stronger than it has been in years.

"We'll see the residual effects of the terrorist attacks for some time," admitted Ratajczak. He added, "Clearly the worst was immediately following September 11. I believe we'll see economic growth in December, and perhaps job growth too."

Ratajczak spoke to about 120 leaders from New Orleans, Baton Rouge, the Mississippi Gulf Coast, the Mobile-Baldwin region and Pensacola during the GCRCC annual meeting held recently at Marriott's Grand Hotel. His presentation was part of a two-day event focusing on regional issues such as the economy, environment, transportation and international trade.

Having developed economic models for the U.S., the Southeast and several individual states, Ratajczak is considered one of the leading economic forecasters in the country. He writes columns for the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* and the *Journal of Financial Services Professionals* and is the exclusive consulting economist for Morgan Keegan & Company.

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EAGLE 2001 Winners

Awards

Awards to be held Nov. 15 at the Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center

Designed to honor minority-owned businesses, the fourth group of Eagle Awards will be presented on Thursday, Nov. 15. The ceremony will feature a keynote address by Earl G. Graves Jr., chief operating officer and president of Earl G. Graves Publishing Company, which publishes *Black Enterprise* magazine.

Five winners were named as Eagle Award recipients this year and include Gallery and Gifts on Ann, The Mobile Beacon Inc., Mobile Engineering Inc., Quality Limousine Service Inc., and State Farm insurance agent Makeda Nichols.

New to this year's award competition was the creation of categories for all businesses. Each

Eagle Award nominee was entered into one of the following categories: Retail/Wholesale Trade, Professional Services, Construction/Manufacturing /Transportation, Real Estate/Finance/Insurance and Consumer Services.

A panel of independent judges selected this year's winners based on nominations from area banks and peer businesses.

Nominated businesses must be headquartered in the Mobile-Baldwin area, be in business for at least three years, produce revenue or employee growth, show a solid financial base and evidence of community services projects.

"This year's class represents a wide variety of

products and services available in the Mobile area," said Jason Thrower, vice president of small business development for the Chamber. "We wanted to capture businesses in various industries, which has made the awards even more competitive for those who were nominated."

Thrower emphasized the importance of minority-owned businesses in the Mobile area. He said too often these business owners are faced with even greater challenges, such as gaining exposure for their business and accessing capital to get their business up and running.

"By recognizing them for their hard work and determination to succeed, we're highlighting their

contributions to the entire community and giving them some of the exposure they deserve," he said.

The dinner and awards ceremony will be held at the Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center beginning with a reception at 5:30 p.m. and dinner at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$35 each and tables of 10 are \$300. Sponsors for this year's event are ALLTEL, Bishop State Community College, Mobile Area Water and Sewer System, Sprint PCS, SouthTrust Bank, Saucy-Q Barbecue and WALA-FOX10.

For more information on the Eagle Awards or to order tickets, contact Brenda Rembert at 431-8607 or via e-mail at brenda@mobilechamber.com.

Gallery and Gifts on Ann (Retail, Wholesale, Trade Category)

Walking into Gallery and Gifts on Ann Street, customers immediately catch a glimpse of the rich history that has shaped and molded the lives of African-Americans in Mobile. The multicultural art gallery and gift store feature paintings and pottery from some of Mobile's most well-known artists and talented amateurs. Not only does owner Lettice Suggs sell artwork and one-of-a kind gifts, but she is also making quite a name for herself with her involvement in community organizations. Suggs is an active participant in the Foster Grandparent Program, Mobile AIDS Support Services Foundation and the Senior Citizens Service's White Linen Night.

Chief: Lettice L. Suggs
Established: 1998
Employees: 3
Location: 123 South Ann St.



Photo by Thom Scott, Pelican Media
Gallery and Gifts on Ann owner Lettice Suggs arranges items on display.



Photo by Thom Scott, Pelican Media

The Mobile Beacon Inc. (Consumer Service Category)

Throughout the last 58 years, the weekly publication, *The Mobile Beacon*, has been a voice of the African-American community in Mobile. Founded to report on nationwide issues such as voter and civil rights, the *Beacon* has fought to break down racial barriers against African-American men, women and children. Editor and owner Cleretta Blackmon describes the newspaper as a voice for all people by informing and promoting racial harmony, fairness and justice. Hard work and a dedicated staff have enabled her not only to give back to the *Beacon's* loyal readers, but also the community at large. *The Mobile Beacon* actively involved in intern programs for up and coming journalists at the University of South Alabama, University of Alabama and Southwest State.

Chief: Cleretta T. Blackmon
Established: 1943
Employees: 3
Location: 2311 Costarides St.

Mobile Beacon Editor Cleretta Blackmon

Mobile Engineering Inc. (Professional Services Category)

Perception is reality, right? Not according to V.J. Reddy, president of Mobile Engineering Inc. In fact, he believes the perception that only large engineering companies can create quality products in a timely manner couldn't be further from the truth. Mobile Engineering is a locally-owned engineering firm working with a variety of customers from public entities to private companies. The company consults on projects such as preparing real estate development sites, environmental issues and new roads and bridges. While its current market is South Alabama, Reddy expects the company will expand over the next three years and move into additional markets along the Gulf Coast. The company takes pride in the fact that all its employees are from the local area, and plans to continue recruiting from local colleges and technical schools when employees are needed for expansion.

Chief: V.J. Reddy PE
Established: 1998
Employees: 7
Location: 1055 Hillcrest Rd., Bldg. F-3

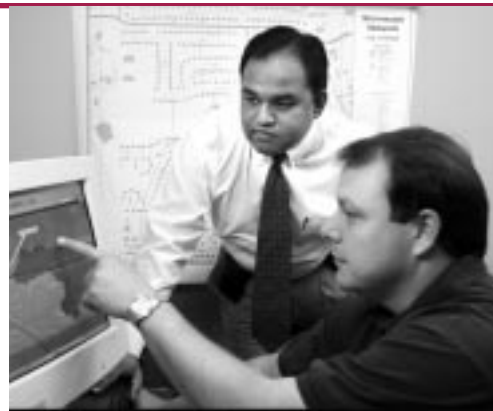


Photo by Thom Scott, Pelican Media
Todd Young and V.J. Reddy (standing) president



Photo by Thom Scott, Pelican Media

Driver Avery Rogers and owner W. J. Bridges (left)

Quality Limousine Service Inc. (Construction, Manufacturing, Transportation, etc. Category)

It's your wedding. You've ordered the cake, tuxedos and flowers, and booked the reception hall. What's missing? A limousine of course. That's where Quality Limousine Service can help. In business 24 years, president Willie J. Bridges has seen his share of radiant brides, giggling teenagers heading out for their first prom and anxious boyfriends ready to "pop the question." Offering luxury transportation at an affordable price, the company features a fleet of limo options for a night on the town and even out of state trips. Bridges remembers the company's first limousine cost a mere \$2,500, but it wasn't until after the first year of operations, and 17,500 additional miles on the limo, he realized he made the right decision to start a new company.

Chief: Willie J. Bridges
Established: 1977
Employees: 5
Location: 1008 Colonial Court

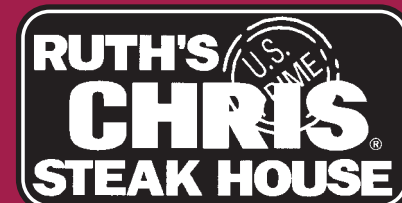
State Farm Insurance (Finance, Insurance, Real Estate Category)

There's never been a time in history when having good insurance coverage meant so much. Makeda Nichols believes that in addition to the quality services State Farm Insurance provides, great customer service goes a long way too. Owning a State Farm agency, Nichols works with customers to develop comprehensive insurance and mutual fund plans. In addition to her business, Nichols is well known and respected in the community. She is an advocate for women and minority-owned businesses, and has served on several local boards and committees. As a volunteer at Booker T. Washington Middle School, she teaches 7th and 8th grade students the ins and outs of owning a small business.

Chief: Makeda Nichols
Established: 1984
Employees: 3
Location: 2504 Dauphin St., Suite M



Photo by Thom Scott, Pelican Media
State Farm Insurance, Agent Makeda Nichols meets with a customer.



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Photo by Thom Scott, Pelican Media

Photo by Thom Scott, Pelican Media

Small Business of the Month Bay Bank



Finding a niche in the marketplace is often the key to success. In the case of Bay Bank, that meant opening branches in underserved neighborhoods and providing a level of customer attention that many believed was "gone with the wind." For its successful launch, Bay Bank has been selected as the Chamber's Small Business of the Month.

Bay Bank opened in September 1999, with locations in Theodore and Dauphin Island. Since then, its assets have grown 500 percent and the company added a business development office in West Mobile in April to build and maintain customer relationships. In the near future, Bay Bank plans to install additional Automated Teller Machines in South Mobile County. Bank officers are contemplating an Internet presence and the opening of a loan office in West Mobile that would become its third branch.

What accounts for their phenomenal growth? "We've gone back to the white-glove treatment people used to expect from a business. There's a

market for it. People prefer not to get an answering machine or a different representative every time they call a business," says Paul Fox, vice president and senior business development officer.

"Also, there were no banks in these locations when we opened. We're a locally-owned bank and other local business owners and community leaders have supported and encouraged us," Fox says.

Fourteen banking professionals make up the core staff, including a former State of Alabama assistant superintendent of banking. Vice President and Senior Operations Officer Linda I. Sandler serves as interim president after the recent death of Katharine Coles Floyd. Odie E. Williams is vice president and senior loan officer. Attorney Robert C. Campbell III chairs the board of directors.

The full-service bank is a member of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) and is an Equal Housing Lender.

For more information about Bay Bank call 342-2339.

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Recent Survey Measures Mobile's Reliance on Technology

Many people might not think of Mobile as a high-tech city, but results from a recent Chamber survey show Port City businesses are technology savvy.

In August, the Chamber sent out a technology survey to members and learned that 98 percent of respondents have a connection to the Internet and use e-mail. In addition, 75 percent use e-mail and the Internet at both home and the office, and 90 percent check their e-mail daily at both locations.

Another question helped the Chamber identify its most popular Web site categories – the on-line registration area for Chamber events and the Business Directory that lists information about each Chamber member were among the favorites.

Regenia Blanchette, administrative assistant from the Mobile Museum of Art wrote, "I love the map for each business. . . ." describing the map button that appears under each directory listing.

Write-in responses indicated a strong desire among the membership to include more information about people. "A large number of respondents wrote in that they want to see more member news, kudos and who's who information. I translate that into meaning that although Mobilians are using high-tech tools, they still want to keep their friendly touch and use the Web as a way to communicate and keep up with friends and business colleagues," says Deborah York Geiger, the Chamber's communications director.

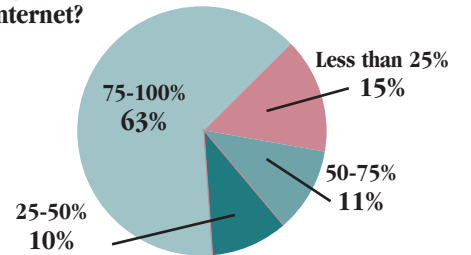
Over 500 surveys were returned, reflecting a 14 percent return rate, which is more than double the return of typical marketing surveys. This response gives the Chamber the confidence to rely on the results.

"These statistics are astounding," says Bob Chappelle, the Chamber's senior vice president. "Clearly our members are telling us that we should continue to focus on improving our Web site to make it more of a business tool for our members. It is my hope that we can improve our Web site and e-mail communications so that we are providing true resources that can help a business succeed."

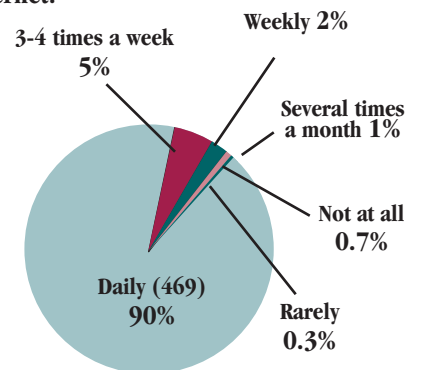


Those responding before the survey deadline were entered into a drawing for a Palm M500 handheld computer. The happy winner, pictured, Ken Mohr of Envirochem Inc., receives his prize from Deborah York Geiger the Chamber's communications director.

If yes, what percentage of employees at your office have access to e-mail/Internet?



How often do you use e-mail or the Internet?



Are Internet access and e-mail critical to your business operations?



Does your business have a Web site?



Do you have a connection to the Internet and use e-mail?



If yes, where?



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Mobile Register's New Business Editor Looks for the Personal Side of Business

Mike Perry, the *Mobile Register's* new business editor, may not be much of a betting man, but he sees a winning combination in Mobile's diverse business community and unique people.

"Business is like a sports competition. It's about overcoming the odds. It's intense. I like getting inside who makes business work, the personal story of how someone made it work or didn't."

Prior to joining the *Mobile Register*, Perry was the managing editor of the *Biloxi Sun Herald*, and before that the metro editor at *The Daily Oklahoman*. But his passion is business news, having begun his career as a business reporter. And in the months to come, Perry assures *Mobile Register* readers will see some exciting new changes in how business news is covered in the area.

Perry is in the process of restructuring beats — the typical industries and trends reporters cover regularly — and he encourages input on what topics are particularly important right now. He also says to look for more profiles on the movers and shakers from both large and small companies and top 10 lists.

He's optimistic that someday soon, albeit not overnight, business news will lead the paper. Only a few obstacles stand in the way of increased business coverage and Perry believes Chamber members can help by offering suggestions on stories and being open to working with his business staff.

So, what makes a good story? Among the factors Perry considers are the company's track record for longevity, its impact, accomplishments, experiences and the bottom dollar. He is also interested in technology advancements that have been popping up throughout the area.

If business managers are wondering how to get coverage, Perry says, "There's more going on than we can hope to cover. It's not an exact science and sometimes, like recently, it's the news of the day that dictates what we cover." It has to be interesting



enough to capture the readers' attention, he challenges.

Each week Perry writes a column inspired by what interests him. He gets ideas from readers and the Internet. "Mostly, I write about what I'm running into."

What's his pet peeve? The universal no-no is alluding to the amount of advertising dollars spent with the paper when pitching a story. And while that doesn't happen as much as it used to, Perry says he still hears it about once a month. But more common, he says, are the labels reporters and business people apply to each other. "The greedy capitalists who want to ravage the Earth vs. the uncaring ego that only wants the big story. Neither can be made as a general sweeping," explains Perry.

Perry grew up in the West Texas oilfields of Odessa. He holds a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Texas and a Davenport Fellowship in business journalism from the University of Missouri. During his extensive career as a journalist and editor, he's held a number of positions, from business editor to city editor to sports editor to managing editor.

The best way to contact him is by e-mail, mperry@mobileregister.com, and follow-up with a phone call, 434-8644.

Bellingrath in Lights Opens Nov. 23

Bellingrath Gardens & Home Magic Christmas in Lights will open the day after Thanksgiving, Nov. 23, and will continue every night, except Christmas, through Dec. 31.

Bellingrath added animated figures to this year's attraction and will feature several theme areas, such as Cajun Bayou, Santa's Workshop, the Nativity, Fantasy Land, Oriental Gardens and The Nutcracker. In addition, last year's theme areas have been remodeled for the upcoming holiday season.



Using more than 2 million lights, Bellingrath began this holiday tradition in 1996. Tickets can be purchased at the gate for \$8.50 to see the Gardens and \$15.75 to view the gardens and tour the Bellingrath Home. Advanced tickets are available at a discount at any AmSouth Bank location. Reservations are encouraged for groups of 20 or more. For more information, or to secure group reservations, call 800-247-8420, ext. 163. Hours will be 5 - 9 p.m.

The Chamber's Annual Meeting Fills all the Senses

Attended by more than 1,100 people each year, the Chamber's annual meeting has become one of those premier business events that no one wants to miss.

Held at the Mobile Civic Center on Tuesday, Jan. 22, a champagne reception kicks off the festivities at 5:30 p.m., and the meeting starts promptly at 6 p.m. Highlights include a keynote speaker addressing a timely business issue, a video annual report featuring the major accomplishments of the Chamber and the community and a networking reception featuring heavy hors d'oeuvres by 12 area restaurants and caterers.

"The Chamber's meeting is unequalled by any in the city. It is the only event I know of in which all your senses are filled. There is a wide variety of food, great music, a stimulating program, great conversation and freedom of movement. It is an event where much is given and very little is asked in return — only the price of your ticket," explains Marie Stephenson, a recruiter at Long's Human Resource Services and chair of this year's annual meeting task force.

Charles E. "Gus" Whalen Jr., president and chief executive officer of the Warren Featherbone Company of Gainesville, Ga., will speak at the annual meeting. In addition, he is an author and motivator. His book, *The Featherbone Principal*, is a story about resilience, change and flexibility. Among his clients are EDS, IBM and Rockwell International.

The event offers people the chance to interact with many of the community's movers and shakers in a professional, business environment. In fact, many companies purchase tables in order to motivate and treat their employees.

"What other event in town offers this size venue

for business leads and key contacts, a positive pep talk on the city, the chance to hear a thought-provoking, business-related speech, a great dinner and still have time to interact with your employees? It's a bargain compared with other options for employee gatherings," says Deborah York Geiger, the Chamber's director of communications.

Long's has been a long-time sponsor of the event and Stephenson believes it is a high priority among the company's community activities. "The event generates lots of business leads, but more importantly, gives us a chance to show our support of the community. We are proud of Mobile and care about the people of this city. Our participation allows us to tell the community what we do and also get the Chamber's update on the events of the last year and an overview of what is going on in the business community."

In addition to Primary Sponsor, Minolta QMS, this year's Annual Meeting is sponsored by Alabama Power Company, G.A. West & Company, Gevity HR, Integrity Inc., ITC Delta-Com, Long's Human Resource Services, Manpower Professional,

Mobile Gas Service Corporation, Thompson Engineering and the University of South Alabama.

Restaurants and caterers providing the food include the Adam's Mark Hotel, Alec Naman Catering,

Atlanta Bread Company, Copeland's, Everything and More, Lassere's Catering and Cajun Seafood Shop, O'Charley's, The Red Brick Café, Ruth's Chris Steak House, Tony Roma's, Tyner's Catering and The Wilton Caterer.

Tickets are \$40. Tables of 10 are \$375. Call Ashley Collins, 431-8606 or e-mail ashley@mobilechamber.com for reservations.

What: Chamber Annual Meeting
Where: Mobile Civic Center
When: Tuesday, Jan. 22, 5:30 p.m.
Speaker: Charles E. "Gus" Whalen Jr.
Cost: Tickets are \$40.
Tables of 10 are \$375.
Contact: Ashley Collins, 431-8606 or e-mail ashley@mobilechamber.com

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Alabama Chosen as National Benchmark for U.S. Chamber Trade Program

Later this month, Gov. Don Siegelman will be in Mobile to emphasize the importance of international trade at a grass roots level. Alabama was chosen to serve as the benchmark state of a Trade Roots Tour for other state governments to duplicate, and for good reason. Over the past seven years, Alabama was ranked seventh among the 50 states in terms of percentage growth in exports.

Gov. Siegelman has also toured Huntsville and Birmingham.

While visiting Mobile, Gov. Siegelman will tour Gulf Lumber, Bender Shipbuilding, Masland Carpets and the Alabama Seaport (all exporting companies). He will be talking to employees about the positive effects of their job relative to free trade. Export-related jobs tend to be good, high-paying jobs, according to a number of surveys and studies. Wages supported by merchandise exports range from 13-18 percent higher than the national average, and export-related jobs are also more secure.

The Trade Roots Tour, an endeavor of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Alabama Development Office and the Chamber, aims to personalize the

advantages of international trade by presenting the success stories of local small and medium businesses. In addition, the tour will emphasize the role of international trade in Mobile's economic development and reiterating the importance of keeping communities strong and competitive in international trade.

In 1998, 73 percent of the more than 2,500 Alabama companies that export were small-and medium-sized businesses with less than 500 employees.

The Trade Roots Tour will also present a unique opportunity for public and private sector leaders to join in promoting the renewal of Trade Promotion Authority formerly known as Fast-Track. The program allows the president to quickly negotiate trade agreements.

A kick-off breakfast for the tour will be held Nov. 29 at 7:15 a.m. at the Chamber. Members are invited to attend, but seating is limited. For more information, contact Bridgette Lewis at 694-0702 or bridgette@mobilechamber.com.

Ingram Joins Chamber's Community & Governmental Affairs Department

Hard work, commitment, energy and know-how are all qualities Linda Ingram will be bringing to the Chamber's newly-created director of community and governmental affairs position.

Ingram comes to the Chamber after 10 years at Keep Mobile Beautiful, where she was clean community coordinator, leading many programs and volunteers. "I feel like I'm coming home because Keep Mobile Beautiful was such a part of the Chamber family," said Ingram.

As director of community and governmental affairs, Ingram will be responsible for helping keep Chamber members informed of key legislative issues, managing the Chamber's role in the Envision long-range strategic plan for Mobile and Baldwin counties and coordinating events.

"Linda brings great community knowledge to the position. Her experience with local and county government, citizens groups and civic organiza-



Linda Ingram

tions will assist in focusing on issues that improve our quality of life," said Ginny Russell, vice president of community and governmental affairs.

Ingram says her best training has been working with groups and civic organizations with a mission of making the community better. "My mission in life is to concentrate on issues of community."

She started her career as a teacher of special education, kindergarten and drama, but became a professional volunteer while raising her four children.

She has been a volunteer with the Chamber, working extensively on the All-America City competition awarded to Mobile in 1996 and again in 1998 when Mobile hosted the National Civic League's All America City competition.

A native of Bessemer, Ala., Ingram moved to Mobile in 1971. "The diversity of Mobile is wonderful," she says, "It has the best of everything."

Business Spotlight of the Month Epiphany Development

The Internet is launching many businesses into the international arena. But for small businesses wanting to jump into the global market, knowing who to turn to is often a guessing game. This month's Chamber Spotlight Business of the Month, Epiphany Development, can help.

Epiphany Development is a global computer and Internet company founded in Mobile in 1990.

When working with new companies, Epiphany often asks how many people they rely on to help run their business. Clients are surprised they only need Epiphany, according to Mark Roberts, chief financial officer and director of administration. The company helps businesses integrate telephone systems with Internet systems; implements, develops and designs Web sites; and markets their goods. In addition, they offer accounting packages for on-and off-line sales.

As the World Wide Web has sparked international commerce, Epiphany helps small and large businesses incorporate their telecommunications to ease the transition from selling out of a storefront to local customers to doing business across the globe.

"We are a point of contact for business. Instead of contacting a telephone company, an ISP provider and a hosting developer, customers call one person," says Roberts. "We build one-on-one relationships with our clients so when someone calls, the person on the other end knows their business and the client."

Partners Roberts and Bill Sparkman went to high school together and followed their dream to start a business. With experience in international trade, their business works with clients across the



Epiphany Development Mobile operations include Bob Newman, Mark Roberts (seated) and Michael Gentry.

world. Roberts is located in Mobile, Sparkman is based in Germany and another member of the Epiphany team, Huynh L. Chung, works out of South Vietnam.

"Being positioned around the globe allows us to give our clients 24-hour support no matter what time it is or where they are in the world," says Roberts.

For more information about Epiphany Development, contact them at 343-5115 or toll free at 877-943-5113 or visit their Web site at www.epiphanydev.com.

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GM&O Leasing Begins

Renovations are well underway at one of Mobile's most distinctive downtown addresses. Carbone Properties of Cleveland, Ohio, is updating the landmark GM&O train station into Class-A office space. The project is part of a \$16 million public private partnership between Carbone, the City of Mobile and the Federal Transportation Administration.

"We've had experience with renovating high-profile downtown landmarks. Our company just believed this building was a winner," said James Haas, Carbone's director of development. "The masonry cleaning and repair is going along well. The roof and dome are going to be fantastic."

Generations of Mobilians remember walking under the arched entries into the elegant marble-floored waiting area staring up at the 100-ft.-high domed ceiling inside. Carbone's contractors have opened the dome, which has been sealed up by a second-floor addition since the 1940s. Work crews are removing, cleaning and replacing the red Spanish roof tiles by hand in accordance with strict National Park Service



guidelines, and are sprucing up the exterior with new mortar and replacement bricks. Work on the Mediterranean-style windows and interior restoration is just beginning.

Carbone has partnered with Saad Realty Group to lease the building's 60,000-sq.-ft. The first tenant, Mobile's Metro Transit Authority, will occupy nearly 5,000 feet on the ground floor as its new downtown hub.

Tenants can choose from 500 to 55,000 sq.-ft. of office space. The first floor will feature retail and restaurant attractions along with office space. The second and third floors are reserved for office areas. The leasing brochures featuring new renderings and logo are completed and several prospective tenants are looking over floor plans.

For more leasing information, contact Saad Realty Group at 478-7223. The GM&O grand re-opening is scheduled for late 2002 in conjunction with Mobile's Tricentennial Celebration.

GM&O Development/Leasing Team (l-r) Christie Amezquita, Sadd Realty; James Haas, Carbone Properties; Greg Saad, Saad Realty Group

New Area CEO

Taul Has Taken the Reins at Regions Bank



Name: Fred W. Taul

Position: Chief Executive Officer

Company: Regions Bank - Mobile

Previous experience: Taul began his career at Merchants National Bank in 1968. In July 2000, he became president of Regions-Mobile and in January 2001, CEO. Previously, he served as executive vice president, overseeing credit quality in Regions' Louisiana operations in New Orleans. Before his move to New Orleans in 1994, his entire career was spent in Mobile. In 1966 he served on active duty as a Lieutenant in the U.S. Army at Ft. Bliss, Texas, and received a Bronze Star for meritorious service in Vietnam.

New Business Endeavors: The bank's commitment to regionalism and quality service has expanded Taul's oversight to include Baldwin, Conecuh and Covington county banks. In addition, Regions Financial Co. Inc. expanded to address its customers' financial needs as well as banking needs, acquiring Morgan Keegan Investments and Rebsamen Insurance Company. With the two acquisitions, Regions became a financial services holding company.

Most exciting time in his career: Having lived in New Orleans for five years, Taul says his most memorable experience has been the opportunity to return to his hometown, serve the community and work with the people he knows and cares about. "In my new role, there's more of an opportunity to touch a lot more people."

Education: Taul holds a bachelor's degree in finance from the University of Alabama. He is a graduate from the National Commercial Lending School and the National Commercial Lending Graduate School at the University of Oklahoma, and attended the Graduate School of Banking at Rutgers University. Also, he has earned the American Institute of Banking Advanced Certificate.

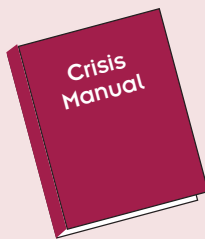
Community and Professional Activities: He serves on many area boards, including Volunteers of America, Boy Scouts of America and Junior Achievement. In 2002, he will serve as a board member to the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce and the American Red Cross. He is a member of the Rotary Club and the Senior Bowl Committee.

Family: He is married to Linda Mulholland Taul and they have three children.

Companies Urged to Develop Emergency Plans

Now more than ever, the American Red Cross is urging companies to develop emergency response plans and to ensure employees are trained to respond to life-threatening situations. General disaster response plans should address training in first aid, CPR and automated external defibrillation (AED). Having a plan can also give employees the skills and confidence they need to be prepared for emergencies.

For information on health and safety training and disaster preparedness, contact the American Red Cross or visit www.redcross.org. Ask for the brochure *Preparing for the Unthinkable*.



Tricentennial Activities will Boost Local Economy

More than fun and entertainment, Mobile's Tricentennial is expected to have at least a \$59 million impact on the local economy.

Semoon Chang PhD and the staff of the Center for Economic Research at the University of South Alabama recently completed a study estimating the economic impact of the Tricentennial, which Chang expects to boost local tourism.

The number of out-of-town visitors for related events and activities is expected to range from 111,000 up to 226,000. Chang expects them to leave behind between \$59 and \$134 million. Using a standard multiplier, Chang says that translates into a total economic impact of \$104 million to more than \$234 million.

Chang considered about a dozen different Tricentennial events, including the Culinary Jubilee, Sail Mobile, the Battle of Mobile Bay, and the



premiere of the Tricentennial historical docu-drama. In addition, because of increased regional and local promotion, he expects a greater number of visitors to existing attractions, such as Bellingrath Gardens, the Gulf Coast Exploreum and the USS Alabama. Chang projects 2002 will also see greater participation in local traditional events such as Mardi Gras, Bay Fest and the Festival of Flowers.

Mobile Tricentennial President Ann Bedsole says, "The report compiled by Dr. Chang confirms what I've suspected — that the year-long celebration will have a tremendous impact on the businesses and citizens of Alabama's Gulf Coast."

Bedsole noted that Chang's report did not include all Tricentennial projects, such as ReVive and ReBloom Mobile, and she expects the actual economic impact to be much greater.

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Reading Between the Lines

◆ Translating Your Financial Statements

By W. Allen Carroll Jr. CPA

Wouldn't it be nice to have an X-ray machine that captured a complete image of our bodies each morning so we could later study it and make sure we stayed in good health? Many entrepreneurs and managers have a similar device for their business, it's an accounting system and the financial statements it produces.

Once you know what to focus on, managers can assess their business' financial health without being a finance or accounting guru. Just like an X-ray communicates to the physician, well-prepared financial statements that fit your business are critical to

communicating its financial health in time to react if needed, the ultimate goal of a good accounting system. There are three basic financial statements: the balance sheet, income statement and cash flow statement.

The balance sheet is a snapshot of the business' assets (what it owns), liabilities (what it owes) and equity (what it owns less what is owed) at a specific point in time, generally at month-or year-end.

An income statement, on the other hand, covers a period of time and communicates the sales or revenue earned, cost of products sold and expenses incurred, concluding hopefully with a positive net income.

The cash flow statement, often overlooked because it is probably the least understood, contains very valuable information as to the source and use of a company's cash — the lifeblood of any business. A good understanding of cash flow could save your business in these uncertain economic times.

Many business people have tunnel vision when studying financial statements, focusing solely on the income statement and believing net income or the "bottom line" is the only number critical to success. There is danger in focusing solely on a business' net income. Many businesses with large bottom lines have been unable to make payroll because the cash was not available.

The cash flow statement bridges the gap between the income statement's "bottom-line" and cash flow by summarizing the sources and uses of a business' cash for a period of time. Cash provided

or used by operations is the most critical number on this statement and will make or break most businesses. This statement also shows other ways a



Allen Carroll Jr. meets with client Stephen Toomey, Toomey's Mardi Gras Candy Co.

business gets its money and where it is being spent.

Financial statements themselves aren't important; it's what they communicate. Look beyond the numbers by reviewing trends from year-to-year or month-to-month, including the changes in raw numbers and percentage changes, as well as comparisons to budget. Reviewing certain relevant financial ratios is also critical. And most importantly, focus on those numbers critical to your business. Trends will help you assess the health of a business and will provide important historical insight.

Evaluating financial statement trends is similar to getting on the scale each morning. You first need to have some idea of what your ideal weight should be to determine if you are getting closer to or farther from your goal. Compare these trends and ratios not only to your own business, but also to industry-wide ratios to determine how you are performing relative to your peers.

Most business owners have a good idea about what is critical to their business' success. The next time you review your financial statements, be sure you get the most from that review by reading between the lines and looking beyond the numbers to ensure your business stays healthy.

Allen Carroll has been practicing more than 14 years as a CPA/Consultant with Wilkins Miller (www.WilkinsMiller.com), a Mobile certified public accounting and consulting firm. He can be reached at Acarroll@WilkinsMiller.com.

Working Smart

◆ Demographics are Changing the way People Work

By Judy Marston

If you're managing your business the way it's always been managed, read the recent reports published about lifestyles. It will change your mind.

The traditional American family — a married couple with kids, a working father and a stay-at-home mother — is continuing to fade. As a result, the traditional workplace is changing.

If your goal is to recruit and keep the best employees, management styles must be adjusted. The South, particularly Mobile, has been slow to make these changes, but like it or not, it's time. Keep these facts, provided by the Society of Human Resource Management, in mind:

- Only one in four households now contain married couples with children. (source: *Christian Science Monitor*, 12/3/1999)

- For the first time, the majority of women becoming pregnant with their first child are unmarried. (source: U.S. Census)

- Married couples make up only half of the population, and married couples with children account for less than a quarter of U.S. households. (source: U.S. Census)

- More than half of the youngsters born in the 1990s will spend at least part of their childhood in a single-parent home.

- There is now a new kind of migrant worker: senior citizens who roam the nation's highways and byways, taking on seasonal jobs everywhere from California to Tennessee and from Alaska to Florida. They travel and work in RVs for part or all of the year and are creating their own alternative lifestyle. (source: *The Christian Science Monitor*, 6/18/2001)

- 80 percent of Baby Boomers say they plan to work at least part-time during their retirement. (source: AARP & Roper Starch Worldwide)

- 35 percent say they will be working part-time mainly for the sake of interest and enjoyment. (source: AARP & Roper Starch Worldwide)

- Smart organizations are re-hiring "Boomerang Employees," people who quit to go somewhere else, then found out they liked their previous place of employment better. Rehiring saves time and money in training and learning company policies. It also develops unbelievable loyalty.

Judy Marston, a Mobile-based business consultant and speaker, owns Judy Marston and Associates. She can be reached at JAMarston@aol.com.



- Baby Boomers have created a new term: "working retirement." This is also the generation who created the term "workaholic."

- The population age 85 and above is currently the fastest growing segment of the older population. (source: U.S. Census Bureau, July 1999)

- There are an estimated 12.2 million "non-traditional workers," including independent contractors, on-call workers and temporary workers. We are fast becoming a 'free agent nation.' (source: Bureau of Labor Statistics)

- Over 25 million Americans are newly self-employed and less than one in 10 works for a Fortune 500 company. There's been a shift in patterns of work from "The Organization Man" to today's independent worker, the free agent. (source: Daniel Pink, *Free Agent Nation: How America's New Independent Workers are Transforming the Way We Live*)

- Factors such as changing demographics, globalization and technology are creating workforces of differing races, gender, ages, cultures, religions, family status, employment conditions and technology access.

- The challenge to managers is to create new, flexible workplace policies that will attract and keep the best employees.

Take the time to find out what changes are needed in your organization. Quit trying to make the old ways work. Re-evaluate your employee programs. Keep what works. Throw out what doesn't. Get feedback from people who work for you. Ask what you can do for them, rather than telling them what they need to do for you.

Find out what's important to them outside of work. Be more involved in the interests of your employees. You, as manager, have a great capacity to influence the lives of the people who work for your organization. It is a responsibility that should not be taken lightly.

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Add 2 Percent

On Nov. 1 a new tax went into affect to boost local tourism efforts. Last month, the Mobile County Commission unanimously approved a 2 percent lodging tax for the county.

Requested by members of the Hotel/Motel Association and the Mobile Convention and Visitors Corp. (MCVC), the tax is expected to bring in \$1 million. It will impact tourists and visitors staying in hotels/motels, rooming houses and condominium rentals in all Mobile County cities and the unincorporated areas.

Funds will be used to buy advertising and promote the Mobile area as a tourism destination.

ACCR Hires Director

The Alabama Citizens for Constitutional Reform (ACCR) hired **Kathryn Bowden** as executive director.

Prior to joining ACCR, Bowden worked as an attorney in Mobile and with numerous political and public interest organizations including Alabama Voters Against Lawsuit Abuse, Alabama Civil Justice Reform Committee, and served as press secretary during the political campaigns of Supreme Court Justice Harold See's successful 1996 campaign and Winton Blount III's 1998 bid for governor.

"Constitutional reform has clearly emerged as one of the most significant issues to face Alabama in recent history," said Bowden. Alabamians from all walks of life and all political persuasions can come together to work on this issue, in what will be a defining moment in Alabama's civic history."

ACCR is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization working to achieve a new state constitution. It was organized last summer by citizens from across the state working to replace Alabama's 1901 constitution, the nation's longest such document with over 700 amendments.

National Recognition for Higher Ed

Consistently Spring Hill College and the University of Mobile earn national recognition each fall.

In September, *U.S. News & World Report* listed Spring Hill College among its "America's Best colleges 2002, ranking it 15th of 130 colleges and universities based on overall quality in the Southern region. The college also was listed 14th in the "Best Value" category in the Southern region.

Indicators determining the list included academic reputation, student retention, faculty resources, financial resources, alumni giving and graduation rate of performance.

The University of Mobile was listed in the 2001 list of "America's Best Christian Colleges," one of 175 colleges and universities in the U.S. recognized by Institutional Research and Evaluation Inc., in Rome, Ga.

Other Alabama colleges recognized include Spring Hill College, Samford University, Judson College, Huntington College and Birmingham-Southern College.

To be considered for this designation an institution must: be an accredited, four-year school offering bachelor degrees; offer full residential and dining services; be affiliated with a recognized Christian denomination; and the entering freshman class must have a high school grade point average and/or SAT/ACT score equal to or above the national average for all freshman entering Christian institutions of higher education.

USA Track & Field Annual Meeting Set in Mobile

Bringing close to 1,300 of sport's top administrators, athletes and volunteers, the national USA Track & Field organization will be holding its annual meeting in Mobile Nov. 27-Dec. 1.

"An event of this type brings \$1.7 million into our local economy through meals, hotel rooms and shopping," says **Sonny Mares**, executive vice president of the Mobile Convention and Visitors Bureau (MCVC). "Conventions are one of the best ways to support our local economy. Once convention-goers are back home they are more likely to think of the area when planning their next vacation or even when seeking a new location for business ventures."

This national conference will bring past Olympic champions from 1976-2000 to the area and will offer locals the chance to golf with some at a charity golf tournament supporting the Twin Towers Fund for disaster relief and USATF Youth programs.

The Inaugural USA Track & Field Golf Challenge will be held Thursday, Nov. 29 at Magnolia Grove Golf Course with registration beginning at 7 a.m. Each foursome will be joined by a USA Track & Field Olympic athlete or coach. Costs are \$475 per foursome or \$125 for individuals.

Contact MCVC at 208-7989 for more information.

An Internet of Resources

Use these Web sites for practical and timesaving ideas from *Blink Magazine*, published bimonthly by EarthLink Inc.:

www.packtrack.com: track packages from 39 shippers

postcalc.usps.gov: calculate the rate for both domestic and international packages via the U.S. Postal Service. Enter the weight and any additional services such as insurance, return receipt, etc., and know immediately how much it will cost.

www.xe.net/ucc: this universal currency converter makes it easy to determine the value of a dollar in a number of foreign currencies.

www.insweb.com/tools: a collection of calculators and questionnaires to help determine the amount of insurance needed for vehicles, homes, health and life coverage. This site also gives helpful explanations of many types of coverage available.

www.bankrate.com: search for the best interest rates currently available at about 4,000 U.S. financial institutions for savings accounts, certificates of deposits, credit cards, mortgages and more.

www.ssa.gov/planners/calculators.htm: the Social Security Administration's site can calculate how much money to expect from the government after you retire based on income, current age and other factors.

Source: American Chamber of Commerce Executives and Blink Magazine found at www.earthlink.net/blink.

SCORE

Ryan is First Female to Lead SCORE

She was the first female certified consumer credit executive in Mobile and now **Dot Ryan** is adding another impressive first to her list of accomplishments – the first female chair of Mobile's Service Corp Of Retired Executives (SCORE). This is the first time in the organization's 37 years that a woman will serve in the lead position.

In the 1970s, Ryan and a partner bought the Credit Bureau of Mobile, which was founded in 1925 with the help of the Merchants of Mobile and the Chamber. They equally operated the corporation until 1991, when they sold to Equifax, one of the three largest international credit reporting and collection agencies.

Ryan became a SCORE volunteer in 1998. "After I retired, I felt like I was a fish out of water," she said. "I realized I did not want to spend my retirement years solely in the pursuit of recreation. I want to help people."

As chair, Ryan is responsible for overseeing the daily operations of SCORE as well as recruiting new volunteers. "We need people who want to give something back to the community," she said.

SCORE, sponsored by the U.S. Small Business

Administration, was developed in 1964 to utilize the expertise of retired business executives and professionals to help America's small business community.

There are SCORE chapters in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

SCORE is a confidential and free counseling service for those thinking of going into business and those already in operation who are experiencing problems or are seeking to expand. Counselors are generally retired business owners or managers.

Ryan adds the organization is looking for additional volunteers and counselors don't have to be retired.

To make an appointment or to become a SCORE counselor, call 431-8614 between 9 a.m. and Noon, Monday through Friday.



Dot Ryan

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Comparative Economic Indicators

August '01 vs August '00

Unemployment Rates <small>Mobile/Baldwin counties</small>		5.3%	August '01
		4.8%	August '00
Business Licenses <small>Mobile City</small>		209	August '01
		289	August '00
Homes Sold <small>Mobile County</small>		408	August '01
		416	August '00
Air Passengers From Mobile <small>Mobile Area</small>		33,117	August '01
		33,541	August '00

LST-325 Crew Named Patriot of the Year

◆ John Tyson Sr. Honored as Mobile Bay Area Veteran of the Year



Pictured above is the Gold Crew, led by Captain Robert D. Jornlin, during the ship's journey from Greece to Mobile earlier this year.

This month another crowd will cheer the accomplishments of the LST-325 crew who sailed the vessel from Greece to Mobile. Monday, Nov. 12, the Chamber's Military Affairs Committee is honoring the crew with its Patriot of the Year Award at a Veterans Day luncheon at the Arthur R. Outlaw Convention Center.

Captain Robert D. Jornlin from Earlville, Ill., is the featured speaker. Jornlin led the retired crew of veterans on its 6,500-mile journey that arrived in Mobile to a hero's welcome in January.

This LST (Landing Ship, Tank) is a 2,366-ton amphibious vessel designed to land battle-ready tanks, troops and supplies directly onto enemy shores. Built at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, she was launched in 1942 and commissioned Feb. 1, 1943.

The LST-325 took part in the invasion of Sicily and the Salerno landings in 1943, before moving to English waters. In June 1944, LST-325 was one of a huge fleet that supported the Normandy invasion.

She was transferred to Greece as grant aid in 1964. In 2000, she was acquired by The USS Ship Memorial Inc. and sailed back across the Atlantic for the final time, arriving in Mobile on Jan. 10. One of only two World War II LSTs to be preserved in the United States, LST-325 is currently undergoing restoration. She will eventually become a museum and memorial ship for the men who bravely

served their country aboard LSTs.

A ceremony officially commissioning the LST-325 as the USS LST Ship Memorial was held Sept. 21. The ship is back in Chickasaw at Hook's Terminal and is open for visits weekdays from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Past recipients of the Patriot of the Year Award include: Jack Edwards, J. Gary Cooper, the 99th Squadron of the Tuskegee Airmen and the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP).



John Tyson Sr.

Also, at the luncheon the Mobile Bay Area Veteran of the Year, John Tyson Sr., will be honored based on service and leadership during and after his military career. Tyson served as Navy Commander in the Judge Advocate General Corp. and as a Navy Carrier pilot in WWII and Korea. He's been recognized as Mobilian of the Year and served in the Alabama House of Representatives and State Senate.

Tyson helped paved the way to bring the USS Alabama to Mobile and is a current board member of the Battleship Commission. Among his community and civic organizations, Tyson is involved with the Scottish Rite and York Rite, the Elks Lodge, West Mobile Rotary Club, Retired Officers Association, VFW, Government Street Presbyterian Church, is a past state commander with the American Legion and past potentate of Abba Temple Shrine.

Other recipients of this award include Grady Vickery, Donald Barton and Neil Livingston.

Diplomat of the Month John Jay

Although he's only been a volunteer since July, John Jay is already making his mark as the Chamber's featured Diplomat of the Month. Jay is an employment specialist with United Cerebral Palsy, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping those with disabilities find jobs.

Fellow Diplomat Michelle Knowles convinced Jay to get involved in the program since he was already a regular attendee of the Chamber's Business After Hours and First Friday events. "I became interested because it's one more way of networking," Jay says, "and I always like to be part of the community in some capacity."

His favorite Chamber events are Business After Hours and First Friday because of the different locations and activities. Jay also enjoys ribbon cuttings and being a part of welcoming new businesses to the area.

As an employment specialist, Jay conducts job and skill assessments, seeks job opportunities for clients and, when needed, takes clients to fill out applications. He also acts as a job coach, helping to acclimate new employees to their positions and retain employment.

Jay has a bachelor's degree in business administration from Faulkner University and two associate degrees.

When he's not busy with Chamber activities, Jay enjoys playing golf, mountain biking, fishing, hunting and other outdoor activities.

For more information on the Chamber's Diplomat program, contact Reeda Taylor at 431-8649.

Mobile Hosted State Trade Conference

Mobile played host to the Alabama International Business Conference in September. With more than 120 registrants, the annual education event focused on Alabama's extensive transportation system and its link to the global opportunities for business owners throughout the state.

"The ability of business owners to reach customers and suppliers is affected by an efficient transportation network," said Hilda Lockhart with Alabama Development Office.

Alabama's international transportation assets, the Alabama Seaport located in Mobile and Huntsville's air and intermodal operation, as well as inland waterways, rail and roadway infrastructure located throughout the state, provides companies with unparalleled access to both domestic and inter-

national markets.

With the State Docks recently receiving \$100 million for expansion from the passage of Amendment One, it was fitting that the conference started with a river tour of the Port of Mobile, led by Jimmy Lyons, director of the Alabama State Port Authority. During the keynote address, Mayor Mike Dow emphasized the importance of international trade to Alabama's economic vitality and noted Alabama's geographical advantage in respect to trade with Latin America and the Caribbean.

Topics covered at the conference included future transportation plans and developments for the state and recommendations on increasing inland waterway and railcar usage.

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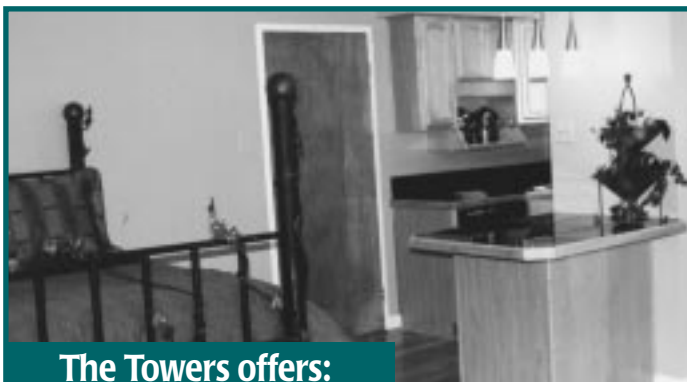
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Local Volunteer Exemplifies Corporate Volunteer Award

◆ Nominations due for the 2001 award



In addition to troop activities, Scout leader John O'Brien, pictured above, front row, second from left; plans a special event with his scouts each year.

Volunteers like John O'Brien are why the Chamber, in partnership with Envision Mobile-Baldwin and Volunteer Mobile, developed an award recognizing corporate volunteers.

O'Brien, general supervisor of the Degussa-Hüls Aerosil operation, is part of an overall effort by the company to support the community.

Over the past 15 years, O'Brien has spent thousands of hours volunteering with the Boy Scouts of America, getting involved when his oldest son became a Cub Scout. It started with transporting boys to various events and camping programs. He steadily got more involved, serving at both the local and national levels from scout leader to conference representative to rewriting the handbook. And with the help of Pastor Michael Jackson PhD, he even started a Boy Scout troop at Aimwell Baptist Church.

This summer he took two weeks vacation to participate in the National Boy Scout Jamboree, a campout held every four years for nearly 50,000 scouts from the U.S., territories and foreign countries. O'Brien has also taken his scouts scuba diving in Key West and white water rafting on almost every river in the country.

"I've just had a blast with it," O'Brien says. "Degussa has been more than supportive over the years."

"Boy Scouts of America relies on volunteers to serve in every capacity from troop leaders to any number of jobs at functions like the National Jamboree," says Steve Pickering, the organization's Mobile district executive.

Degussa-Hüls implemented an activities committee that meets monthly to assess different volunteer and charitable opportunities. Employees are involved in numerous volunteer efforts including Little League, Girl Scouts, Junior Achievement and Rolling Readers. In addition, the company annually sponsors a crew for Mobile Bay Cleanup.

In 1999, the Corporate Community Service Award was created to honor companies that make employee volunteer efforts an important part of their corporate vision, policy and operations.

The inaugural award went to Kellogg, Brown and Root and last year to Regions Bank. The 2001 Corporate Community Service Award will be presented at the Chamber's Annual Meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 22 at the Mobile Civic Center.

Nominations are due by Nov. 30. Those interested in applying for the award or wanting to nominate a company, should contact Michele Rumpf, the Chamber's coordinator of community & governmental affairs, at 431-8630.

Kick Off the Holidays



Growing in popularity, the Christmas Parade draws a large crowd.

During the month of December, Mobile plays host to a number of family-oriented events that will get folks outside and cheering when they need a break from the rush of holiday shopping and office parties.

❖ **Dec. 9: Olympic Torch Relay** – The torch arrives at 7 a.m. for a two-hour, 9.5-mile trip through Mobile on its way to Biloxi. From Spring Hill College, local runners will carry the torch through the downtown area and out I-10 West. Best viewing spots include Spring Hill College, Bienville Square and Sage Park. The torch winds through 46 states before reaching Salt Lake City, Utah on Feb. 8, 2002, for the start of the winter games.

❖ **Dec. 15: Christmas Parade** – A celebration of youth and community service, this is truly a children's event. No throws or police barricades, just giant helium balloons, marching bands and holiday floats. Families can bring chairs or sit on the curb for a great view. Organized by Main Street Mobile, the parade leaves the Civic Center at 1:30 p.m., turns north on Claiborne to Government, east to Royal, north to Dauphin, then returns to the Civic Center via Claiborne. America's Junior Miss Carrie Colvin reigns as Grand Marshall, and Santa Claus brings up the rear. Visit downtown merchants, the Exploreum, Fort Condé and other sites for special family activities on parade day. Last year's parade attracted 18,000 viewers. Rain date: Dec. 16.

❖ **Dec. 19: Third Annual GMAC Bowl** – The first contest of the college bowl season pits players from the Mid-American Conference and

Conference USA. ESPN2 will again broadcast the game beginning at 7 p.m. Last year's match between TCU and Southern Miss sold out and drew the sports network's highest viewership of the college bowl season.

The game caps a week of activities for the players as well as the public. The GMAC Bowl 5K Run begins and ends at Grelot Road United Methodist Church Dec. 16. On Dec. 18, Greer's Food Tiger sponsors a Mardi Gras parade downtown beginning at 6:30 p.m. All 16 carnival societies plus high school and college bands will participate. A crowd of 50,000 is expected. Immediately following, all are invited to a street party and pep rally on Dauphin Street.

Plagued by the post-holiday blues? Cheer up! It's Senior Bowl time.

❖ **Jan. 19, 2002 – 53rd Annual Senior Bowl** – Watch the nation's top college seniors and NFL Draft stand-outs battle for North-South domination in Ladd-Peebles Stadium. Presented by Food World, the game kicks off at 1 p.m. Tickets are \$24, \$18 and \$12, and usually sell out early.

For the first time in Senior Bowl history, the Auburn University Band performs during the pre-game and half-time gala. A national ESPN audience will watch a spectacular tableau celebrating Mobile's Tricentennial. College mascots, the Azalea Trail Maids, America's Junior Miss and NFL cheerleaders return to take part in the festivities.

A charitable event, the Senior Bowl has raised \$2 million since 1989 for the Children's Miracle Network, USA Children's and Women's Hospital, and 80 other agencies.

Take a closer look.

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Chamber Golf Tournament Sells Out

Thanks to the many supporters and sponsors of the Chamber's Fall Golf Tournament, the event was a sell-out.

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New Services Offered to Chamber Members at a Discount

Ever searching for new programs and services to offer its members, the Chamber has entered into contracts with four new companies to provide back-up software for computer systems, Internet job postings, a community-based Web site link and an e-commerce site.

The companies were selected based on member requests, advanced offerings at a reasonable price and the various options offered to Chamber members. According to **Win Hallett**, president of the Chamber, entering into partnerships with nationally known companies is a great way for Mobile businesses to become more involved with marketing themselves throughout the world. In addition, he added that nothing is more sacred than having computers backed up so valuable data won't be lost.

"Anyone who's lost information, including accounting files, personal correspondence or spreadsheets knows the value of having your files backed up on a regular basis," he added.

Over the past year, the Chamber has been working with several companies to determine which programs it would offer its members. The process began with staff members learning about different programs other Chambers are using. From there, each recommendation was researched and selections were made based on longevity and stability of each program, cost, whether members' charges would be a one-time fee or recurring, usefulness of services to both small business owners and large corporations and references from other Chambers.

The newest list of offerings, all available through the Chamber's Web site at:

www.mobilechamber.com, includes: ValueComm (computer back-up), ChamberBiz (e-commerce and business-to-business), ebiz Market Place (community-based Web site) and mobilehasjobs.com (Internet job postings).

ValueComm

There's no disputing the fact that for a business to remain successful, detailed records must be kept. ValueComm offers many options for Chamber members. The company backs up records automatically via a standard phone line 24-hours a day, seven days a week, depending on when files need to be saved.

Customers receive regular reports detailing which documents have been saved and information is placed on back up tapes that are proprietary so

only select individuals have the password to access the back up files. It's important to remember that files often take time to save, so ValueComm officials recommend running back up tapes during nighttime hours or early in the morning, so the process does not interfere with day-to-day operations.

ChamberBiz

ChamberBiz is a complete resource of business services and information to improve the way Chamber members conduct business. By using the latest in technology to reduce administrative and regulatory costs, it helps companies develop new avenues for growth through electronic trading networks. This free service also offers resources and tools to help companies adapt to change, and get better use out of electronic trading.

ebiz-Market Place

e-biz-Market Place was developed for Chamber members with Web sites to do business with each other on-line. There are many functions of ebiz-Market Place including extensive category and business listings, business-to-business communications and transactions and on-line credit card and check processing.

Other benefits include: a complete listing of companies with Web sites in the area, company listings by description of product(s) or service(s) offered, one-click communications with multiple companies to request information or pricing and/or product availability, on-line opinion polling, a community bulletin board for locating products and services and statistical reports on Web site use.

mobilehasjobs.com

Recruiting qualified employees is a top issue among businesses owners in the Mobile area. With that in mind, whohasjobs.com works with chambers across the nation to help members recruit employees via the Internet. Providing Chamber members with a cost-effective method of recruiting employees from outside the Mobile area is the main objective of the Web site - www.mobilehasjobs.com.

Some of the program's benefits include expanded recruitment areas, Web site pages dedicated to one company's job openings and decreased recruiting costs. whohasjobs.com was developed by the Applied Information Management Institute in 1993 as a service to Chambers looking to meet workforce and economic development needs.

Featured Profiles Advisors

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, contact **Katrina Dewrell** at 431-8611.

Martin G. Schweers is director of Kellogg Brown & Root's Mobile operations. He has more than 25 years of management and engineering experience in petrochemical and pulp & paper industries. He joined the company in 1974 after completing his master's degree in electrical engineering at Rice University.



Martin G. Schweers

Following his assignment in the Houston office as the process staff manager, Schweers was transferred to the Mobile office as pulp & paper engineering manager. He has served as general manager for the past four years, and is responsible for all aspects of the \$100 million operation and 200-300 employees. He currently is president of the Daphne Dixie Youth League, active in Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts of America and United Way. He is also a member of several professional organizations including the USA Industrial Advisory Board, American Institute of Chemical Engineers, Business Council of Alabama and Alabama Chemical Association.



Alice Keel

Alice Keel is district manager for Bruno's Supermarkets Inc. She has been employed with Bruno's for 25 years, serving the organization in a wide variety of roles ranging from cashier and customer service manager, to store manager and director of human resources. She is a graduate of the Southwest State Technical College management program. Keel volunteers with the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

William J. Withers is general manager for Cingular Wireless. He has been associated with the company (formerly as BellSouth Cellular and BellSouth Mobility) since 1990. Prior to his association with BellSouth, he was self-employed in the communications industry, as a dealer and leasing company for various types of communications equipment, and as a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) licensed radio common carrier. Withers received a bachelor of science degree in business administration and marketing management from Southeast Missouri State University. He is also a graduate of Elkins Radio and Electronic Institute, where he earned credentials as a FCC. First, Second and Third Class Radio-Telephone Operator Licensed Engineer.



William J. Withers

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Bunkley RV Super Store
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Picklefish Melodic Inc.
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2001 Statement of Ownership, Management & Circulation

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a. Total No. Of Copies	4,000	4,000
(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
Free distribution outside mail	250	250
Total free distribution	250	250
Total distribution	3,784	3,784
Copies not distributed	216	216
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(17) Signature and title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager or Owner & Date:

Susan Rak Blanchard 10/2001

Managing Editor

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CALENDAR VIEW

November **12** **Veterans' Day Luncheon**

Time: Noon
Place: Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center
Cost: \$15
Call: Shelly Mattingly at 431-8612
 (see story on page 12)

November **12** November **13** **Speak Up! Mobile**

Time: 6:30 - 9:30 p.m.
Place: Mobile Marriott, 3101 Airport Blvd.
Cost: Based on number attending
Call: Judy Crookston at 431-8631

November **13** **Member Open House**

Time: 5 - 7 p.m.
Place: Chamber Atrium and McGowin Room
Cost: No charge
Call: Maria Bladorn at 431-8638

November **15** **Business After Hours**

Time: 5:30 - 7 p.m.
Place: Darryl's, 828 Beltline Hwy.
Cost: \$2 for members/\$5 for potential members
Call: Maria Bladorn at 431-8638

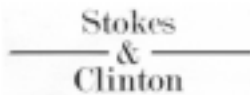
November **15** **Eagle Awards**

Time: 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Place: Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center
Cost: \$35 per person/Table of 10 for \$300
Call: Brenda Rembert at 431-8607
 (see story on page 3)

First Friday

On Friday, Dec. 7, the Chamber presents First Friday at the offices of Stokes, Clinton, Fleming & Sherling, 1000 Downtowner Blvd. Come by beginning at 7:45 a.m., and enjoy a breakfast buffet while networking with fellow professionals.

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



United Cerebral Palsy of Mobile

December **7** **First Friday**

Time: 7:45 - 8:45 a.m.
Place: Stokes, Clinton, Fleming & Sherling
 1000 Downtowner Blvd.
Cost: \$2 for members/\$5 for potential members
Call: Maria Bladorn at 431-8638

December **11** **Noon Marketing Meeting**

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

Member Open House

Held on Tuesday, Nov. 13, the quarterly Open House gives members an opportunity to visit the Chamber building and learn how the Chamber staff can help its members do business better. The event begins at 5 p.m. in the Chamber McGowin Room, and light hors d'oeuvres will be served.

There is no cost to attend. For more information and reservations, contact Maria Bladorn at 431-8638.

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For information on individual and group rates and for registration information, call Judy Crookston at 431-8631.

Noon Marketing Meeting

The Noon Marketing Meeting gives members the opportunity to make a two-minute presentation on their company's products or services. Held in the Chamber McGowin Room on Tuesday, Dec. 11 from Noon until 1 p.m., this event is a great chance to promote your business through presentations. Bring brochures and any other printed material to pass out.

For reservations, call Maria Bladorn at 431-8638. The cost to attend is \$6 and includes lunch.



Mobile Mysticks November, 2001 Home Games

- Thursday, November 15 vs Louisiana 7:00 PM
- Thursday, November 22 vs Louisiana 7:30 PM
- Saturday, November 24 vs Pensacola 7:30 PM
- Tuesday, November 27 vs Augusta 7:00 PM

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Business After Hours

November's Business After Hours, on Thursday, Nov. 15, will honor the authors and photographers of the Chamber's new coffee table book – *Mobile Renaissance – Celebrating Mobile's Tricentennial*. Featuring the writing of Barbara Spafford and George Ewert and photography of Steve Goraum, a book signing and champagne toast will kick off this event. Sponsored by Cellular South, the popular networking event will be held at Darryl's restaurant beginning at 5:30 p.m.

The cost to attend is \$2 for members and \$5 for potential members. Books will be available that night. Chambers will receive a 20 percent discount off the retail price of \$57.95. Members ordering 11 or more books will receive a 30 percent discount.

For more information on *Mobile Renaissance – Celebrating Mobile's Tricentennial* or to order a copy, contact Leigh Perry Herndon at leigh@mobilechamber.com or call 431-8645.



Veteran's Day Luncheon

Veteran's Day is Sunday, Nov. 11, but the celebration is set for Monday, Nov. 12. Join members of the military and armed forces in celebration of Veteran's Day at the Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center beginning at Noon. The luncheon will honor Patriots of the Year – the LST 325 crew members.

The cost to attend is \$15 and includes lunch. For more information and reservations, call Shelly Mattingly at 431-8612.

Eagle Awards

On Thursday, Nov. 15, the Eagle Awards return to the Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center. This event recognizes five minority business owners in the Mobile-Baldwin community. Guest speaker for the Eagle Awards will be Earl G. Graves, president and chief executive officer of *Black Enterprise* magazine. A cocktail reception will be held beginning at 5:30 p.m. followed by dinner, awards and guest speaker at 6:30 p.m.

The cost to attend is \$35 per person or a table of 10 for \$300. For reservations, call Brenda Rembert at 431-8607.



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA



Saucy Q Barbeque

ATTENTION MEMBERS!

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

- Kathryn Schipp at 431-8627
- Tom Lewis at 431-8629/pg: 582-2076

WHO'S NEW?

Regions Bank announces the promotions of four staff personnel.

Charles A. Murray was promoted to senior vice president portfolio manager in the capital management group. He is a graduate of Marion Institute and holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Alabama, completed the Southern Trust School's three-year program at Birmingham Southern College and is a Certified Financial Analyst.

John L. Singley was promoted to senior vice president. A graduate of the School of Banking at Louisiana State University, he joined the bank in 1955 and has worked in several areas of the retail division. Singley earned the Pre-Standard, Standard and Graduate certificates from the American Institute of Banking.

Paula B. Allen was promoted to vice president regional marketing officer. Her duties include coordinating the sales and marketing communication activities for the three banks that comprise the South Alabama Group of the Central Region. She is a graduate of the School of Bank Marketing, University of Colorado.

Rita F. Monroe was promoted to branch manager of the Snow Road office. She has worked in several areas of the retail division since joining the bank in 1991. Monroe has completed numerous American Institute of Banking courses and other bank-related training.

Robert F. Diehl Jr. joined the Bank as vice president, commercial loans. He received a business degree in finance and economics from Samford University and graduated from the Graduate School of Banking at LSU.

Ashleigh Ann Ledbetter joined TAG/The Architects Group Inc. interior design team. She graduated from the University of Alabama in 2001 with a bachelor's degree in interior design. Ledbetter's responsibilities include space planning and furniture, carpet and floor selection. She is an allied member of the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID).



Ledbetter

Dauphin Realty of Mobile & Baldwin county announces Chris Stanley and Barbara Martin have joined the firm's Mobile office.

EAP Lifestyle Management LLC announces several new additions. Reg Vanderpool, retired United States Coast Guard, is public relations director. Wendy Bowman is an account representative in Maryville and Knoxville, Tenn. Kristi Hall, counselor, will work in Mobile and surrounding areas. Julienne Raynal is global advisor and will work with employee assistance program services in France.



Ward

Cheryl Y. Ward was appointed executive vice president/chief operating officer for Providence Hospital. She joined the hospital in 1972 as an instructor in the education department. Ward has a bachelor's degree in biology and education from the University of Alabama and a master's in healthcare administration from Central Michigan University.

Eric H. Mabowitz joined First Community Bank as executive vice president chief credit officer. A graduate of the University of West Florida, he has a bachelor's degree in economics and a master's in finance. He will be responsible for all loan support functions.



Mabowitz

MEMBER NEWS

Andrew Davis and Taylor Peterson joined International Assurance Inc. as commercial insurance producers. Davis attended Spring Hill College and is a graduate of the Carolina School of Broadcasting in Charlotte, NC. He was formerly associated with Fisher Broadcasting Inc. and served as a television news anchor at their Lewiston, Idaho affiliate. Previously Peterson was a project manager with G.R. Harville Inc. General Contractors. He graduated from the University of Alabama.

Habitat for Humanity announces Susan Milling is the new executive director for the Mobile affiliate. Her duties include raising awareness and funds for the organization as well as recruiting volunteers. Milling is a University of South Alabama Adult Degree Program graduate with a bachelor's degree in financial planning.

NewSouth Communications Corp. announces Gina Fulling and Nikk Nicholson are new account executives. They will be responsible for marketing products and services to businesses throughout the Mobile area and establishing new data, Internet, and voice accounts for the company.

Three individuals were named to the cardiovascular staff for Springhill Medical Center's new HeartCare facility. Susan Mitchell was named director of the new cardiac rehabilitation program. She has worked with cardiac patients for 11 years. Amy Hendrix, director of Outpatient Heart Failure Services, has been with Springhill since 1995 and manages two inpatient units as well as another outpatient infusion clinic. Tina Vanderheiden, cardiovascular coordinator, holds advanced degrees in nursing and has 20 years experience in cardiovascular intensive care nursing.



Mitchell



Hendrix



Vanderheiden

Instant Photo Corp. of America (IPCA) announces the hiring of Janice Nance as district manager for the Tennessee/Kentucky region and Glenda Hilliard as the district manager for the Mississippi/Louisiana/Texas region.

Ideal Technical Services announces four new staff members: Melissa Spiers, senior technical recruiter; Linda Bennett, technical recruiter; Selina Bumpers, administration; and Michelle Dueitt, sales representative.

In other news, Beverly Bratloff transferred to the sales department.



Klyce

Kimberly Klyce joined Praytor Realty Co. as a full-time realtor. A native Mobilian, Klyce was previously program director with the Coalition for a Drug Free Mobile and has been involved with marketing and community activities for Bebo's Express.

The Mobile Convention and Visitors Corporation announces Landon Howard as new tourism director and Richard Mack as director of convention sales. Howard comes to Mobile from Chattanooga, Tenn., where he was the director of marketing & communications for the Chattanooga Area Convention and Visitor Bureau and Regional Director at the Southeast Tennessee Tourism Assoc. Mack joins MCVV from NYC & Company, Convention and Visitors Bureau Inc. where he was responsible for the development and execution of sales and marketing strategies.

Mobile Association for Retarded Citizens Inc. announces Judy Shortridge as its human resource manager. She has a bachelor's degree in psychology and a certificate in administration from the University of Regina in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada.

Ernest Ladd joined Thames, Batre, Mattei, Beville and Ison as a commercial insurance producer. Ladd, a lifelong resident of Mobile, is a board member of Mobile County Wildlife & Conservation Association and Goodwill-Easter Seals.



Ladd

WELL DONE!

The University of Mobile celebrated its 40th anniversary in October. It was chartered as Mobile College on Dec. 12, 1961, and enrolled its first class in the fall of 1963.



Irvine

Robbie Lynn Irvine with Praytor Realty was recently awarded the Accredited Buyer's Representative, ABR designation. This training prepares a realtor to better serve buyers in the home buying process.

Providence Hospital announced the recipients of its annual awards given to employees demonstrating devotion to service. Janie Sims, physical therapist, received the hospital's Vincentian Award for epitomizing the philosophy and the mission of Providence. Angie Wilkie, office coordinator for the pastoral care department, received the Service of the Poor Core Value Award for her activities involving annual food and clothing drives. Erna Singleton RN earned the Reverence Core Value Award for her compassion for the diversity and dignity of life during her 22 years at the hospital. Jeannine Lankford RN received the Integrity Core Value Award for her leadership abilities. The Wisdom Core Value Award was given to Ethel Jackson, food and nutrition department, for her help in providing employees and patients with excellent service. Cheryl Quale RN received the Creativity Core Value Award for her role in consolidating all of the cardiac heart failure services and personnel into a unified program leading to patients being treated more effectively. The Dedication Core Value Award was earned by Althea Ford, PC support analyst, for her dedication to Providence. Todd Hoffman, cash management supervisor, received the Spirit of Providence Hospital Award for his spirit and enthusiasm.

Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Mobile (CCCS) announces Scott Hehman and Nedra Johnson earned the distinction of Certified Consumer Credit Counselor.

EAP Lifestyle Management LLC owner Patricia A. Wheat Vanderpool was recognized by the University of South Alabama Business Development Center as an "Up & Coming Woman Owned Business" for 2001 and among the Women's Yellow Pages as 2001 "Woman to Watch."

Cynthia A. Donnell MD, associate professor of pathology at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, is currently serving as a member of the Step I Test Material Development Committee for Gross Anatomy and Embryology. This committee developed the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE).

In other news, the clinical laboratory at USA Medical Center was awarded accreditation by the Commission on Laboratory Accreditation of the College of American Pathologists based on the results of a recent on-site inspection and lab service excellence.

Also, SouthFlite USA, a medical helicopter transport, celebrated 15 years of service on Sept. 10, giving care and rapid transport to nearly 5,000 patients.

COL John W. Schmidt USMC (Ret) is the new chairman of the USS ALABAMA Battleship Commission. Schmidt, a Birmingham native, graduated from the University of Montevallo and received a master's degree in journalism from the University of Wisconsin in Madison. As a Marine Corp officer, he commanded at every level. He is Vietnam and Desert Storm veteran.

In other news, the park celebrated its 11 million visitor on Sept. 7.

Cynthia Jones, Allstate insurance agent, earned the Personal Financial Representative title. She is now able to provide customers with variable annuity, variable life and mutual fund products. The title is earned after passing license exams and completing an extensive training curriculum.

BUSINESS ENDEAVORS

J Townsend Personnel moved to 455 Azalea Rd. Their new phone number is 340-6641 and new fax is 340-8272.

Mobile Infirmary Medical Center is offering an intensive outpatient relapse prevention program for those at risk of relapsing from either a substance abuse/dependency disorder or psychiatric disorder. For a free assessment, referral or more information call 432-6582 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Applications for J.L. Bedsole Scholarships are now available to high school seniors interested in attending college next fall in Alabama. The application deadline is Nov. 30. For more information, contact Meghan Stacey at 432-3369.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

L.A. Dodgers legend Tommy Lasorda will be the keynote speaker at Spring Hill College's benefit "Let There Be Lights 2001" on Wednesday, Nov. 14 at 6 p.m. in the Gautrelet Room at Spring Hill College and Thursday, Nov. 15 at Noon in the Chamber's McGowin Room. Please confirm attendance. Lunch will be served. For more information or a spring schedule, contact 380-3065 (undergraduate) or 380-3094 (graduate).

Spring Hill College Division of Lifelong Learning and Graduate Programs will hold information sessions for the spring semester Wednesday, Nov. 14 at 6 p.m. in the Gautrelet Room at Spring Hill College and Thursday, Nov. 15 at Noon in the Chamber's McGowin Room. Please confirm attendance. Lunch will be served. For more information or a spring schedule, contact 380-3065 (undergraduate) or 380-3094 (graduate).

The Boar's Head Festival, the University of Mobile's medieval, musical Christmas feast, will be performed Dec. 6-8 at Moffett Road Baptist Church. Dinner performances begin at 7 p.m. and tickets are \$25. A dessert performance will be held Dec. 8 at 2 p.m. and tickets are \$15. For information and tickets, call 442-2420.

The Gulf Coast Exploreum announced *Lost Worlds: Life in the Balance*, narrated by Harrison Ford is playing through Jan. 11 in the J.L. Bedsole IMAX Dome Theater. "Arithmetricks: Perfectly Perplexing Puzzles," a traveling exhibit, is at the Exploreum until Jan. 1, 2002. For information call 208-6873 or visit www.exploreum.net.

Senior Citizens Services is taking orders for florist-quality poinsettias. Plants come in red or white and are wrapped in decorative gold foil. They will be available for pick-up on Nov. 29 and 30. Proceeds will benefit programs and services of Senior Citizens Services. Plants are \$15. To order call 470-5232.

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 1st 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.com.

NEW MEMBERS

Clip and add these to your Membership Directory.

Abel Insurance Agency Inc.
J. Don Guy
3105 Airport Blvd., Ste. 175
Mobile, AL 36606-3678
(251) 478-9095
jdonguy@hotmail.com
Insurance Agency

Allen/Towne Custom Frame Shop & Art Gallery
Gail M. Allen CPF
2106B Airport Blvd.
Mobile, AL 36606-1702
(251) 479-1199
allentowneframeshop@aol.com
Picture Frames-Dealers

American Industrial

Marine Inc.
Claude Hodges
2560 Middle Rd.
Mobile, AL 36605-9524
(251) 445-5515
acm@amerindmar.com
www.amerindmar.com
Contractors-Industrial

Bilotti's Italian Cafe

Robert J. Moore
1850 Airport Blvd.
Mobile, AL 36606-1375
(251) 476-6777
Restaurants

Challenge Engineering & Testing Inc.

Connie L. Glover
4234 Halls Mill Rd.
Mobile, AL 36693-5617
(251) 666-1435
challengeengineering@aol.com
Engineering Services

Chem Station Gulf Coast

Chris Rowland
1804 6th St.
Mobile, AL 36615-4223
(251) 338-3570
chenal@mindspring.com
www.chemstation.com
Industrial Cleaners

Executive Jet Center Inc. d/b/a Million Air Mobile

Emily K. Henriksen
571 Flave Pierce Rd.
Mobile, AL 36608
(251) 633-6767
infomob@millionair.com
www.millionair.com
Aviation Technology
Aircraft Service-Maintenance-
Repair

Global Securities LLC

Ken Cook
3229 International Dr.
Mobile, AL 36606-3004
(251) 662-1390
ken@gssi.net
www.gssi.net
Security Control
Equipment/System

Hilb, Rogal & Hamilton Company of Alabama Inc.

Paty Daves
1015 Montlamar Dr., Ste. A210
Mobile, AL 36609-1713
(251) 344-6611
patydaves@hrh.com
www.wlwh.com
Insurance

Hy-Tech Computer Systems Inc.

Terry Glass
858A Butler Dr.
Mobile, AL 36693-5104
(251) 602-8100
tglass@hy-tech.net
www.e-hytech.net
Computer-Manufacturers

H.H. Jordan Construction Company Inc.

Robert K. Gates
3221 Anton St.
Mobile, AL 36612-1707
(251) 456-4100
hhjordan@aol.com
Pile Driving

Epiphany Development

Mark Roberts
7068 Airport Blvd.
Mobile, AL 36608-3713
(251) 343-5115
mroberts@epiphanydev.com
www.epiphanydev.com
Technology Consultants

Joule' Industrial Contractors

Marcus H. Brandt
720 Lakeside Dr.
Mobile, AL 36693-5112
(251) 643-7635
mbrandt@jouleinc.com
www.jouleinc.com
Contractors-Industrial

Knowledge Marketing Inc. d/b/a Knowledge Backgrounds

Paula Butler
3000 Mill St.
Mobile, AL 36607-1918
(251) 476-6100
pbutler@handpaintedbackgrounds.com
www.handpaintedback
grounds.com
Photographic Equipment &
Supplies/Wholesale/Manufacture

Mack LLC, d/b/a Krispy Krene

Chris Brooks
1354 Government St.
Mobile, AL 36604-2080
(251) 432-5559
Doughnuts
Restaurants

Longhorn Steakhouse

Rodney Bays
6201 Airport Blvd.
Mobile, AL 36608-3128
(251) 316-3880
Restaurants

Mackinnon Paper Company Inc.

Thomas B. Mackinnon
4204 Mackinnon Industrial Pkwy.
Mobile, AL 36693-5247
(251) 666-8175
Paper Company - Wholesale

Mark Dodge LLC

Andrea P. Beauth
3118 Government Blvd.
Mobile, AL 36606-2612
(251) 478-5252
Automobile Dealers-
New & Used Cars

Marketing Details Inc.

James A. Ellis
168 S. Broad St.
Mobile, AL 36602-1111
(251) 433-6090
info@marketingdetails.com
www.marketingdetails.com
Advertising Agencies-Counselor

Mobile Football LLC, d/b/a Mobile Wizards

Neal Dell'oco
301 Government St., Ste. 203
Mobile, AL 36602-2699
(251) 694-0200
wizard@themobilewizards.com
www.themobilewizards.com
Football-Professional

Mobile Society for Human Resource Management

Billy Boswell
452A Government St.
Mobile, AL 36602-2320
(251) 433-8686
bbos74@aol.com
www.mobileshrm.org
Professional Organizations

New Health Dynamics d/b/a Dent-U-Save

Sam Durrence
2370 Hillcrest Rd., Ste. G243
Mobile, AL 36695-3838
(800) 804-0015
Dentists

Winning Combinations LLC

Alicia Farmer
1259 Elmira St.
Mobile, AL 36604-2329
(866) 650-3917
winningcombo@teaminfo.com
Gifts-Specialty

Worldwide Industrial Hygiene Services Inc.

Lynnetta T. Kidd
4718 Sugar Mill Rd. N.
Eight Mile, AL 36613-3748
(251) 330-0310
wsilkidd@aol.com
Consultant

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CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Photo by Thom Scott, Pelican Media