

THE VIEW

MAY 2001

MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

XXXIII, No. 5

Members Asked to Rally for Schools

We're running out of time and we need your help. On May 15, citizens will be asked to vote on the school funding issue. Its success will depend on groups, such as your business or organization, helping promote a "YES" vote for our children and our future.

What can you do? If you could simply take responsibility for getting materials out to your employees and remind them to vote on May 15, you will have done a big part in helping with this campaign. You may also have some creative ideas such as giving people an extra 30 minutes at lunch to vote or organizing a rally at your office. It's all up to you.

Inside this issue of *The View* is a poster that we're asking you to prominently display in your offices. Need more? We have them, as well as yard signs, bumper stickers, lapel stickers, door hangers, fact sheets, flyers and even a video. Contact our chamber offices at 433-6951 and let us know how many of each you need.

VOTE YES!
MAY 15

Why Vote Yes?

Most of the 128 school systems are in much poorer counties yet, **Mobile County ranks 112th** in how much it spends on educating our children.

With 66,000 students and nearly 8,000 employees, Mobile County schools receive far less funding than most other school systems in Alabama, including our neighboring counties:

Statewide average: \$994/student
Mobile County: \$700/student
Escambia County: \$799/student
Washington County: \$930/student
Baldwin County: \$1,713/student

Because **Mobile schools** receive so little local funding, they are far more dependent on **unreliable state funds**. That's why statewide funding cuts are hurting Mobile schools more than others in Alabama. If the funding cuts from Montgomery go even higher — as some expect — Mobile County's school funding crisis will become even more desperate.

Without additional local funding, **Mobile County schools** will have to cut programs and extracurricular activities.

How do I know the money will be managed well?

The Mobile school system's administrative costs are well below most school systems in the state, as well as many area businesses. In fact, only 3 percent of the entire budget is spent on central office staff. Most school systems and businesses spend between 5 and 7 percent on administration.

The Mobile County school board has earned the highest possible bond rating from the nation's most respected financial rating service, Standard & Poor's.

And in spite of inadequate funding, test scores continue to improve. **Mobile County students now rank above the national and state average.**

Will the money stay in Mobile County and ONLY be used on schools?

This money is earmarked for Mobile County school expenses only such as textbooks, janitorial services, power bills, and extracurricular academic and athletic programs.

The Gulf Coast Visits Washington

Top officials such as White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card, White House Director of Legislative Affairs Nick Calio and EPA Region Six Administrator Gregg Cooke, were just a few of the highlights when a regional delegation met in Washington, DC recently.

A group of 79 business representatives, including 14 from Mobile, flew to the U.S. Capitol for the second annual Washington Fly-in. Sponsored by the Gulf Coast Regional Chamber Coalition (Pensacola, Mobile, Biloxi/Gulfport, New Orleans and Baton Rouge), the group also met with senators and congressmen from the Gulf Coast states.

"Within the four states are eight U.S. senators and five congressmen — some of whom are considered heavy hitters on the Washington scene, such as Trent Lott from Mississippi, Connie Mack

and Bob Graham from Florida, Billy Tauzin from Louisiana and Alabama's Sonny Callahan," said Chamber Chairman of the Board **John Turner**, Whitney National Bank. "We figured out quickly that if our region could come up with a common agenda, we had quite a combined power house to help us attain it."

"I thought the time we spent with our own Congress (Congressman Sonny Callahan and Senators Jeff Sessions and Richard Shelby) and their spouses was particularly beneficial," said

Chamber Board member **Cheryl**

Thompson with Alabama Power Company. "We covered a wide range of topics and it was good to hear what they had to say."

Generally, the coalition has been rallying around such regional topics as transportation, economic development, environment and trade. Specific programs discussed included a rapid rail system from Pensacola to Baton Rouge, federal royalties from offshore gas and oil drilling for local conservation programs, and the development of regional trade missions that market the Gulf Coast area as one geographic location.

Covering more than 20,000 square miles, the region is comprised of five major Southern metropolitan areas bordering the Gulf of Mexico in four states with a combined population of 3.4 million.

Chamber President **Win Hallett** observed that each of the people in Washington who addressed the group acknowledged that the coalition of four states created a powerful presence.

Two years ago, representatives from the region started meeting to identify common issues. When tourists think of the Gulf Coast, they see beaches, great food and a world-renowned reputation for hospitality. From a business perspective, this region has a diverse economic base of shipbuilding, manufacturing, import/export centers, oil and gas exploration and refining, military operations and other supporting industries that position the region as a center for world commerce.

"We'll continue to work on building our image as one economic block with common concerns," added **Bob Chappelle**, senior vice president of the Chamber.

Hallett said next year the Mobile Chamber would be the lead organization to develop the agenda for the fly-in. "We've already contacted staff from our Congressman and Senators' offices to begin identifying speakers and topics," he concluded. "We're also securing assistance from the U.S. Chamber in Washington. I think it will be another great trip."



(l-r) Mobile Area Chamber President Win Hallett, Rep. Sonny Callahan, Cliff Inge and Mike Lee.

Fools No More



Recently Envision Mobile-Baldwin supported two rallies organized by the Alabama Citizens for Constitution Reform (ACCR). Both events featured mules and wagons, horses and buggies creating a visual message that Alabama cannot progress into the 21st century with a mule-and-wagon-era constitution.

Several hundred supporters marched through the Bankhead Tunnel on Sunday, April 1 in the April Fools Day Walk in remembrance of 100 years of misrule, carrying signs reading "Fools no More" and "Fools for Reform."

Among the participants were Rally organizer **Wendy Allen**, Mayor **Mike Dow**, Mobile County Commissioner **Sam Jones** and ACCR board member **Jack Edwards**.

On April 4, scores of supporters from Mobile and Baldwin counties joined in a statewide rally at the State Capitol. Several events have been organized to show **Gov. Don Siegelman** the grassroots support for Constitutional Reform. **Gov. Siegelman** spoke in favor of reform at the Montgomery rally. "Our school system is being held back by a system that is just not up to the job. . . It's time to retire the wagon and let the mules out to pasture."

Commenting on the Governor's recent public favor towards reform, **Ginny Russell**, the Chamber's director of community development said, "It means a lot that our state leader has recognized so many of our problems can't be solved without rewriting the Constitution."

Census 2000 and What it Says About Mobile

With the Census results in and some of the data analysis completed, few area leaders are surprised but what the numbers are showing — Baldwin County again experienced tremendous growth, Mobile lost its standing as the second largest city but remained the second largest county.

Montgomery surpassed Mobile by 2,653 residents, thanks in part to the foresite of community leaders who annexed part of the county into its city limits.

Mobile County grew 5.6 percent to 399,843 residents and Baldwin County grew to 140,415, a 43 percent increase since the 1990 Census. The growth in Baldwin County made it the second fastest growing county behind Shelby County.

Perhaps a little surprising is the redistricting that will result from the new population numbers. Although Mobile County added 21,200 people in the last 10 years, it is set to lose a partial seat in the state House. This would give Mobile nine full seats and one partial seat. Baldwin County's growth stands to secure a third seat for its newest 42,135 citizens.

Mobile's suburban areas are growing at a very fast rate.

"Mobile's metro area continues to grow at a very good rate," said Jim Apple, Chamber vice president of Economic Development. "Rapid suburban growth resulting in slower growth inside city limits is a national trend."

Tom Siewald, adjunct director for the Center for Entrepreneurial Excellence and senior analyst for the Institute of the Future South, has spent years studying demographic trends to assist businesses and local and state governments throughout the Southeast. "The preliminary data from the 2000 census is just what we expected. People are tired of the hassle, traffic and crowds in the city and are seeking a better quality of life in the suburbs."

Baldwin County is a classic example of that

according to Siewald who uses the term penturb to define the areas beyond the suburbs. "Families can commute to work and within 30 minutes to an hour can be at the airport or the mall."

Mobile's metropolitan statistical area (MSA) includes both Mobile and Baldwin counties and has reached a population of 540,258, some 38 percent larger than Montgomery's. "Most businesses use

Central Gulf Coast Ranked by Population

Rank	State	2000 Population	% Increase
23	Alabama	4,447,100	10.1
4	Florida	15,982,378	23.5
22	Louisiana	4,468,976	5.9
31	Mississippi	2,844,658	10.5

population numbers to make decisions about expansions and relocation and Mobile is still very attractive, especially if we pass the school funding referendum," said Apple.

A real concern with the city's slower growth and loss of its no. 2 city status is missed opportunities to increase the amount of federal funds for Mobile.

"We are not losing money," Apple said. "Maybe missing opportunities for additional funding."

Suburban flight had a substantial effect on Birmingham's population numbers. The largest city in Alabama experienced an 8.6 percent drop to 242,820 residents inside the city limits. But Shelby County, lying just to the south took in almost all of those 23,000 people as it grew a whopping 44 percent since 1990.

"It is important that Mobile pay attention to its urban and suburban economic issues," Apple said. "For metro area success, we need a healthy city at its core."

Jodi Swiderek, the Chamber's vice president of community development agreed. "Years ago when urban growth expert David Rusk was here, he noted how well our city is laid out. Neighborhoods with

expensive real estate are located not far from middle class sub divisions or lower income housing. The point he was making was that Mobile has very few deep 'poverty' pockets. That kind of diversity keeps the core of the city healthy."

The city's white population fell from 59 percent to 50 percent in the last decade. African American's now make up 45.2 percent of the city's population, compared with 38.9 percent in 1990. The category, "other race," experienced a 2.5 percent increase and 1 percent of respondents choose to put themselves in the multiple race group.

Baldwin County's white population rose 87 percent, while African American residents increased to 14,444, Registering as 10.3 percent of the total population.

The U.S. Census Bureau will continue to release statistical analysis over the next two years. Slated for release this summer is demographic, age distribution, gender and housing data. For more information log on to www.census.gov/population/cen2000/.

Alabama's Top 5 Metro Areas

Metro Statistical Area Population (counties included):

Birmingham MSA	.921,106
(Blount, Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair)	
Mobile MSA	.540,258
(Baldwin, Mobile)	
Huntsville MSA	.342,376
(Limestone, Madison)	
Montgomery	.333,055
(Autauga, Elmore, Montgomery)	
Tuscaloosa	.164,875
(Tuscaloosa)	

On The National Scene

Overall the Census showed the U.S. experienced its largest 10-year population increase in history with an increase of 32.7 million people. The nation's population reached 281.4 million up from 1990 data of 248.7 million.

For the first time in the 20th century, all states gained population, according to the Commerce Department's Census Bureau.

The previous record increase was the 28 million jump between 1950 and 1960, occurring during the post-World War II "baby boom."

During the past decade, the fastest-growing region was the West at 19.7 percent, adding 10.4 million people in the 1990s for a total of 63.2 million. The fastest-growing states in the nation were all located in the West: Nevada (66.3 percent), Arizona (40.0 percent), Colorado (30.6 percent), Utah (29.6 percent) and Idaho (28.5 percent). California recorded the largest numeric increase of any state, 4.1 million people.

The South was the second fastest-growing region (17.3 percent), with a total of 14.8 million people. Georgia was its fastest growing state (up 26.4 percent). Texas, which grew by 3.9 million, and Florida, up 3.0 million, showed the largest numeric increases.

The Midwest grew by 7.9 percent, adding 4.7 million people. Minnesota (up 12.4 percent) was this region's leader for the third straight decade.

Illinois, up 988,000 and Michigan, up 643,000, recorded the largest numeric increases.

Population in the Northeast increased by 2.8 million, or 5.5 percent with New Hampshire (up 12.4 percent) growing the fastest in that region for the fourth straight decade. Meanwhile, New York, up 986,000, and New Jersey, up 648,000, gained the most population in the Northeast.

Top 10 States By Population

1. California
2. Texas
3. New York
4. Florida
5. Illinois
6. Pennsylvania
7. Ohio
8. Michigan
9. New Jersey
10. Georgia

Insurance Sign Up Ends May 31

These are the last few weeks to enroll in Chamber Advantage, the discounted health, dental and long-term care insurance program. New enrollees will have an effective date of June 1.

Chamber Advantage offers competitive rates and is available to current Mobile Area Chamber member businesses.

Jonathan Byrd from The Oath will be at the Chamber for members to sign up for the health insurance on Monday, May 7, 14 and 21 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

For more information, call Byrd at 470-8508 or Priscilla Smith at 470-8518.

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Chamber Chase 2001 Survivor Team

◆ Out Reach – Out Achieve

In the past, there have been super sleuths and there have been trekkies. This year comes survivors! No rats, snakes, kangaroos or wild hogs, just a great team of volunteers who are rising to the challenge of attempting to out-reach and out-achieve their goals for Chamber Chase 2001.

The Chamber's total resource development campaign, Chamber Chase, has a goal of \$600,000 in cash, goods and services. Instead of out playing, out witting and out last-ing each other like the popular reality-based TV program, each team will merge together to form an alliance for the greater good.

Chamber Chase is an annual effort run by the Chamber's membership department. More than 100 volunteers will recruit new members and raise income to support Chamber programs and services.

The Tribal Chief and Campaign Chairman is Jeff Weston Jr. of Cooper/T. Smith Corporation. Division Chairmen, a.k.a. Tribal Leaders, include Bill Goodloe, Lyon Fry Cadden Insurance Agency; Chris Teague, Sullivan St. Clair Advertising; Jody Dunn, Whitney National Bank; Eliska Roe, Office of U.S. Representative Sonny Callahan; and Jo Shannon, Regions Bank.

In its fifth year, the 2001 campaign dropped from 14 weeks to six to help volunteers deal with the responsibilities and pressures of their everyday business life. "There are so many things going on in the business community and we are sensitive to

how important our volunteers' time is," explains Carolyn Golson, the Chamber's vice president of the membership department. "We're trying this abbreviated version of the campaign as an experiment of how effective we can be in a shorter time frame."

Weston has every confidence that his teams will meet the challenge. "These volunteers have the look of a veteran team plus a few potential 'All-American' rookies."

As weeks progress, members of each team will not face the dreaded tribal council and vote a member off. Instead, as each team and team member get closer to their goal, they are cheered as they take one step closer to their final victory.

Kickoff for the campaign begins on June 7. During the campaign, reward sessions will be held to congratulate and promote members.

"This campaign could not be as successful as it has been without the companies and individuals giving so much of their time and energy," adds Golson.

The fact that everyone comes together from different companies and areas of Mobile makes the event an extraordinary networking opportunity for the volunteers who meet weekly at the reward sessions.

For more information on Chamber Chase 2001, call Maria Bladorn in the membership department at 431-8638.



CHAMBER CHASE '01

**WOTE
YES!**

MAY 15 



FOR OUR CHILDREN, FOR OUR FUTURE

Small Business of the Month

Thames, Batré, Mattei, Beville & Ison



Having established their insurance business in 1891 when most insurance needs were as not complicated as they are today, Thames, Batré, Mattei, Beville & Ison have changed with the times and now offers all types of insurance for business, personal, estate and business planning.

The Chamber's Small Business of the Month began as a partnership between Gus Thames and Lloyd Batré. Though more than a century old, the company promotes a modern, up-to-the-minute approach to insurance for each of their clients in a progressive automated environment.

Over the years, various mergers transformed the agency into a company rich in family tradition. In 1983, Thames Batré merged with the Mattei Agency. In 1990, the company merged with two other firms, Ison Insurance and Beville Insurance.

Being part of an established firm has been a successful venture for the current partners, who include **Bo Mattei**, president; **Jay Ison**, vice president; **Alan Ladd**, vice president and **Lewis Beville**, vice president. The partners, who amazingly enough all started their careers by working with their fathers in the insurance business, came together in 1991 to form the alliance that is today Thames, Batré, Mattei, Beville & Ison.

The firm believes in having the best staff possi-

Members of Thames, Batré staff stand ready to meet all insurance needs.

ble and prides itself on giving employees the training needed to be up-to-date in the ever-changing insurance industry. "At one point, insurance changes occurred once every six months, now, changes occur on a weekly basis," explains Beville. "We have numerous training sessions and even in-house training sessions for employees to make sure we are accommodating all our clients, and maintaining the highest level of excellence. This adds value to business and allows us to continuously change to meet all of our clients' insurance needs."

Of the services they offer, Thames Batré provides coverage for businesses in all aspects of business and property. Their personal coverage options include life and health.

Other than the basic insurance needs, the firm's staff of more than 40 people provides a variety of services including designing protection programs, pricing proposals, and maintaining a full time claims staff on call 24-hours a day.

For more information about Thames, Batré, Mattei, Beville & Ison, call 473-9000 or visit the Web site at www.tbmbi.com.



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Pricing Options: The Big Sale Dilemma

Without profits, of course, you have no business. Simply put, that means what your business sells must be attractive to the customer and provide a return on investment.

Pricing is one of the trickiest decisions a business owner can make, but it is critical to success. The usual way to look at a price is a combination of its original cost plus a certain amount of markup. The cost includes what you paid along with any shipping, handling or export fees. The markup goes toward your operating expenses and what remains becomes profit.

There are several basic philosophies of pricing: the discount, negotiated, static, variable and the value-added approaches. Each fits different types of businesses, though some mix them depending on the product.

❖ **Discount pricing** involves constantly trying to meet or beat the competition. Goods sell at a similar price in various places until someone drops the price again further. In this race, one must try to sell more goods at a lower price to make more money. Often this means trying to deal with wholesalers, vendors and distributors to keep costs down.

❖ **Negotiated pricing** is most famously seen on the stickers on new cars. The dealer sets a price and then haggles with the customer to get a mutually agreeable price. Negotiating is typically done with big-ticket items where there is plenty of room for markup, such as antiques, furniture, jewelry, electronics or real estate.

❖ **Static prices** are a set percentage above wholesale cost. This is to ensure a certain profit on every sale. A variant of this is when a business will deliberately sell certain items at a fraction below cost in order to attract customers who will buy more products later.

❖ **Variable pricing** occurs when the value of an item changes due to season, place or fashion. For example, many mall-clothing stores debut their newest goods at full price near the front door, then move them toward the back wall over time (to the sale rack and then the clearance aisle). Holiday items fluctuate as the day approaches, and then the prices fall through the floor afterwards. Other items may be more popular in one city than another.

❖ **Value-added pricing** involves giving the customer something that makes the goods more valuable. You may have a reputation for better merchandise, strong brands, specialized selections for selective taste or the fastest delivery in your neighborhood. This works with higher prices when customers save time and effort or feel they are getting top-notch quality and service.

Point to Ponder

❖ **Price Lining:** This marketing strategy

involves only selling products within a certain range. It lets you target a market with a specific amount of spending power. Customers thus know what they can expect to pay when they patronize your business.

❖ **Odd Pricing:** The strange custom of setting prices to end in odd numbers may never die. From either psychology or familiarity, products tend to sell for \$1.99 rather than \$1.98. Some companies, however, try to break this rule with even pricing to stand out.

❖ **New Customers:** Often companies will give special rates or discounts to someone making a first purchase. This is sometimes referred to as predatory pricing when the goal is to grab people away from established competitors.

Questions to Ask

- ❖ How popular are the products I am selling?
- ❖ If I were the customer, what would this be worth to me?
- ❖ Will a lower price move goods faster?

Trouble Spots

❖ **Dead inventory:** If a product doesn't move, get rid of it. A possible loss on an item frees up space for something that may sell faster.

❖ **Suggested retail price:** Usually, this is just a suggestion. Depending on the competition, customers may find it artificially high.

❖ **Credit cards:** Every time you slide a card, you pay a transaction fee. Even if a substantial number of customers don't use plastic, this must be factored into pricing.

Glossary

Loss leaders: Products sold at or below cost to entice customers to come to a store and buy other products that are more profitable.

Margin: The percentage of profit calculated into the price of goods.

Multiple-unit Pricing: Selling a bundle of items for less than the price of the individual units.

Overhead: A company's cost of doing business, such as light, heat, rent, insurance, equipment, sanitation and the like.

Prestige pricing: Selling a product at an inflated price to convince the customer that it is more fashionable or of higher quality.

Unit pricing: A cost-comparison price that shows how much a certain amount of a product costs, such as the price of one item or a certain weight or volume.

Yield management: The process of selling goods at different prices to make more money. This is a form of variable pricing most famously used by airlines.

Area Businesses May Have Access to World Leading Trade Show

A total of 830,000 visitors from 60 countries and more than 8,000 exhibitors spread out over 4.5 million square feet at this year's leading information technology, telecommunications and office automation trade show. Held in Hanover, Germany, the event set a new attendance record.

Companies from around the world unveiled the latest trends and product innovations at CeBIT, the German acronym for Center for Office and Information Technology. Next year, Chamber members could have the opportunity to participate in one of the world's largest trade shows.

Tony van Aken, the Chamber's director of Trade and Technology, attended the 2001 event and is working with the Alabama Development Office to secure funding to offset the cost of a booth in next year's show set for March 13-20, 2002. He is looking for six companies willing to contribute \$2,000 toward a \$15,000 booth for Alabama-based companies. Participants would share time in the booth promoting products and networking on the trade floor.



"This is the premier show to attract global customers. The event provides numerous opportunities to establish personal contacts with new and existing global clients," said van Aken.

For more information about CeBIT, contact Tony van Aken at 431-8651 or by e-mail at tony@mobilechamber.com. Additional statistics as well as a list of this year's participants can be found at www.cebit.de.

Toast from the Coast

◆ Mobile and Baldwin Counties Host State Legislators

It's one of the most popular events held in Montgomery. This year's annual Toast from the Coast, coordinated by Mobile and Baldwin County Chambers, was another hit among the state's legislators and staff.

One legislator, said he "never misses an function held by Alabama's Gulf Coast (Mobile and Baldwin counties)."

The event is a casual networking session held in Montgomery so area business representatives can develop and build relationships with the state's legislators and staff.

Chamber Board Chairman John Turner with Whitney Bank thanked Alabama's leaders for their work, particularly during these difficult times. "We appreciate the challenges you face and commend your efforts."

In addition to area Chambers, participating sponsors included Alabama Power, Baldwin EMC, Mobile Gas, The Port of Alabama and Volkert & Associates.



From right to left are: Carolyn Doughty, Meyer Real Estate; Donna Watts, South Baldwin Chamber (Foley); Ginny Russell, Mobile Area Chamber; Shelia Hodges, Meyer Real Estate; and Linda Whitlock, Alabama Gulf Coast Chamber (Gulf Shores).



Mobile Rep. James Buskey (right) talks with Mobile County Commissioner Freeman Jockish.



Gordon Moulton (left), University of South Alabama and Mobile Rep. Chris Pringle

Tricentennial Renovates Mobile's Oldest Existing Structure

One major focus of the Mobile Tricentennial is the creation of a Renaissance in Mobile: a reawakening of the rich cultural past and architectural heritage. As part of this renaissance, volunteers will work to revitalize entire neighborhoods and renovate individual properties. The first such project is the Vincent-Doan-Walsh House, the oldest existing structure in the Port City.

On loan to the Tricentennial organization through 2002 from the University of South Alabama, the house represents classic early Louisiana plantation architecture and is located at 1664 Springhill Ave.

Capt. Benjamin Vincent, a well-known sea captain who commanded several vessels carrying cargo between Mobile and New Orleans, built the house in 1827. The Springhill area had become a popular location for summer homes, more comfortable during the hot months and less affected by the frequent yellow fever epidemics. Mrs. Vincent was the sister of Michael Krafft, founder of Mobile's first Mardi Gras organization, the Cowbellian de Rakin Society. Krafft lived in the house with the Vincents for many years.

The house has been vacant for a couple of years. Time and the Gulf Coast climate have begun to take their toll on the historical structure, and the city was in danger of losing one of its more important historic treasures. However, a partnership between builders, architects, the University of South Alabama and the Mobile Tricentennial will preserve it for generations.

Since the house was occupied by a family until recently, the majority of the renovations will restore the outside to its original architectural design. Once a raised Creole Cottage, efforts will restore the grand staircase leading to the second floor main entrance.



The Vincent-Doan-Walsh House is the oldest existing structure in the Port City. Tricentennial volunteers are restoring the outside of the home to its original architectural design.

"Mobile has lost far too many of its architectural treasures, but the Vincent-Doan-Walsh House will stand for generations as a monument to the commitment of the present community to preserve an important piece of Port City history," said Ann Bedsole with the Tricentennial.

Funding for the project is off to a good start thanks to the generosity of the Flora-Bama Ken Stabler Celebrity Golf Classic, which has pledged \$50,000. In addition, noted Mobile architect, Nick Holmes Jr., has drawn the renovation plans at no cost to the Tricentennial; and John Thomas and Jeff Johns with TCM Remodelers are donating their services as general contractors and local suppliers are donating materials. WPMI-TV and WALA-TV will both be involved in promoting the renovation project, and tracking its progress for the community.

Following the Tricentennial at the end of 2002, the University will allow the house to be used by a consortium of charities helping children with serious medical conditions and disabilities.

Starve a patient, feed an HMO.



Too many managed care companies put profit above the health of the patient.

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www.theoathofalabama.com

Chamber Foundation Has Several Responsibilities

In 1978, the Mobile Area Chamber was out of office space. Personnel and programs pushed it beyond the capacity of its long-time location in the Waterman Steamship Company building on St. Joseph Street (currently, SouthTrust Bank's downtown headquarters).

With the enthusiastic support of **Arthur Wood, M.D.**, the Chamber's Board of Directors and other volunteers, two major strategic initiatives were launched. First, more office space. Ideally the Chamber would

have its own signature location as a community landmark. Second, there was a clear need to establish a foundation to serve area civic needs — two important tasks, seemingly different, but possibly very compatible.

In August 1978, Chamber Board Chair **Ernest Todd**, along with **Dewitt Reams** and **Wood**, formed the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation Inc. Its first slate of board members consisted of **William Armbricht**, **Oliver Delchamps**, **William Hearin**, **Dewitt Reams**, **Roy Smith**, **Ernest Todd**, **Fred Widdon PhD**, **Arthur Wood** and **Albert Weiskopf**.

Todd and **Reams**, in their positions as chairmen of the Chamber Board, served as the first two Foundation chairs. In 1980, **William Hearin** became chairman and held this volunteer position until his death in February 2001. In March, **Robert Guthans**, was elected to succeed **Hearin** as chairman of the Foundation.

The U.S. Internal Revenue Service recognized this new foundation as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, greatly enhancing its ability to



The Chamber's building was the first major project the Chamber's Foundation in March 1981.

raise funds, said **Joe Mareno**, the Chamber's vice president of Finance.

"For example, many funding organizations and government agencies can only award funds to recognized nonprofit organizations — a 501(c)(3)," **Mareno** explained. The Foundation can often, therefore, serve both grantors and grantees by acting as a receiving and disbursing agent, or financial conduit, that is, by receiving and passing on grants to designated recipients.

The first major project of the Foundation was to raise funds, acquire land and construct a new headquarters for the Chamber. After the devastation of Hurricane Frederick delayed construction for almost a year. The Chamber building was completed in March 1981. Besides the Chamber staff, over the years the Foundation has been able to provide office space in the building to various civic organizations and agencies such as **Keep Mobile Beautiful**, **Mobile Convention and Visitors Corp.**, **Mobile Arts Council**, **SCORE**, **Military Affairs Committee** and others.

Through a strong and stable board, the Foundation is always searching for civic challenges in need of leadership and funding sources. One project that will have a lasting positive impact on Mobile is the **MLK redevelopment effort**. Begun in 1993, with the help of Foundation leadership and funding from the **Bedsole Foundation**, the **MLK Redevelopment Corp.** has built and sold 65 new, affordable homes in the **Martin Luther King Avenue** area. This community investment continues to leverage other neighborhood construction projects such as two new public schools valued at \$9.3 million and a \$1.3 million neighborhood shopping area — with the promise of more investments to follow.

Most recently, in 1997, the Foundation helped the Chamber raise funds to support the startup of the **Envision Mobile-Baldwin program**, the area's long-range strategic plan. This continuing community-driven effort has made progress in bringing a variety of groups to the table to affect constitutional reform, transportation, housing, and a plethora of partnerships.

In fulfilling its original charter, the Foundation continues to assist the Chamber and other organizations, such as the **Mobile County School Board**, by serving as a conduit for federal, state and local funds designated for programs supporting economic development, civic improvement and special purpose education programs such as **work force development**.

The Foundation's next project is to renovate the Chamber's first floor to create an additional meeting room and update the reception area and atrium. New Chair **Robert Guthans** and other volunteers will soon be requesting donations and memorials to fund this project.

For more information about the Foundation, call **Joe Mareno** at 431-8624.

Chamber Foundation Elects New Board Chair

Robert Guthans, R.G. Company LLC, is the new chairman of the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation, a 501(3)(c) organization that owns and operates the Chamber building. The Foundation also solicits, administers and disburses funds for community projects. A Mobile native, he was elected in March to the position left vacant when **William Hearin** passed away earlier this year.

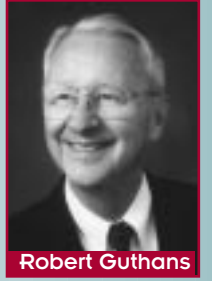
Guthans is the owner of **R. G. Company LLC**, and is a business consultant. He was president and CEO of **Midstream Fuel Service**, **Petroleum Energy Products** and **Tenn-Tom Towing** until their recent sale.

He has been a member of the Foundation board since 1999 and previously served as Chamber Board Chair in 1985.

Among his many professional and community affiliations, **Guthans** serves on the boards for **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama**, the **American Steamship Owners Mutual P & I Association**, **Spring Hill College**, the **Virginia Military Institute Foundation** and the **Alabama Child Caring Foundation**.

He is also a member of the board of the **Business Executive Council of the University of South Alabama**, the executive committee of the **Warrior-Tombigbee Development Association**, the **Mobile Economic Development Council** and the **Industrial Development Board of the City of Mobile**.

Foundation board leadership includes **Ernest Todd**, **Associated Land Development Corp.**, secretary; and **Win Hallett**, president of the Foundation as well as the Chamber. The current slate of board members are **Stephen Dill PhD**, **The Bedsole Foundation**; **Lowell Friedman**, **Creola Investment Corp.**; **Joe Little**, attorney; **Sydney Raine**, **Mobile Works**; **John Turner**, **Whitney National Bank**, **Luis Williams**, **Hearin-Chandler Foundation**; and **Robert Williams**, **Terminix Services**.



Robert Guthans

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The Great Quest to Be Organized



Could your disorganized work style lead to health problems. Yes, says Sandra Seick RN, the director of cardiovascular development with Providence Hospital. Chaos leads to stress, which takes itself out on the body. The primary organ affected by stress is the heart. Eat right, exercise and reduce your stress, advises Seick.

Not long ago, high tech gurus around the country were predicting that, by now, we would have become a paperless society. Though a heavenly vision, it simply hasn't happened.

In fact, with the onset of technology, people seem to be waging an internal battle, stuck somewhere between their old filing system and an increasing attraction to their computer and all of its paperless capabilities. The result is chaos, lost souls who, at one time relied on personal filing methods but who are now wandering aimlessly in a disorganized realm.

Today, it is estimated that 80 percent of all information is still paper based. U.S. and Canadian businesses alone generate over one trillion new pieces of paper each year.

In addition, the average time to retrieve and refile a paper document is 10 minutes, and about 30

percent of documents are lost or misfiled and have to be recovered at an alarming cost of \$120 per document. (Source: Gartner Group, Coopers & Lybrand, Ernst & Young).

"It's not only frustrating to be disorganized, it's just plain costly," says Lee Donald, president of Organizing Associates Inc. in Mobile. Donald likes to quote a study by Coopers and Lybrand which found that the average executive wastes 150 hours per year looking for lost, misplaced, misfiled or mislabeled documents.

"People think that being organized is being perfect, but it's not," Donald points out. "Being organized is having a system that works consistently for that person."

Though there are different software programs available to help people become more organized, Donald's favorite one for filing systems is called "Taming The Paper Tiger."

Describing it as a "search engine for your files," Donald says the system integrates paper filing sys-

tems into a computer program that can help people find information instantly, reminds them of any activity they need to maintain within a file, and can even keep track of archived information stored off-site.

"You're not getting rid of your files," said Donald. "You're simply logging them into a system where you can cross reference information and find things instantly without searching through a file drawer. It's so useful that you no longer need to keep a single piece of paper on your desk. Your active files and information are placed within arms reach, so even your things to do list can be dropped into a file."

Mark Glass, CEO of Southern Heritage Inc. is a believer in the Paper Tiger method. His three-year-old company was experiencing 10 percent compounded growth every month of last year and this year, the percentage has been even higher.

"My desk was a three-ring circus," said Glass. "We have 8,000 customers in our data base. I use my computer for everything, but when it came to paper, I didn't file anything for fear I'd lose it. I needed to put my hands on that paper instantly."

One day, Glass was watching television and saw Donald talking about the Paper Tiger system. He

called her the same day with one simple sentence, "You are going to organize me." Before long, Donald was in his office helping him put his papers into the system.

"With Paper Tiger, everything's in the computer and files are numbered. It's so simple, but it's ingenious," said Glass. "If paperwork bogs you down, you can't grow. This enables you to get control so you can step up to the next level."

For more information about Paper Tiger or organizing your business, log on to Donald's web site at www.organizingassociates.com.

Five Tips for Organizing Your Workload

1. Eliminate the non-essentials.
2. Prioritize your task or "to do" list using a 1, 2, or 3 to indicate order of importance. Do one of each every day, so that the lesser important things do not turn into urgent matters.
3. Schedule appointments with yourself to get work done. Keep the appointment!
4. Define and delegate when possible.
5. Break projects into manageable steps and schedule the due dates for each step on a calendar for all involved.

Business Spotlight of the Month Bay Paper Company



Bay Paper Company, this month's Spotlight Business of the Month, will be celebrating its 50th anniversary next year. This family business promotes itself as being the "Internet's Lowest Price Source for Paper and Janitorial Supplies."

Alan Hirsch, owner of Bay Paper Company, believes that being available to his customers locally or through the Web is a great way to do business. "We are the oldest paper wholesale distributors in Mobile," boasts Hirsch.

Started in 1952 by Raymond Hirsch, the company began as a wholesale grocer and over the years as their customer based changed, so did their product line. "We are a family business. We even consider our staff as family," explains Hirsch. "My father started this company and I have cousins who have their own similar businesses across the Gulf Coast."

Items available from Bay Paper Company are separated into 151 categories and include everything from paper, bags and boxes to table covers to cleaning supplies. The reason for such a large product list is simple. "The customer base for the paper business has changed tremendously over the past 30 and 40 years. We are constantly adding new products and discontinuing others on a regular

Standing in front a billboard-size delivery truck, Alan Hirsch and Floyd Terrell are proud of being the oldest paper wholesale distributors in Mobile.

basis as the demands change," says Hirsch. "We try to anticipate all of our customers needs."

One successful and interesting aspect of Bay Paper Company's business is on-line. They not only offer paper and janitorial supplies, but also a question and answer section that addresses landfill concerns, lists recyclable items, outlines styrofoam concerns and what life would be like without food service disposables. Another section offers useful cleaning tips, the proper way to clean a restroom, treatments of floors and the entertaining History of Toilet Paper.

With a staff of 25 employees, Hirsch likes to run a clean and efficient business. "We have a field rate of 97 percent, which means that as soon as orders are placed, they are sent out within hours. The industry average is 93 percent. We offer same day service."

A complete listing of the categories and products offered on-line can be found at www.baypaper.com or call them at 800-476-9791.

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Encouraging an Ethical Workforce

What can businesses do to encourage ethical behavior in a society where fewer decisions are based on "what's right" and more are based on "what can I get away with?" One way the business community can combat this trend is to begin with a specific focus on character in the overall operation and culture of each organization.

Recently, the Chamber joined the Drug Education Council, and several other local groups, to launch a community-wide initiative called CHARACTER COUNTS! Based on six "Pillars of Character:" trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship, this initiative is working to bring value-based behavior and decision-making to the forefront.

In a company, promoting good character traits as a basis for employee conduct creates the expectation that business will be conducted fairly, with consideration and in a trustworthy manner. The following are specific ways to incorporate the Six Pillars of Character into a company's routine procedures:

Recruiting and Hiring

Prominently and explicitly include character considerations in recruiting materials, during interviews and in the hiring decision.

Employee Orientation and Training

Emphasize the importance of character and adherence to the ethical principles embodied in

The Six Pillars of Character in orientation, initial job training and in-service education.

Performance Reviews

Include evaluation of fundamental character values, such as accountability and fairness, into performance reviews.

Internal Communications

Use internal communications channels, such as newsletters, internal e-mails, bulletin boards, etc. to create a family-friendly environment that overtly prizes positive role-modeling at work, home and in the community. Encourage employees to recognize one another for exhibiting trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship in daily work activities.

External Communications

In communicating with customers, vendors and others, consciously discuss and model encouraging and affirming messages about character and ethics. Advertise and market only in a manner that honors the values embodied in the Six Pillars.

Encourage Employee Volunteerism

Promote community volunteer activities as an important aspect of employment at the company. Encourage teams of volunteers, sponsor events and report volunteer activities through in-house communications vehicles.



Diplomat of the Month

Michele Knowles



Honored for the second time in less than 10 months, Michele Knowles is the featured Chamber Diplomat of the Month. She is a permanent placement recruiter for Long's Human Resource Services and has more than 13 years experience in the business recruiting industry.

Knowles has been a Diplomat for five years and views it as an opportunity to promote her company and herself while helping develop the business community.

"Serving as a Chamber Diplomat is an invaluable networking opportunity," Knowles said. "People know who you are by what you do."

Knowles takes advantage of her participation in the program and works to build relationships with potential clients as well as obtaining feedback from current customers in a more casual environment.

When she is not attending ribbon cuttings, First Fridays or Business After Hours, her favorite event, she finds other ways to stay involved in the community. She is an active volunteer in "Le Krewe de Bienville," an organization that works with various tourist venues. Members of "Le Krewe" perform in costume, throughout the city, promoting Mobile's rich history and the importance of tourism to the community.

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

Showcase Your Business

It's a tradition. The August Business After Hours is hosted by the Mobile Convention Center where there is room for businesses to showcase their products and services.

"This year's event is going to be even better," said Reeda Taylor, the Chamber's director of customer service. That's because the event is moving into the Exhibit Hall. A larger space means more businesses will have the opportunity to sponsor a tabletop display or exhibit booth. There are 100 booths available, twice the amount of previous years.

"Our August Business After Hours is always a popular event. It draws an unusually large crowd, close to 500, and booth space goes quickly," said Taylor. Instead of the typical two hour format, the Chamber has expanded the event an extra hour, from 4 - 7 p.m.

Mark your calendars for Thursday, August 23 from 4 - 7 p.m. at the Arthur Outlaw Mobile Convention Center. Remember, even with the expanded location, space is limited, so call today. For reservations, call Taylor at 431-8649.



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Run the Olympic Torch Relay in Mobile

For the first time ever, the Olympic Flame will travel through the streets of Mobile, offering citizens a once in a lifetime chance to participate. This historic event will take place on Dec. 9.

The Salt Lake 2002 Olympic Torch Relay will travel more than 13,500 miles. The men, women and children chosen as torchbearers will showcase the passion and diversity of American communities.

Be a Torchbearer

The Committee is looking for individuals who:

- Inspire others to greater achievement
- Have been a source of inspiration for his/her community
- Embody the inspirational spirit of the Olympic Movement
- Motivate others by encountering and overcoming adversity

Applicants, must be 12 years or older as of Dec. 4, 2001, and can apply on-line through the Salt Lake City games at www.saltlake2002.com; www.chervrolet.com or www.coke.com. Nomination forms are available through the Mobile United Office, 432-1638.

Sandi Forbus with Mobile United, the organization sponsoring the local leg of the relay, recommends applying on all three sites for the best chance of being chosen.

Be a Support Runner

Coca Cola will select support runners, who run along side the torchbearer and hold the torch if necessary. These runners run approximately three times as far as torchbearers. Nominations available through Coke, are school counseling offices and Mobile United. Local youth over the age of 12 are being targeted for support runners.

Mobile United will organize a judging panel that will judge torchbearer nominees submitted through the Salt Lake City games, only. "When you think about people who contribute something extraordinary to the community and individuals of great community pride and respect," requests Forbus.

Since torchbearers travel two-tenths of a mile, the event is not limited to athletes.

Deadline for Nominations is May 15. If submitted by mail, applications must be postmarked no later than this date.

For an application or additional information, please call Mobile United at 432-1638 or e-mail leadershipmobileunited@hotmail.com.

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NETIQUETTE Electronic Manners

by Sissy Louise Moore

Before punching those keys and composing electronic messages we should stop and think about the repercussions of what we're doing. E-mail, for example is open to anyone's perusal, even if the communication is addressed to one person only. Since privacy is doubtful, we should ask ourselves:

- Have I said what I meant to say? No doubt as to the meaning?
- Have I used language, either incorrect grammar or misspelled words, which will make anyone on the receiving and perceive me in a negative way?
- Have I harmed someone in my message, either by joking about an accusation or insinuating something that isn't true?



Other Tips for Managing Your E-Mail

- Respect other people's time: BE BRIEF.
- If you sent an e-mail and didn't receive a reply, don't assume the worst, call to make sure he/she received it.
- Be sure that e-mails are case sensitive, use upper and lower case letters (Typing in all-caps is considered shouting).
- Remember that some correspondence (sympathy note, wedding invitations, personal thank-yous, and proposals) should be sent snail mail.
- Remember it is difficult to defer the meaning of an e-mail conversation when you can't see the sender's body language or hear the tone of their voice.
- Formality is important when communicating to clients in other countries. They will not understand jokes and hidden meanings.
- Electronic mail should be used for memos and communications, which require immediate answers or to respond to urgent requests. They should be written as professionally as a letter or memo.

The swift efficiency of the computer world in which we live does not grant us license to substitute rudeness for manners. Learning to manage your e-mail makes it the time saving device it was meant to be.

Sissy Louise Moore is trained and certified by The Protocol School of Washington and owner of Protocol First in Fairhope.

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Chamber's Web Site Wins Top Award

Whether you are curious about benefits of being a Chamber member, trade statistics, job hunting or searching for something fun to do this weekend, there is one site that will give you all this and more — the award winning www.mobilechamber.com.

The Public Relations Council of Alabama (PRCA) gave the Chamber its top statewide award, the Medallion, for best Web site. The site also won a PRCA Award of Excellence in 1998 for design, content and ease of use.

"We are very proud. This was not just a competition among Chambers of Commerce but a statewide competition that included all types of companies," said Judy Winfield, the Chambers' Web master.

As the Chamber strives to meet the changing needs of the business community, the Web site has expanded to include even more information such as member news, relocation information and job postings. Through the site, browsers can even search for a new home using Relocation Services of Mobile, LLC or directly link to more than 1,000 Web sites of Chamber members and other business resources.

"Don't forget about the things that haven't changed," reminded Winfield, "like information about Chamber activities and initiatives. We continually update everything, including the Business Directory, the Calendar of Events and trade statistics."

Recently, the Chamber has added a do-it-yourself job opportunities post in the Workforce Development section and soon members will be able to find individuals looking for jobs.

The International Trade Division offers Alabama trade statistics, the top

countries for trade and expansion, trade leads and information, Alabama database of exporters and numerous other links.

A click on the Economic Development icon will lead you to the Chamber's Buildings and Sites database and information and contacts on new projects coming to Mobile. This section also contains information for businesses looking to locate in the area, such as: permit, transportation, utilities and even tax incentive information.

A national small business Web site, Onvia, is also available through the Chamber's site. Here businesses can buy and sell products and access valuable small business information. For more information on the Chamber's Web site log on to www.mobilechamber.com or call Winfield at 431-8626 or e-mail her at judy@mobilechamber.com.

Source: Onvia, which can be reached through the Chamber's Web site, www.mobilechamber.com, is a resource for small business tips.

Put Your Web Site to the Test Make sure your site clicks with customers

The best e-commerce sites make user navigation intuitive. Customers move effortlessly from page to page, without ever having to think about where to go next. They find their product, make their purchase — and come back for more. Here's a five-question checklist to optimize your site's navigation and appeal.

1. Is your text easy to read and professional?
2. Do your buttons do their job?
3. Do your graphics take up too much space?
4. What screen resolution are you catering to?
5. Do you have a shopping tool and is easy to use?

To read more on this article and find similar guides go to www.mobilechamber.newsonvia.com/x15272.xml.

Source: Onvia

SCORE

Surf the Net for Small Business Info

Whether planning to open a business or managing day-to-day operations, time is limited for an entrepreneur. Technology provides easy access to a wealth of information via the Internet and can help save time.

Entrepreneurs "need to know that new regulations, business practices, trade association information and guaranteed loan information are all available with the click of a button," said Bob Kirby with the Mobile Chapter of the Senior Corps of Retired Executives.

Common small business questions often arise about how to protect products, declare employee wages, file tax returns or where to find general small business information. Look no further. Before spending countless hours surfing for that useful piece of information, here's a list of small business resources, all reachable 24 hours a day via the Internet.

Patents & Trademarks, hosted by the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office at www.uspto.gov. Patents for inventions are vital to a successful business, such as registering a company trademark to protect it. Easy to access information is available on a topic-by-topic basis and forms can be downloaded directly from the site. There's also a link to the U.S. Copyright office.

Wage Reporting, hosted by the Social Security Administration at www.ssa.gov. As an employer, businesses are required to report employee wages and taxes to the Social Security Administration. This Web site has information on accurate filing and year-end reporting.

Tax Filing, hosted by the Internal Revenue Service at www.irs.ustreas.gov. The federal government collects both personal and corpo-

rate taxes. Be sure to stay in compliance with tax laws and consult with your accountant. Extensive information and downloadable publications, tax forms and regulations are available on this site.

Small Business Information hosted by the U.S. Small Business Administration at www.sba.gov. The SBA provides publications, business tips, SBA-guaranteed loan information and an abundance of small business links, as well as information about women's business ownership, minority business ownership and other resources. The site is divided into easy-to-use sections for starting, financing and expanding your business.

Small Business Counseling hosted by SCORE at www.apple.com/smallbusiness/. SCORE has a nationwide network of 12,400 volunteers in 389 chapters throughout the United States. These volunteers donate their time as business counselors providing assistance to small businesses. Sponsored by Apple Computer Inc., the Web site provides a wide variety of small business resources including access to counseling via e-mail and links to local chapters.

Kirby suggests on-line information is one critical tool in any successful plan. "This does not, however, replace contacting SCORE for a one-on-one, face-to-face counseling session to help you focus on key business issues."

Contact the local SCORE chapter, located on the Chamber's second floor at 451 Government St. The services are free and confidential. Appointments are available from 9 a.m. until Noon, by calling 431-8614.

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2001 Leadership Class Graduates



Mobile United's Leadership Class of 2001

Every year a group of local individuals are identified as community leaders. The group spends eight months together in a program called Leadership Mobile. From October through May, participants attend seminars focusing on issues such as cultural diversity, ethics, public safety, health and human services, education and leadership skills. They learn about themselves, each other and the community.

Towards the end of the session, the group breaks into six teams and each adopts a project that addresses an issue of Envision Mobile-Baldwin, a long-range, citizen-driven strategic plan for the community. The projects have a two-

fold purpose, a fresh group of minds address a community challenge, and the group practices what they have learned in various seminars and classes.

Two of the groups from this year's class worked on developing quality-of-life projects. Group 1 chose the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) project. They also assisted other area agencies in funding and implementing SANE.

Group 2 focused on recycling and produced a "good neighbor" handbook. Group 3 was interested in economic development, and concentrated on ways to support Mobile's downtown residential development. Group 4 took interest in a government goal, and produced a video that will help educate the public on how the antiquated state Constitution impacts our daily lives. Group 5 spent

their project time addressing education. A most important issue now and for the future, the group developed and began implementing a marketing plan that will keep the issue of education in the forefront of the community. Group 6 chose to focus its efforts on building community leadership, and created an area billboard campaign to encourage leadership and involvement.

Pictured above are members of the Leadership class of 2001: Michael D. Anderson, Daryl A. Atchinson, Angela N. Barnes, Benita Peyregne Battiste, Devereaux Bemis, Chandra Brown, Rebecca Byrne, Gia Coleman, Megan Conwell, J. Reid Cummings, Lephate Cunningham Jr., S. Jan Daly, Buffy Donlon, Marian R. Faulk, Maj. Glenn D. Fite, John P. Fitzgerald, Daniel T. Ford, Lester Hargrove, Percy Harris Jr., Janet R. Hayes, Gary Len

Jackson, Vanessa Easter Jackson, Edward Johnson, Brigitte E. Kemnade, Bebe G. Lindsey, Christina Littlejohn, Julie Litzinger, Debbie Lord, Sherwood C. Lynn Jr., Raphael A. Maharaj, Ramona Marsalis-Hill, Earline Martin-Harris, Kathy McMaken, Robert Mueller, Austin L. Rainwaters, Mark Randelson, Steven Savage, Rene Garris Shaver, Charles M. Shirk, Charles Smoke, Heather A. Solomon, Thomas K. Steiner, Sarah Hicks Stewart, Jason Thrower, Samuel "Duke" Walker, Hugh L. White and David A. Wilhem.

Leadership Mobile is a venture of Mobile United and is sponsored by the Junior League of Mobile, United Way of Southwest Alabama, the Community Foundation and the Chamber.

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Featured Profiles Advisors

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

James M. Lyons is vice president and chief financial officer of The SSI Group Inc., a diversified healthcare information technology company headquartered in Mobile. The company has more than 300 employees in offices in Florida, Virginia, Colorado and California, and serves over 1,200 clients in 47 states. Prior to joining the company, Lyons was the CFO of Riverside Manufacturing in Moultrie, Ga. Prior to that, he was CFO at Ryan Walsh Inc. in Mobile. He is a 1967 graduate of the University of South Alabama, a certified public accountant and a member of the American Institute of CPAs and the Healthcare Financial Management Association. Lyons is married to Andrea Redmond Lyons and enjoys grandchildren, golf, hunting and fishing.



James M. Lyons

Alan L. Heffernan is plant manager and executive director of Ciba Specialty Chemicals. He joined Ciba in 1986 and has held various roles in engineering and safety, including a three-year assignment in Switzerland. Before becoming plant manager and executive director of the McIntosh site, Heffernan served as director of Engineering, and director of Environment, Health and Safety. Heffernan has a mechanical engineering degree from the University of Arkansas.



Alan L. Heffernan

CHAMBER ANNIVERSARIES

25 YEARS

General Machinery Co. Inc.
Melvin Pierce Painting

20 YEARS

ERA Marie McConnell Realty Inc.

15 YEARS

Mobile Arts and Sports Association
The Prime Health Companies
Southeastern Natural Resources Inc.
The Eichold Company

5 YEARS

Debt Counseling Services
Golden Stevedoring Company Inc.
Mac Tools
Mobile Museum of Art



A Round of Thanks

The Chamber's Membership Department extends a sincere thank you to the sponsors and golfers who made the Spring 2001 Golf Tournament a success. More than 150 golfers participated in the event Friday, March 23 on the course at TimberCreek.

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Mobile Beer & Wine Co.
Palmer's Airport Toyota
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Roto Rooter Plumbing Service
Whitney National Bank
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Reception:

Cock of the Walk, C.O.W. Inc.

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New Library Breaks Ground in West Mobile



Mobile Mayor Mike Dow and some of the children, who are eagerly anticipating the opening of the West Regional Library at 5555 Grelot Road, help break ground for the new library on March 27. The 59,000 sq. ft. library will feature 5,000 sq. ft. for children's services including an outdoor story time area, a coffee shop and library store, quiet study area and a multipurpose meeting room with outdoor patio. The focal point at the entrance will be a Literary Column, which will be surrounded by engraved pavers featuring the names of authors throughout literary history with a heavy Southern emphasis. The grounds of the 6-acre site will be heavily landscaped with native plant material and "Re-Bloom Mobile" selections.

The Worst of Times, the Best of Times

by Bailey Thomson

These are the best of times and the worst of times. The novelist Charles Dickens might call it a tale of two Alabamas — one hopelessly adrift, the other yearning to begin.

Our school funding crisis illustrates the contrast.

For decades, the Legislature has refused to create a fair and effective method to pay for good schools. Instead, the state relies too much on sales and income taxes. Sales taxes are notoriously fickle and their burden falls heaviest on the poor. Meanwhile, the 1901 state constitution caps the income tax at a low 5 percent, all but removing its progressive potential.

A good economy can disguise this policy flaw by simply making the revenue pie bigger. Until recently, growth was sufficient to have teachers dreaming of being paid at the national average.

But now fortune has betrayed us. The once robust economy has developed a cold, which means Alabama faces financial pneumonia. Sales tax collections are plummeting, as consumers buy fewer goods.

With red ink in the budget, the state constitution requires the governor to bleed the victim — that is, public education — until spending matches available dollars. We have a name for such legislative triage. It's called "proration."

Schools are being asked to slash more than 6 percent from budgets that, in many cases, are at the bone already. Tuscaloosa County's schools will have to borrow millions just to survive this fiscal year. It's even worse in Mobile County, where the superintendent has put football on hold.

Indeed, these are the worst of times for the old Alabama.

But they may be the times for finally birthing the new Alabama. The reason is that a significant number of citizens grasp the high cost of merely reacting to crisis. They see their state investing too little in its human capital and, as a consequence, forfeiting its future.

Say what you will, but one thing good about a crisis is that it can bring out the truth.

The old Bourbons of royal France, for example, learned nothing and forgot nothing. Truth came when their world crumbled around them, as people

rose in revolution.

We in Alabama have had our own ruling Bourbons. Generation after generation, these special interests have told our school children to eat cake, knowing that many of the youngsters had not even a good roof over their heads. But the curtain has been pulled back now to expose this sham.

Citizens demanding change are not mere rabble at the barricades. Instead, they are our best hope that common sense and fortitude can guide us to a better constitution for governing our state. And as part of that broad reform, we need a tax system that is fair and that supports essential services, such as schools, law enforcement and public health. Such are the qualities that any good company looks for in a state when considering expansion.

There are still many people, including some legislators, whose vision does rise above and beyond the present condition. They see things as they are — the old Alabama way — and cannot imagine an alternative.

But recent polls suggest a growing number of citizens dare to see things not as they are but as they must be if Alabama is to achieve its potential.

You can hardly pick up a newspaper these days that does not editorially embrace such a vision. And more and more their readers get the message.

Witness how in these last few months we have seen three major religious denominations demand reform. And behind them are lining up professional groups, civic clubs and yes, students who want good education.

So it's a wondrous time to be in Alabama if you believe in citizens' capacity to rejuvenate their democracy to shape their future. Such optimism, however, does not mean change will happen immediately. Even a train must first build momentum. But reform may occur much sooner than its opponents imagine.

For as another great novelist of the 19th century, Victor Hugo, observed: Armies may be resisted — but not an idea whose time has come.

Bailey Thomson teaches journalism at the University of Alabama and volunteers with the Alabama Citizens for Constitution Reform.

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CALENDAR VIEW



Armed Forces Day

Time: Noon- 2 p.m.
Place: Brookley Field Officers' Club
Cost: \$15 per person or table of 8 for \$120.00
Call: Shelly Mattingly at 431-8612



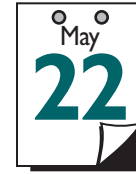
Noon Marketing Meeting

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



Net Gain: Succession Planning

Time: 11 a.m. -1 p.m.
Place: Chamber McGowin Room
Cost: \$20 and includes lunch
Call: Brenda Rembert at 431-8607



Future 30 Awards & Banquet

Time: 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Place: Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center
Cost: \$35 per person or \$300 for a table of 10
Call: Brenda Rembert at 431-8607



Business After Hours

Time: 5:30 - 7 p.m.
Place: Wintzell's, 605 Dauphin St.
Cost: \$2 for members/\$5 for potential members
Call: Maria Bladorn at 431-8638

COMING IN JUNE



First Friday

Time: 7:45 - 8:45 a.m.
Place: Adelpia Business Solutions
 1110 Montlimar #301
Cost: \$2 for members/ \$5 for potential members
Call: Maria Bladorn at 431-8638



Media Appreciation Party

Time: 5:30 - 8 p.m.
Place: Ramada Inn Atrium
 600 Beltline Hwy.
Cost: \$15 (Free admission to working news media)
Call: Ashley Collins at 431-8606



Afternoon Marketing Meeting

Time: 4 - 5 p.m.
Place: Chamber McGowin Room
Cost: \$6 and includes lunch
Call: Maria Bladorn at 431-8638

Afternoon Marketing Meeting

The Afternoon Marketing Meeting, sponsored by The Holliman Group, is scheduled for Wednesday, June 13 in the Chamber McGowin room from 4 - 5 p.m. This meeting gives participants the opportunity to give a two-minute presentation about their company's products or services. Bring brochures and flyers to hand out to participants.
 For reservations, call Maria Bladorn at 431-8638. The cost to attend is \$6 and includes lunch.

Armed Forces Day

The Armed Forces Day Celebration is May 15 at Brookely Field's Officer's Club starting at Noon. This event of Mobile's celebration of Armed Forces Week, includes Outstanding ROTC, JROTC and NJROTC students, plus, Guard, Reserve and Active Duty personnel, all of whom are honored guests, will be presented well-deserved awards.

Tickets are \$15.00 per person or table of 8 for \$120.00 and are available by calling Shelly Mattingly at 431-8612.

First Friday

On Friday, June 1, join the Chamber for First Friday at Adelpia Business Solutions located at 1110 Montlimar, Suite 301. Stop by between 7:45 and 8:45 a.m. and enjoy a continental breakfast while networking with fellow professionals.

The cost to attend is \$2 for members and \$5 for potential members.



Business After Hours

Enjoy Business After Hours at Wintzell's restaurant at 605 Dauphin Street. Held on Thursday, May 24 from 5:30 until 7 p.m., enjoy items from Wintzell's menu and their famous atmosphere while networking with area professionals.
 No reservation is needed. The cost to \$2 for members and \$5 for potential members.



Noon Marketing Meeting

The Noon Marketing Meeting, sponsored by Signs Now, is scheduled for Tuesday, May 15 at the Chamber McGowin room from Noon until 1 p.m. This meeting gives participants the opportunity to give a two-minute presentation on their company's products or services. Brochures and flyers are welcome.
 For reservations, call Maria Bladorn at 431-8638. The cost to attend is \$6 and includes lunch.



Future 30 Awards Banquet

On Tuesday, May 22 the Mobile Area Chamber will Recognize the Area's 30 Fastest Growing Companies

Join us at 5:30 for a Reception with the 2001 Future 30 Winners and from 6:30 - 8 p.m.

for the Dinner and Award Ceremony at the Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center

Tickets:

\$35 each or \$300 for a table of 10

For reservations or information call: 431-8607

Sponsored By:



Media Appreciation Reception

On Tuesday, June 5, spend an informal evening with reporters, assignment editors, news anchors, producers, camera operators and radio personalities from Mobile and Baldwin counties. Make new media contacts and network with area businesses in a tropical surrounding of fun at the Ramada Inn Atrium from 5:30 until 8 p.m.

Admission is free to all working media. For reservations, call Ashley Collins at 431-8606.



Net Gain: Succession Planning

On Wednesday, May 16, NetGain will present "Succession Planning for Family and Independently Owned Business" from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. in the Chamber McGowin Room. The workshop is open to any business owner interested in the continuation of their business after retirement, death, or disability. Presented by John Shields CPA, CFP and Trey Mayhall CPA, CFP, partners in the accounting and consulting firm of Crow, Shields & Bailey PC, will discuss planning points such as providing for the owners financial security, transferring the business (to whom and how) and minimizing the impact of taxes.

For reservations, call Brenda Rembert at 431-8607. The cost to attend is \$20 and includes lunch.



ATTENTION MEMBERS!

If you know of a company interested in benefiting from Chamber membership, please contact our account executives:
 • Nancy Hughes at 431-8647/pgr: 582-1999
 • Tom Lewis at 431-8629/pgr: 582-2076
 • Melody Lipscomb at 431-8627/pgr: 371-9634

WHO'S NEW?

AmSouth Bank announced the following promotions: **Rick C. Burroughs** who was trust administrator is now vice president; **Jenny Hunt**, formerly assistant vice president and relationship manager in Commercial Banking was promoted to vice president; **Lawana R. Stroble**, branch manager at the



Burroughs



Hunt



Stroble



Tatum



Robertson



Hand



Taylor



Carpenter



McElhaney

Toulminville office; **Erin Tatum**, management associate was promoted to assistant branch manager at St. Joseph Street; **Susan Robertson**, formerly area branch operations manager is now vice president; **Michelle Hand**, previously branch manager of the McGregor Square office is assistant vice president; **Lee Ann Taylor**, paralegal for Commercial Banking group is now officer; **Elizabeth B. Carpenter** was promoted from branch assistant to assistant branch manager at Ambassador Plaza office; and **Michael McElhaney**, assistant branch manager at the Springdale Plaza office, is the new branch manager at the Skyline office.



Ott



Patrick

In other news, **McCrary Ott IV** joined the South area as private banker and **Brenda Patrick** joined as assistant branch manager at the Skyline office.

Providence Hospital announced **Michael Bolt RN** received the 2000 Vincentian Award. The annual award is presented to the employee who has demonstrated the core values of service, reverence, integrity, wisdom, creativity and dedication. Bolt has been with the hospital since 1986 and volunteers with its outreach programs including the food drive, United Way, mobile van and health fairs.

Prudential Real Estate awarded **Prudential Cooper & Co. Inc. Realtors** with the second place Round Table Award for Top Residential Gross Commission Income in 2000 for the Southeastern region. The company also earned fourth place in the Sunshine Kids Foundation National Awards for raising funds for the nonprofit organization providing group activities for children with cancer.

In other news, **Tony Cooper**, **Sheree Dees**, **Angela McArthur** and **Sandra Walley** were named to Prudential's real estate affiliates Chairman's Circle. **Don Foster**, **Sam Page**, **Frank & Carolyn Peoples** and **Elaine Sessions** were named to the President's Circle. **Jordan Cooper**, **Joe Rogers**, **Vince & Ellen Emmons**, **Tom & Debi House**, **Janie Lanier**, **Steve & Cindy Schuhmann**, **Bobbie Dewrell**, **Barbara Higgins** and **Forest Floyd** were named to the Leading Edge Society. All those awarded placed in the Top 4 percent of the real estate network for 2000.

MEMBER NEWS

Andy Younce was promoted to Senior in accounting services department at **SC&G**. **Teresa Jones** was also promoted to manager in the accounting services department.

John D. Rhodes was named director of Development and Communications for **Volunteers of America Southeast** which oversees Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi regions. He joins the agency with 30 years of experience in development and public relations, having served as a consultant for organizations ranging from Goodwill Industries and the Salvation Army to museums and public television.



Rhodes

Paul Allen Fox was named vice president and senior business development officer of a new business development division of **Bay Bank**. The new division will concentrate on building and maintaining relationships with customers to serve business and individual banking needs.



Fox

Fox has more than 20 years experience with financial institutions in public relations, marketing and customer service.

Allen Middleton, **Karen** and **Rob Singleton**, **Leanne Carpenter**, **Russell Heidelberg** and **Marcia Gilmore** joined **ERA Marie McConnell Realty** as senior sales executives.

Habitat for Humanity announced its officers for the 2001-02 board of directors: **Charles Shirk**, president; **Andree Williams**, vice president; **Penelope Cook**, secretary; **Ray Lapierre**, treasurer; **James Apple III**, past president; and **Nida Threet**, executive director.

Lynne Carey & Co. announced its new licensed therapeutic massage therapist, **Rebecca Havard**. A graduate of the Mobile School of Massage, she is certified in reflexology, a technique that relieves tension, improves circulation and aids balance; and reiki, a natural healing technique from the East, and aromatherapy.

Daniel Taylor, Gulf Coast territory manager of **Expanets**, formerly the GEM division of **Lucent Technologies**, was recognized for outstanding sales achievement. This is the fourth time he earned this distinction.

Ward International Trucks Inc. was awarded the Circle of Excellence award for 2000 by International Truck and Engine. The award is presented to the top performing dealers in the areas of truck and bus sales, parts sales, service sales, fiscal management and customer satisfaction rating.

WELL DONE!

The Alabama Housing Finance Authority (AFHA) awarded **SouthTrust Mortgage** as Servicer of the Year, recognizing the firm as the top performer among four Alabama mortgage companies used by AFHA to service loans.

The firm operates 46 retail branch offices in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas. Its production is ranked in the Top 30 by *National Mortgage News*.

Venture Development Corporation, a management consulting firm serving the worldwide electronics industry, released a study that ranked **Accelerated Technology Inc.**'s Nucleus software as the highest in single most utilized source code, royalty-free RTOS (real time operating system).

Mobile United's Natural Resources Committee presented the Green Awards, recognizing leading and deserving efforts by businesses, organizations or individuals in regard to environmental protection in the Mobile area. The group awarded the **Alabama School of Math and Science**, the **Alabama Power Company** and the **Mobile Area Water and Sewer Service** for exemplifying sustainable development practices, making aesthetic improvements, reducing urban sprawl and preserving green space.

The MRI practice at **Mobile Infirmary Medical Center** was awarded a three-year term of accreditation by the American College of Radiology. The award is evaluated by radiologists and physicians who are members of the American College of Radiologists with special expertise in MRI and is based on achievement of high practice standards, quality of work as well as personnel qualifications.

The **Alabama Gulf Coast Chapter of the American Red Cross** earned the American Red Cross Vice Presidential Award for demonstrating the highest reach and serving more than 5 percent of the community with HIV/AIDS prevention education.

The unit works to keep people and communities safe by helping them learn how to prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies through locally relevant programs and bestows the award on the Red Cross chapter exemplifying superior commitment to its goals and mission.

Ernest G. DeBakey MD was inducted into the Alabama Healthcare Hall of Fame, Class 2001, an honor given to individuals with outstanding contributions and exemplary service to healthcare throughout Alabama. Selected by a distinguished panel of health care professionals representing all areas of the medical field, he was instrumental in developing the Drug Education Vehicle program for **Mobile Infirmary Medical Center**.

DeBakey was in private practice from 1948 to 1993. His contributions to the community include being one of the first surgeons in the region to travel to surrounding towns providing surgical services in small rural hospitals. He established the Peri-operative nursing education fund allowing surgical services nurses and support staff to pursue continuing education opportunities and a number of programs funded through the Ernest G. DeBakey Charitable Foundation benefitting research, education and programs related to public health in the community.

The Alabama Environmental Council honored **Lloyd Scott**, director of the **Mobile County Public School System's** Environmental Studies Center, as Alabama's Outstanding Nature Educator of the Year. Serving as director since the Center opened in 1976, the program has been recognized nationally for its commitment to educating the area's youth as well as adults about indigenous wildlife, environmental conservation, astronomy and other scientific fields.

COMMUNITY NEWS

The **Mobile Museum of Art** announced an effort to benefit its \$15 million capital campaign. Internet shopping from **shopformuseums.com** will donate a percentage of sales made by participating merchants on the site.

There are more than 125 participating merchants offering a variety of brand-name products including Lands End, Martha Stewart, Hallmark, Office Max, Sharper Image, National Geographic, Border's and Warner Bros.

BUSINESS ENDEAVORS

Accelerated Technology Inc. (ATI) a leader in source code and non-royalty based real-time operating systems (RTOS) software announced the establishment of its newest office, Accelerated Technology Japan. ATI Japan will direct its efforts towards expanding awareness of the company and its products in the Japanese market and to establish relationships with companies that own technologies that they wish to import into the United States.

CentralLite Systems Inc., a designer, manufacturer and supplier of home control systems, announced the introduction of a hand held home controller, **GenDI (CentralLite Device Integrator)**. The new product allows customers to control lighting and security systems, thermostats and audio media, monitors security cameras and surf the Web. For more information visit www.centralite.com or call 1-877-466-5483.

The corporate offices of **Winfield Resort Properties Inc.** have moved to 3839 Gulf Shores Pwy., Gulf Shores. The condominium rental, property management, accounting and maintenance divisions also relocated to the new location. The company also plans to add a branch of Winfield Realty as well as move its housekeeping division.

Winfield Realty, Winfield condominium rental and the front desk operation of Windemere Condominiums will continue to operate from 23008 Perdido Beach Blvd. In Orange Beach. For more information, call 888-974-1120.

Televox Software Inc. announced the release of HouseCalls for Windows 95/98/2000/NT. The message delivery system assists healthcare practices deliver appointment reminders or other informative messages accurately to their patients, and in the process, create more time for staff members to focus on patients in the office.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Get out your Gumbo pots and gear up for the 5th annual **Propeller Club's** Gumbo Cook off at Cooper Riverside Park on May 11. The cost is \$10 for all-you-can-eat gumbo and drinks and benefits the club's grant fund that raises money for area charities, schools, cultural groups and the maintenance of Middle Bay Light House.

For more information, contact **Mike Lee** or **Jean Satter** at Page and Jones, 432-1646.

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

Comparative Economic Indicators
February '01 vs February '00

