



THE VIEW

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The Impact of Technology

Technology companies throughout area are staying on top of the latest trends and innovations. (See story on page 3 for a more in-depth look.) To determine the state of technology and how its use has increased in the Mobile area, *The View* asked several local entrepreneurs:

What was the most significant technological advance your organization made in the last year?

"The move toward Web-based applications and enhancements" says Chris Lee with the City of Mobile. "This allows us to provide seamless transfers of data between the city, county and state." Examples include on-line permitting, an automated citizen complaint system and the Automated Vehicle Location system, which allows the police department to track patrol car locations and display real time information to 911 response units.



Chris Lee

Gulf Coast Computer Services (GCCS), manufacturer of custom computer systems and services, has "implemented a total wireless system for connectivity," explains Luis Nieves. Also, GCCS staff has total remote access to their systems worldwide with Citrix, software that enables secure, reliable access to applications and information over the Internet.



Luis Nieves

Dennis Lang with VESA Enterprises, a company offering networking services and support, increased its operations to offer Web design and hosting. He says, it "has allowed [VESA] to dramatically expand its market share."



Dennis Lang

"Control(ing) home electronic systems from the palm of your hand" has changed the way Jim Busby with Centralite designs new in-home lighting systems. This technology helped them develop a new product line called, the CenDI (Centralite Device Integrator) that uses an iPAQ Pocket PC, a handheld computer.



Jim Busby

For Sam St. John with The Computer Broker, a maker of computer systems, Windows 2000 has changed the way he does business. He says, "The advanced features of this operating system have made a lot of things such as security, networking and connectivity much easier."



Sam St. John

John Strope with Dogwood Productions, a Web design company, has found creating his own proprietary software for building Web sites has been the greatest technological advance. He says, "Moving to open source code, rather than relying on Windows-based development tools gives us remarkable flexibility."



John Strope

Two Local Companies Sign Shipbuilding Contracts

Within one week of another, two local shipbuilders announced approximately 300 new jobs for Mobile over the next several months.

Bender Shipbuilding and Repair announced it has been hired to build two container ships for Santa Maria Shipping LLC, based in Santa Rosa, Calif. Also, C&G Boat Works signed a four-vessel contract with New Orleans-based Tidewater Inc.

Bender is the first U.S. shipyard to win a container ship building contract in 10 years. The company will build two 450-ft. long container ships capable of hauling 355 45-ft. cargo containers between Hawaii and California on a weekly basis.

Under the Jones Act, federal law requires that commercial vessels shipping products between United States ports be built and owned by U.S. companies.

During a media conference held at the Chamber last month, Bender President Tom Bender and Santa Maria Shipping President and Founder Stas Margaronis signed the contract and announced the deal.

Bender announced that ships of this magnitude are a first in the long history of the company, but one it is capable of handling. "There's nothing built like these vessels," Bender said referring to the deal with Santa Maria. "It's been a five year process to get to this point, and our facility is ready to begin."

The process according to Margaronis started out as a feasibility study to determine if it was possible to build ships capable of carrying such large cargo containers as well as cranes. "Shipbuilding has been the backbone of the American economy, and we knew it could be done."

"We've found the right company to do it as well," Margaronis said referring to Bender Shipbuilding.

Bender has built ships since 1919 at its Water Street facility. Currently the company employs 650



Pictured above is an artist's rendering of the 450-foot container ships Bender Shipbuilding and Repair will build for Santa Maria.

full-time workers and expects to add 150 jobs during the peak of vessel construction to fulfill its contract with Santa Maria.

Also ready to begin work on its new contract, is C&G Owner Janson Graham. His company inked a \$24 million deal to build high-speed supply boats for Tidewater to service deepwater drilling operations in the Gulf of Mexico. Included in the deal is an option for Tidewater to purchase four additional vessels.

A relative newcomer to the shipbuilding industry, Graham and his sister, Gayla Graham started C&G in 1996. Their company has two locations — Bayou La Batre and a new facility on the Mobile River. Per the contract, C&G will build 175-ft. aluminum vessels designed to carry passengers and cargo to the oil rigs, located in the Gulf of Mexico.

In addition, Tidewater has agreed to purchase a

\$4.1 million 155-foot vessel already under construction at C&G.

"The water has been the core of (Mobile's) existence since our founding," said Mobile Mayor Mike Dow. "We got away from it for awhile, but we're back."

Over the past year, city, county and state leaders as well as private sector companies have placed renewed focus on increasing investments along Mobile's waterfront. New industries such as Austal USA, a partnership with Bender Shipbuilding, C&G Boat Works, as well as a \$350 million upgrade for the Port of Alabama, and the establishment of a Port Authority to oversee the Alabama State Docks are working to increase the public's focus on Mobile's viable waterfront.

(Another shipbuilding deal could lead to more jobs in Mobile. See Austal story on page 4.)

Pork and Politics

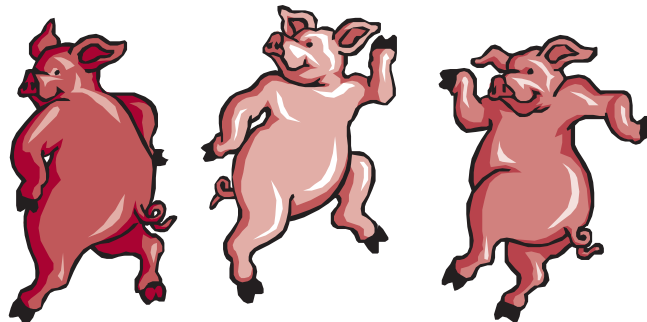
The Chamber's annual political mixer, Pork and Politics in the Park, is set for Wednesday, Aug. 22. The event is a popular forum for the business community to meet and talk with elected officials and candidates vying for public office.

On Tuesday, Aug. 28 Mobilians will go to the polls and vote for mayor and the seven members of city council.

The current structure of city government with a mayor and a city council consisting of seven members is still relatively new in Mobile. Until the mid-80s three county commissioners were elected at-large and rotated to the position of mayor.

The obvious advantage of the current structure is that city government is comprised of a more representative group of elected officials who share in the responsibility of running the city.

In addition to candidates running for local



Don't Forget to Vote on Aug. 28

offices, those who have announced they will be running in the state elections next fall have also been invited.

"It seems politicians enjoy this event as much

as representatives from the business community," says Ginny Russell, the Chamber's vice president of community and governmental affairs.

The casual atmosphere offers a menu of barbeque, side dishes and soft drinks provided by Buffalo Rock. It typically draws a crowd of more than 500, often including local legislators as well as those in constitutional offices such as governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state and attorney general.

"This is a fun way to fulfill your responsibility as a citizen of making an informed choice at the polls and knowing who your elected officials are. You never know when an issue will affect your businesses or neighborhood and it's good to know the person who can help you," says Russell.

The event will be held on the Chamber lawn beginning at 5:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15. Call Shelly Mattingly at 431-8612 for reservations or e-mail shelly@mobilechamber.com.



Energy Supply Plentiful in Mobile

August — it's the hottest month of the year. News stories about rolling blackouts along the West Coast and lack of electricity makes people in the deep South wonder if that could happen here?

It's a question **Bernie Fogarty Jr.**, Alabama Power's external affairs manager, has been answering a lot lately. "We won't find ourselves in a situation like California," he says.

The key, Fogarty says, is forecasting, the difficult task of anticipating and planning for usage before it's

needed. The household demand for electricity alone has increased 3 percent annually over the last 10 years. "People are building bigger houses and there are more televisions, computers, printers and other appliances and electronics in homes than ever before."

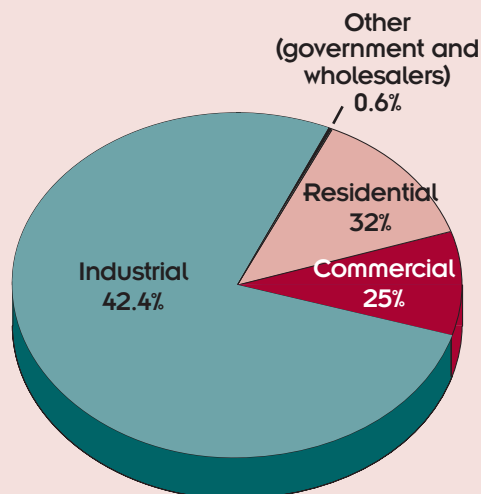
However, the household demand accounts for less than one-third of Alabama Power's annual kilowatt sales. The bulk is purchased by industrial customers, 42.4 percent, and

commercial customers, 25 percent. "Not unusual when you consider the number of operations that have moved into the area such as Mitsubishi, IPSCO and Phenolchemie as well as a number of expansions at established companies like Degussa," says Fogarty.

But why is California in such a desperate situation? It's a complicated answer that has to do with decisions made by the power companies when the state deregulated its utilities combined with a lack of diverse power sources and not enough plants to keep up with demand according to Fogarty.

Record breaking temperatures during the summer last year pushed up energy usage 4.7 billion kilowatt-hours over 1999 throughout Alabama Power's service area. "By using diverse sources such as coal, hydro, oil, natural gas and nuclear to run our plants, we have the resources needed as well as the flexibility to keep costs down when fuel costs rise," he explains.

Annual Kilowatt-Hour Sales for 2000



Source: Alabama Power's 2000 Annual Report

Residential consumers are 85 percent of Alabama Power's customer base and account for 32 percent of its annual kilowatt-hour sales. Commercial clients represent 14.5 percent of the company's customer base and account for 25 percent of annual kilowatt-hour sales. Industrial clients are 3.6 percent of the company's customer base and account for 42 percent of the annual usage. The remaining, less than 1 percent, is used by government or wholesale accounts.

Ozone Levels Down First Half of Summer

Around this time last year, Mobile had exceeded Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Ozone limits more than 10 times. This year, however, the news is significantly better.

From March 1, the beginning of Ozone season, through July 20, Mobile's Ozone numbers have been the lowest in several years, but "we haven't gotten to the second half of the game and anything could happen," according to Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) Chief Meteorologist **Chris Howard**.

"I'm excited, but cautious," said Howard who pointed out that this year's weather patterns and Ozone numbers for Mobile and Baldwin counties are more normal than the past three years.

In fact, as of July 20, Mobile had only exceeded the Ozone limit of .084

parts per million (ppm) one time at the Chickasaw monitoring station, one of three stations in the two county area. Currently, the Chickasaw station is the only one that has exceeded the eight-hour Ozone standard three years in a row, so it is the station being used in determining the area's attainment status.

The EPA designates attainment or non-attainment when the average Ozone level during a season exceeds .084 ppm. Communities in non-attainment status have certain restrictions such as limits on the type of economic development projects it can pursue and laws regulating everything from the kind of gasoline sold to mandatory reductions of emission levels by industry.

EPA's new eight-hour standard is undergoing a challenge through the U.S. Supreme Court, but the agency is confident it will eventually win its case. In the meantime, ADEM and most other state environmental agencies in the country are using the new .084 ppm standard as a baseline, in anticipation that it will be approved by the court.

Ozone is an odorless, colorless gas that occurs both in the earth's upper atmosphere and at ground level. Naturally occurring 10 to 30 miles above the

earth's surface, it forms a protective layer shielding against the sun's harmful rays. But, in the earth's lower atmosphere, near ground level, Ozone is formed when pollutants, emitted by cars, power plants, manufacturing companies and other sources, react chemically in the presence of sunlight.

"If the summer ended right now, we'd be in attainment," said Howard. Though Mobile's highest reading this summer was .089 ppm, EPA takes the fourth highest reading in determining attainment to minimize effects from errors or freak weather patterns. Mobile's fourth highest reading as of July 20 was only .076 ppm, well below the limit.

Baldwin County, which last year had the highest Ozone readings in the area at its new Fairhope monitoring station, had only exceeded the standard

AIR QUALITY DESCRIPTION

Green	Good	0 - .064
Yellow	Moderate	.065 - .084
Orange	Unhealthy for sensitive group	.085 - .104
Red	Unhealthy	.105 - .124
Purple	Very Unhealthy	.125 +

twice as of July 20, once in May with a .089 ppm and once in June with a .087 ppm.

Because EPA uses a three-year average to determine attainment designations and the Fairhope station has not been operational for three consecutive years, it is not currently considered.

Stations in either Mobile or Baldwin County impact the entire area. For example, if the Fairhope monitoring station, after three years, consistently reports high Ozone readings, Mobile will be included in the non-attainment designation because Mobile and Baldwin counties are considered one area.

The community has definitely enjoyed better air quality this Ozone season, but Howard says the dry, hot periods are likely coming when Ozone is more easily formed. "It only takes one week of hot, dry, stagnant air and we could be back in non-attainment," Howard concluded.

Mobile's Port Cleaner With Industries' Stepped Up Efforts



Mobile has one of the cleaner ports among its Central Gulf Coast neighbors, according to Hunter George, operations and response manager for the U.S. Environmental Services based in Mobile.

The reason says George, is local industries' voluntary participation in a regional Oil Pollution Act of 1990 Spill Response Work Group (OPA90 SRWG).

"There's been a definite decrease in spills locally because industry has stepped up their efforts in Mobile. Compared to Pensacola, Gulfport or New Orleans, Mobile has one of the cleanest ports."

With oil being a valuable and plentiful resource in the Gulf of Mexico, there are millions of gallons that move in and out of the area regularly. Quantities like these could spell disaster for the environment, but a group of private industry representatives trains and prepares for the unexpected.

Thompson Engineering's **Mike Brown** is lead coordinator of the group, which consists of more than a dozen industry representatives from companies such as the Alabama Bulk Terminal, Amoco Oil, Alabama River Pulp, Eagle Asphalt, Shell and Williams Energy.

An environmental preparedness group gets ready for a field exercise in Mobile River. These exercises are critical to meeting the OPA 90 requirements for companies or vessels shipping oil in bulk.

Since 1997, Thompson Engineering has helped members develop their plans and coordinated field and table top exercises, serving as a consultant on the OPA 90 requirements and reporting needs.

Quarterly, Brown conducts either a field and table top exercise to help members meet their regulatory requirements under the OPA 90 law.

The OPA 90 act requires any facility or vessel storing or shipping over 1 million gallons of oil to have a plan and an appointed contractor should a spill occur, explains George.

Earlier this summer, the group conducted its first field exercise in the Mobile River to identify the optimal deployment position and equipment needed to divert an oil spill into a collection area on the east bank.

"It was extremely successful and went off without a hitch," says George.

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Silicon Bay?

The Transition to a Technology-driven Economy

Perhaps no other Southern city has faced such dramatic economic comebacks as Mobile. From rebuilding 40 downtown city blocks after the devastating fire of 1919 to the closing of Brookley Air Force Base in the 1960s to the recovery from Hurricane Frederic in 1979. Not to mention the shift from an agricultural economy to one focused on heavy manufacturing in the years in between. The citizens of Mobile have relied on their innate tenacity, fierce independence and remarkable flexibility to face these economic challenges head on. Today, the city faces another challenge. Can it make the successful transition to a technology-driven economy?

Attractive Environment for Business Operations

While it's doubtful Mobile will become the Silicon Valley of the South, there are features that keep current high-tech firms from moving elsewhere and may attract new ones. For many local firms, quality of life is the key issue keeping them here combined with low-cost office space and lower taxes compared to high-tech areas elsewhere.

Local technologist, **Jim Busby**, founded QMS to manufacture high-performance printers. After selling the company to Minolta in 1999, Busby's newest venture, Centralite Systems, has also become successful while headquartered here.

With Centralite's market primarily outside the area, Busby says, "Locating in Mobile has been good for business. Quality of living is high, costs for operations are relatively low and there are no traffic jams—a major benefit if you compare doing business in California where traffic can tie you up for hours."

Finding Employees

Another critical factor in keeping and attracting high-tech firms is an appropriate labor pool. Local tech firms have found the workforce, although not technical in nature, has valuable characteristics like honesty, integrity and a strong work ethic. Between QMS and Centralite, Busby has found 70 percent of his labor force among the local population. "We have found plenty of engineers when we needed them, many from the University of South Alabama," he says.

Sam St. John, founder of The Computer Broker, found many of his best employees when they've walked in off the street just wanting to



The advantages of technology matched with the area's quality of life are major drawing cards for businesses and potential employees.

"The first time a company executive sees us build things that are useful and serve an important business purpose, they are sold on the power and value of technology," explains **John Strobe** founder of the local Web design company, Dogwood Productions.

The business has grown as he's developed proprietary software solutions to add functionality to customer Web sites, like taking on-line reservations or offering real-time customer support via a live chat program. This is when businesses begin to understand why technology innovations are becoming a revolution.

The City Implements Technology

Embracing technology with new computer-related tools and Internet strategies is a practice the City of Mobile has not only adopted, but also flourished under.

One dramatic example is how the system has revolutionized the way the City receives and responds to customer complaints and requests. The system, called REACT (REquest for ACTion), incorporates databases of information with Mobile's geographic information system (GIS) to put quick answers at the fingertips of call center employees.

share a conversation about technology. "Applicants with degrees and Microsoft certifications, often lack the real in-depth understanding of computers to be as effective as someone I've found locally who has a love for computers and is willing to learn," says St. John.

State	Rank	Score
Alabama	45	25%
Florida	27	31%
Louisiana	47	21%
Mississippi	50	17%
National Average		31%

"The number of people on-line is probably the most basic indication of a state's progress toward the digital economy. In 1997, 25 percent of households were on-line nationwide and by 2003, it's projected to be well over half. (The percentage of adults on-line is even higher than the percentage of households because some people have access at work or through colleges or universities, and not at home.)"

Source: The Progressive Policy Institute, Technology and New Economy index, www.neweconomyindex.org, 1997, Cyber Dialogue data.

Luis Nieves, owner of Gulf Coast Computer Services, says he looks for employees with Cisco certification, a degree for the networking industry. "Universities and technical programs offer a heavy emphasis on programming languages. The hands-on technical knowledge and problem-solving skills that one gains with a Cisco certification is what we really need."

Technology Solving Real World Problems

One common element of success among local tech firms has been the development of useful business applications of technology.

At Centralite Systems, automated home systems are designed to make life easier. According to Busby, "we wouldn't have even one customer if we didn't add quality of life each time we install a system." Centralite customers benefit from energy cost savings and innovative products that allow control of home lighting, music, heating and air conditioning, and security systems from the convenience of a handheld computer.

Dennis Lang, president of VESA Enterprises, has offered computer networking and IT (information technology) support to local companies for 3½ years and sees a steady growth of technology applications within the businesses he serves. "We supply traditional networking and hardware support, but local increased demand for on-line services and faster Internet connections has caused us to invest in additional servers to provide hosting services and Web site support."

It is likely that the city will become more and more high-tech as people understand how technology, if used correctly, can save dramatic amounts of time and money.

Number of Jobs in Gazelle Companies*

(Gazelle companies have annual sales revenue growth of 20 percent or more for four straight years)

State	Rank	Score
Alabama	20	14.3%
Florida	7	15.8%
Louisiana	32	13.5%
Mississippi	21	14.2%
National Average		14.3%

"The degree to which a state's economy is composed of new, rapidly growing firms known as gazelles is indicative of the degree to which the state's economy is dynamic and adaptive — a key driver of the New Economy. . . . It is not small firms per se that are the key, it is the relatively small number of fast-growing firms of all sizes that account for the lion's share of new jobs created in the 1990s."

Source: The Progressive Policy Institute, Technology and New Economy index, www.neweconomyindex.org, 1997, Cogenetics data.

High-Tech Jobs

(Includes electronics manufacturing, software and computer-related services, and telecommunications as a share of total employment)

State	Rank	Score
Alabama	28	3.2%
Florida	25	3.5%
Louisiana	48	1.5%
Mississippi	47	1.6%
National Average		4.5%

"Just as capital and machinery-intensive industries (autos, chemicals, and steel) drove growth in the 1950s and 1960s, high-tech firms (computer hardware and software, telecommunications, and biotech) are the growth engines of the New Economy."

Source: The Progressive Policy Institute, Technology and New Economy index, www.neweconomyindex.org, 1997, American Electronics Assn. data.

With REACT, the City has increased employee productivity and eliminated redundant service requests, offering citizens the chance to register concerns with one phone call—something virtually unheard of within typical government offices.

REACT has tremendous potential. According to **Chris Lee**, the City's executive director of administrative services, future decisions about street resurfacing projects can be made by first analyzing the data held in the REACT database and mapping locations of all pot hole and ditch repair complaints. Areas with the greatest cluster of damage can be easily pinpointed and the scope of the project can be more accurately defined when seeking bids from contractors.

The City's Web site, designed by Dogwood Productions, utilizes problem-solving applications to provide impressive cost savings for the citizens of Mobile. By providing over 55 forms such as business licenses or permits, the city has eliminated printing and paper costs of 140,232 pages for a savings of \$2,000 in one year. Even more striking is the benefit to citizens whose time and money were saved by unnecessary trips to city hall.

The Transition to a New Economy

The bottom line is Mobile already has a number of businesses embracing technology and competing in world markets. By taking time to learn the value of technology and how incorporating innovative solutions can change the way business gets done—faster, better and more efficiently, more local companies will join the technology-driven economy.



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Small Business of the Month BugMaster



Frank Alardo knows bugs. Since 1975, he's seen all types of bugs, insects and other creepy, crawly pests, and works to eliminate them from area homes and businesses. Alardo's company, BugMasters, is the Chamber's Small Business of the Month.

BugMasters serves Southwest Alabama with locations in Mobile, the Eastern Shore, and provides professional pest control services for a multitude of pests. "We keep up-to-date on the new insects, especially the newest Formosan termite, and we offer our customers a variety of services (related to pest control)," says Alardo.

Protecting clients' homes and offices from infestation is the most important aspect of the pest control business. With the concern for people's safety and the environment, BugMasters is a member of the National Pest Control Association and the Alabama Pest Control Association. "Every new insecticide and product to protect us from these creatures is tested (by those organizations) and then relayed to us. This information allows us to give our customers the newest type of protection from insects and from harmful chemicals," adds Alardo.

BugMasters services not only households throughout Mobile and Baldwin counties, but also

Frank Alardo stands with "Bugzee" their new addition. Look for the "bug" to be rolling around town.

commercial spaces and industrial and marine businesses. "Because we are a port city, there are lots of barges that come through here, and even people with fishing boats or yachts need our help," says Alardo.

The newest employee to their ranks is Max, a canine termite detection dog. Max's ability to sniff out termite infestations in homes or businesses comes from extensive training. Max was part of a program to rescue puppies from Animal Shelters and train them to do a variety of jobs. Max's specialty is termite detection and he completed 600 hours of training, similar to canine drug training programs. It's a powerful snout and training experience that makes Max a weapon in termite detection.

In addition to Max, BugMasters uses "Bugzee," a Volkswagen Beetle used to market the company.

Locally owned and operated, Alardo maintains a high-level quality service and customer care.

For more information about BugMasters and their professional services, contact them at 666-4402 or visit their Web site at www.BugMaster.com.

Austal's Military Contract: New Jobs for Mobile?

The U.S. military's interest in high-speed transport ships could mean hundreds of new jobs in shipbuilding for the Mobile area in the next five years.

Austal Ships, the Australian majority owner of Mobile's Austal USA, announced it has inked a contract with the U.S. Marine Corps to charter a 101-meter, high-speed Theatre Logistics Vessel. The Third Marine Expeditionary Force will lease the vessel for rapid deployment of Marine battalions and equipment in the Western Pacific.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Army has expressed a need for a similar vessel, says Bill Pfister, vice president of marketing and administration at Austal USA.

"There's a strong likelihood we'll be building these ships in Mobile for the Army," Pfister says.

If that happens, Pfister said the potential for new jobs in the Mobile area is extraordinary. "We have 80 people working here now. We'd need 1,000 in five or six years."

While Pfister said the Defense Department is currently budgeting for those ships in FY2007, "they

intend to bring that forward to 2005." At the same time, Austal's 80-meter-long facility will have to grow to accommodate 100-meter ships.

"If you want to operate ships in the U.S., you have to build them in the U.S. That's the reason we're here," Pfister said. Austal developed the Theatre Logistics Vessel to rapidly move large numbers of troops and cargo during military operations. In one load, the vessel can carry 950 people and up to 550 tons of equipment, offering significant savings of time and money over air travel. Large ramps at the ship's bow and stern allow a variety of military vehicles to roll on and off decks in ports that lack infrastructure.

During the two-month trial period, the vessel named 'Westpac Express' will operate between the Marine base on Okinawa, Japan, and training locations in the Asian-Pacific region. Use of the vessel will decrease the military's intrusion on community life by reducing air and ground traffic on the island.



MAWSS Makes a Conservation Plan for Mobile's Wildlife

◆ The gopher turtle gets help from the MAWSS

With Mobile continually moving west, land is getting sparse for wildlife and especially the gopher tortoise.

In response, the Mobile Area Water & Sewer System (MAWSS) signed an agreement with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to develop a Habitat Conservation Plan. "(This plan) is the future of the endangered species act," says Mitch King with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Southeast Region.

Included in the plan is a 222-acre conservation bank located near Big Creek Lake in West Mobile. The conservation protects the gopher tortoise and its diminished habitat, the longleaf pine ecosystem.

In short, this plan will enable property owners to develop land where the gopher tortoises live, but still aid in the conservation of these burrowing creatures. Through this act, "land owners can purchase land credits from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to relocate the tortoise from the developing land and relocate them to the new conservation bank," says Robert Bonnie with Environmental Defense Department.

The conservation bank and agreement is the first Federal Conservation bank for the gopher tortoise and a first for the state of Alabama.

The gopher tortoises are not the only thing in danger, but also the longleaf pine ecosystem. "These trees built the South," says Malcolm Steeves with the MAWSS, who emphasized the fact that the pine trees were used to build many Southern homes. While the longleaf pines at Big Creek Lake average 60-70 years old and are able to withstand hurricanes and fires, they cannot be

replaced easily and "they do not grow fast," adds Steeves.

For more information about the gopher tortoise and the conservation bank, contact the U.S. Fish & Wildlife, Southeast Region at (404) 679-7287, or visit the following Web sites: U.S. Fish & Wildlife at <http://southeast.fws.gov/daphne>, Mobile Area Water & Sewer Systems at www.mawss.com, or Environmental Defense at www.environmentaldefense.org.



Chamber Partners with ebiz-Market Place

Interested in the speed and convenience of the Web but want to do business with fellow Mobilians? Then take advantage of the next generation of community-based Internet services with ebiz-Market Place™ — a pilot program between ebiz-America and the Chamber.

Market Place creates a "community-wide Web" bringing Mobile-based Web sites together so local companies can do business with each other easily. Click on the ebiz-Market Place link on the Chamber's Web site at www.mobilechamber.com.

According to Joe Mareno, the Chamber's vice president of finance and operations, ebiz-Market Place will offer the convenience of sending bid requests to several businesses at once.

"When you search for a product or service you

will get a list of all the local businesses offering what you're looking for. Then, Market Place makes it easy to send a bid request to all those on the list. So, with a quick click of the mouse, you can let all the local businesses in town know what you need to buy, giving them the chance to respond."

During the six-month pilot program, Chamber members with existing Web sites will be added to the ebiz-Market Place automatically. If the project is successful, members will be offered special rates after the six-month trial period.

The ebiz-Market Place is managed by ebiz-America, which also hosts the Chamber's Web site.

Watch for more information at ebiz-Market Place on the Chamber's Web site.

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The Planner or the PDA - Which is better?

Has the traditional hard copy planner/calendar finally met its match?

As Palms™ and Pocket PCs become more popular and time management training becomes available for Palm™ users, the debate as to whether handheld computers are better than hard copy planners continues to elevate.

There are still a few things that a PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) cannot do, like survive a drop from a three-story window or make its planner section large and legible while retaining its smallness. But then again, there aren't many planners that can beam information to another planner or plan 30 years in the future.

Here are a few pros and cons of both handheld computers and paper planners according to Harold Taylor, president of Harold Taylor Time Consultants Inc.

Two obvious advantages of the PDA are its portability and capacity. It is impossible to purchase a hard copy planner that could hold even a fraction of the information provided by a handheld computer.

The paper planner still has its advantages. It's faster for logging appointments, drawing maps and entering directions. Even accessing data from a calendar at the flip of a page seems faster than turning on a PDA, tapping buttons and scrolling. Plus, there are no batteries to change or recharge.

The initial investment is a lot less for paper and users can boast they never had their planner crash, freeze or lose all their data. They might even mention the joy of being able to see their week at a glance or being able to color code events without having to add third party software.

On the other hand, the total information contained in a life's accumulation of planners

could be housed in a tiny 3 x 4½ inch PDA. There is unlimited space for notes and things to do. Only one entry for birthdays, anniversaries and other events is necessary. No need to copy over information from one planner to the next. They even have alarms that work whether the PDA is turned on or off, to remind its owners of appointments, birthdays, etc.

It's easy to make changes quickly and cleanly as well as keep confidential information hidden from sight on Palms and Pocket PCs. Users can even attach notes to appointments, scheduled tasks or to do items. These electronic devices can beam assignments, business cards and other information to fellow users, synchronize with computers and install e-books (with a document reader) to utilize travel time.

PDA's eliminate the need to carry a separate watch, calculator, alarm clock or expense forms. Accessories can convert a Palm into a digital camera, send and receive e-mails, and print a schedule directly from the Palm. Software is being developed daily that makes the Palm even more versatile.

The PDA may be more expensive initially, and more fragile, but with a protective case and caution, it could serve its owner for the rest of his working days. It could even be cleared of its information and used by someone else. So the traditional planner, with its finite number of pages, space and time frame is being challenged with this relatively new electronic marvel. But is it better? You be the judge.

Source: Harold L. Taylor is a time management consultant, author and public speaker. He can be contacted at (416) 491-0777 or Harold@TaylorOnTime.com. Copyright 2001.

Working Smart

◆ How to Run a Meeting

By Judy Marston

Meetings — a waste of time or a wise investment? The answer lies in the purpose, planning and priorities. Get these three things right and meetings in your organization will be something everyone looks forward to rather than dreads.

Well-run meetings inform and motivate while unorganized meetings cause frustration, and it's the person in charge who creates the mood.

If you think a meeting is necessary, check for at least one of these qualifications:

- want to give information to a lot of people quickly and in person
- need a quick group decision
- want everyone to get the same information at the same time
- want to create synergy
- need commitment

Cancel meetings, or at a minimum rethink them, if they have become routine with no apparent benefit, like weekly staff meetings; if there is nothing special to discuss; or if you are the one who has to make the decision and you already know what you're going to do.

Once it has been decided that there will be a meeting, preparation is the key to its success. Start by defining its purpose. If it doesn't seem clear ask, "what is the result I need from this meeting?" Follow-up by questioning the purpose, "Do I need a meeting to accomplish it?"

If so, prepare an agenda and get important information to attendees ahead of time so they can look it over in advance.

When deciding when and where to meet remember most people are fresher in the morning, so if it's creative input that's needed, schedule it early. If the goal is to keep it short, meet just before lunch or time to go home.

Sometimes it's important to arrange seating. The power positions are close to the chairman; neutral positions are at the opposite end; opposing

positions should be next to the power positions. Seating attendees in these areas according to their agendas should put you, the chairman, at some advantage. But keep in mind no matter where people sit, everyone's opinion should be heard and respected. Use an objective facilitator from outside the organization if necessary to give everyone fair opportunity in a controversial situation.

Here's a few tips to help the meeting be effective:

- Start and end your meeting on time — it's a basic point worth repeating.
- Write the purpose on a board to keep everyone on track.
- Bring discussions to an end when enough has been said.
- Set goals and make decisions.
- End the meeting when the purpose has been reached and wrap up by reviewing what has been done.
- Send everyone away with an upbeat attitude and a feeling that their opinion contributed to the decisions — whether decisions were in their favor or not.
- When the meeting is over, send follow-up notes reviewing assignments and deadlines.

Judy Marston, a business consultant and speaker, owns Judy Marston and Associates. She can be reached at JAMarston@aol.com or www.marstoncomm.com.



Win a Palm™ M500

Members completing the Chamber's technology survey will be entered into a drawing for a Palm™ M500 organizer.

Feedback will help the Chamber determine the best way to get information to its members. "We want to understand how our members are using technology, so we can communicate with them effectively and plan relevant training programs," says Deborah York, the Chamber's director of communications.

Anyone completing the survey is eligible to win the Palm. Those companies that have not received a survey or that have employees in their organization who would like to participate, should contact York at 431-8623 or by e-mail, deborah@mobilechamber.com.

About the Prize

The new Palm™ M500 handheld is completely customizable with two expansion features, the standard Secure Digital/Multi MediaCard slot and the Palm Universal Connector, providing the option for added storage, applications, content and add-ons such as a portable keyboard, wireless modem or camera. The Palm™ M500 handheld is useful for reading and writing e-mail, viewing and editing spreadsheets and documents,

viewing eBooks, video clips and photos, or browsing Web content off-line.



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

Business Spotlight of the Month

Expanets



Daniel Taylor can work with small to medium-sized companies to provide them with Fortune 500 telephone systems. How? His company, Expanets – the Chamber's Business Spotlight of the Month – works with a company's existing telephone system to integrate other services.

Examples of his services include tying branch offices to each other or connecting phone systems to an e-commerce program or networking the phone system to the company's computer system.

Taylor explained one of his clients was receiving 30,000 to 40,000 telephone calls a month and with his technology assistance, can handle all the calls with a staff of 10.

Expanets, a name derived from its mission, "experienced at network solutions," started operations in 1997 with the acquisition of local and regional network and communication solutions providers.

Currently, the company has strategic partnerships with network carrier service providers, such as Lightyear Communications, BellSouth and Net2000. They are the largest distributors of communications equipment for Avaya, NEC, CISCO; and computer-based training by Smartforce; and is the nation's largest system integrator for Lucent

Roy Hudson, CEO of Scott Credit Union (left) and Daniel Taylor of Expanets stand in front of the call center Taylor helped develop for the credit union.

Technologies for mid-sized businesses.

Taylor has an extensive background and training in network solutions. His goal is to make an impact on a company's revenue stream. "When one of my clients needs help, I want them to know they can contact me and that I am looking after their business to maximize their revenues by measuring and managing their existing resources," says Taylor. "Technology is out there and available to help people in business. I want to get the word out that I can help them, and save them money."

"With Daniel's help, our company was able to move forward with technology," says Roy Hudson, CEO with Scott Credit Union. "His ability to come in and evaluate our existing systems helped us utilize our services better for our customers."

For more information about Expanets and what the company can do for small businesses, contact Taylor at 661-1560 or visit the Web site at www.expanet.com.

Diplomat of the Month

David Mundine



David Mundine, this month's featured Diplomat, has been an active Chamber volunteer for nearly 18 months.

An employee of Union Planters Bank for the past nine years, Mundine has served as branch manager and now as a financial services representative for the bank.

In the past, he was an active participant in Chamber events like Business After Hours and First Friday, then a fellow Union Planters employee introduced him to the Diplomat program.

"I became involved as a way to meet people in the community and potential clients," says Mundine.

As a Diplomat, Mundine has become involved with a variety of Chamber-sponsored events. Whether it's ground breaking ceremonies, Business After Hours or other marketing meetings, he believes it's an important part of his job to network and meet other Chamber members. He said there's always a chance that someone else at one of these events will need the services of Union Planters Bank.

"David is a reliable volunteer who makes an effort to get to as many Chamber events as possible," says Reeda Taylor, director of customer service for the Chamber.

For more information about becoming a Diplomat, contact Taylor at 431-8649.

Recycling Efforts Grow

◆ Center has increased scheduled pick ups as residents travel far and wide to recycle their trash



Keep Mobile Beautiful Director Bob Haskins expects to collect close to 50,000 lbs. of old phone books this year at the Mobile Recycling Drop-Off Center and in the 12 bins positioned at Regions Bank branches throughout the City. Haskins expects to keep the bins on location through August, but says they can be recycled year-round at the Center in the mixed-paper bin.

For every ton of recycled paper, 17 trees are saved, using 60 percent less energy than making it from wood pulp. That's just one reason people come from as far away as Baldwin and Washington counties and two counties in Mississippi to drop off their paper, plastic, metal, glass, wood and oil products to the Metro Mobile Recycling Drop-off Center.

According to Bob Haskins, director of Keep Mobile Beautiful, the Center at 1451 Government St. has been such a success that they've had to increase scheduled pick-ups.

"Originally, we had four bins for mixed paper and it was emptied once a week," said Haskins. "Now we have eight bins that we have to empty twice a week."

The same goes for plastic. Previously removed every 10 to 12 days, it's now picked up every four to six days.

"We ship 42,000 lbs. of glass every six to nine weeks," said Haskins who added that, for now, the current Center is handling the load and no other recycle location is being planned for Mobile.

The Center's recycling partners are an interesting mix of local companies that reuse the products, generally making them into basic materials used to manufacture other items: Aaron Oil gets the used oil; Browning Ferris takes plastic and metal (aluminum and steel); Goodwill Easter Seals picks up clothing; Fibers International takes glass; Recycled Fibers gets the paper and cardboard; Mobile Forest Products uses the wooden pallets; and a Mobile-based small business, the Cartridge Family, takes the used toner cartridges.

Recycled goods are used for a variety of products. For example, the used oil becomes fuel, plastic is used to make carpets and other products, and the mixed paper can become cereal or toothpaste boxes or the backs of legal pads.

Haskins added that another advantage of recycling is the economic impact it has on the community. The donated clothing goes to Goodwill where people are employed to run the store. The money raised helps educate and train people with disabilities. The same formula goes for the other companies hiring workers who make the recycled products into raw materials according to Haskins.

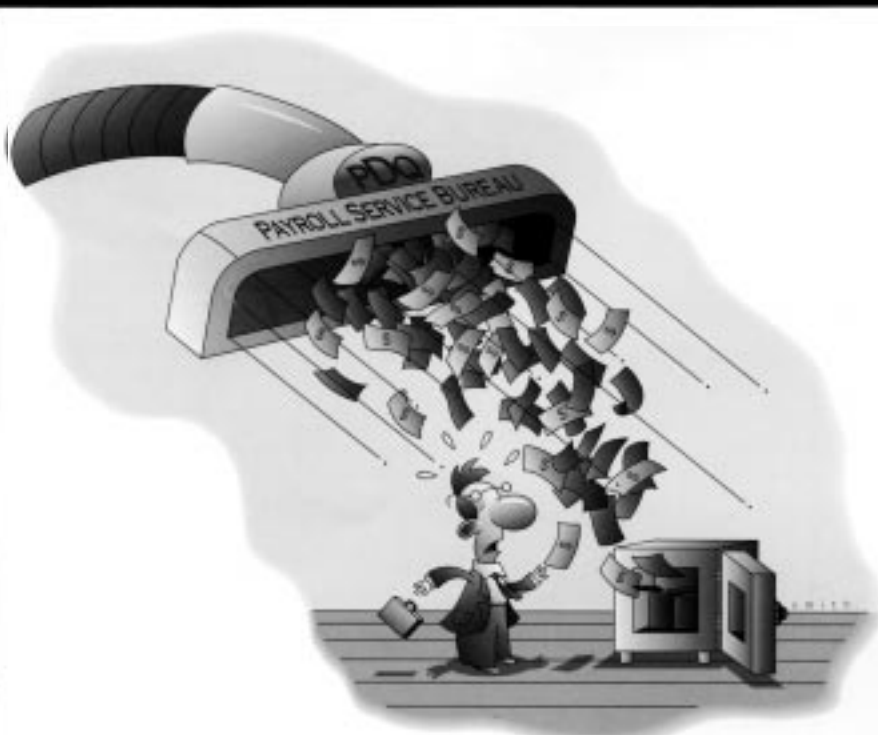
For more information call at 208-6029 or visit the City's Web site at www.cityofmobile.org.

**Metro Mobile Recycling
Drop-Off Center**
1451 Government Street
Open: Monday - Saturday
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Recyclable Items:

- Clean, flat, plastic beverage containers
- Milk jugs and liquor, soda, juice and water bottles
- Paper (corrugated cardboard flattened), newspapers and magazines, mixed (junk mail), phone books and computer paper, cereal boxes (without liners)
- Aluminum beverage cans
- Soda, beer, etc.
- Glass (Remove & discard lid, rinse and separate. Labels can stay on.)
- Jars – food and beverage containers only, e.g., peanut butter, pickle, wine, beer
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Check www.cityofmobile.org for a complete listing.



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New Area CEOs

Wilkerson & Miller Take the Reins at McCrory & Williams



When Richard Williams sold McCrory & Williams to his senior managers earlier this year, it was decided that two of the partners would be the primary decision makers. William Wilkerson (right) is the company's president and chief operating officer and Merlin Miller (left) is chief executive officer.

Name: William Wilkerson

Company: McCrory & Williams

Previous experience: He joined the company in 1998 to head up the organization's civil engineering division. Wilkerson also worked for BCM Engineers holding various positions from project manager to senior vice president and branch manager, and the West Virginia Department of Highways.

Most memorable project: Assisting Mobile Area Water and Sewer System (MAWSS) in restoring service in Mobile after Hurricane Frederic in 1979. Over the past 20 years, he has provided engineering assistance to MAWSS after other hurricanes and floods.

Education: B.S. Civil Engineering, Louisiana Polytechnic Institute

Professional affiliations: Wilkerson is a past president of the Alabama Society of Professional Engineers, the Mobile branch of the American Society of Civil Engineers and the Mobile Area Council of Engineers.

Name: Merlin Miller

Company: McCrory & Williams

Previous experience: He has worked with the company on and off since 1979. He returned permanently in 1997 to head up the organization's survey division. Miller has also worked for Volkert & Associates as a survey manager and Waggoner Engineering in Jackson, Miss., as operations manager for an advanced survey group.

Most memorable project: Surveying for the Round Island Lighthouse restoration project in Pascagoula, Miss. Hurricane Georges knocked down the lighthouse and the community worked quickly to preserve what was left, restoring portions of the tower and returning the base to its upright position.

Education: Civil Engineering major, Auburn University; Geography major, University of Alabama

Professional affiliations: Miller is a member of several professional organizations including the American Congress of Surveying and Mapping and the National Society of Professional Surveyors.

McCrory & Williams' Founding Partner Retires and Sells Company

Richard Williams, the surviving partner of McCrory & Williams, has traded in his computer, telephone and drawing equipment for a tractor and a chain saw, a retirement gift from the McCrory & Williams team. Instead of studying reports and estimating jobs, he's now thinning out the woods, building a chicken ranch and chasing turtles out of his 1½-acre pond.

McCrory & Williams is an engineering and land surveying firm based in Mobile since 1976.

Williams and his wife, Nancy, left Mobile recently and moved to the mountains of Lewisburg, Tenn., where they have 25 acres less than an hour from Nashville and only 32 miles from Huntsville.

It was a little over a year ago that he announced his retirement date and began making plans to sell his company. Resisting offers from larger firms, Williams chose to stick to the plan he and his partner, William McCrory, developed when it came time for him to retire.

McCrory died unexpectedly in 1997, and after 25 years of running the company, Williams was ready for a change of pace.

"Our plan all along was the company should be employee-owned, if that was doable, since they contributed to its success," said Williams.

Earlier this year Williams sold the company to its senior managers. The new owners and management team at

McCrory & Williams includes William Wilkerson, president and chief operating officer, who manages day-to-day activities and the engineering side of the company; Merlin Miller chief executive officer, who runs the surveying side of the business; and Thomas Williams, vice president, and son of Richard Williams.

Throughout its first 25 years in business, the company has worked on a variety of roads, bridges, streets, drainage structures and other civil engineering projects. Its client list ranges from state, county and city governments to residential, commercial and industrial firms. As of last year there were offices in Mobile, Baldwin County and Pascagoula.

The company's assets in Baldwin County were sold to employees of that office, and the name along with assets in Mobile and Pascagoula, went to Wilkerson, Miller and Williams.

The sale was official Feb. 1, 2001, and Wilkerson says not much has changed. "McCrory & Williams has a good reputation and we want to continue in that tradition of providing our customers with the competent and reliable professional services they have come to expect."

Williams still stays in touch with the company and says they are exploring additional markets and hiring a few more staff. "These are the sorts of fresh ideas that young people can add."

"I've always been a city boy. This is kind of like *Green Acres*. I miss everything and everybody but I have a jillion things to do, and only the rest of my life to do it in."

Richard Williams, former owner of McCrory & Williams, and his wife Nancy, are enjoying retirement and their "Green Acres" lifestyle.



An Exercise in Ethics

◆ Part two outlines how employees and businesses can address difficult choices and decisions.

by D. Kent Welsh PhD

Editor's note: In last month's issue of *The View*, *An Exercise in Ethics*, presented readers with a situation where there was not a clear win-win solution along with a number of ways on how it might be handled. (see below)

We asked Kent Welsh PhD to address the situation helping managers help their employees when faced with difficult situations.

In thinking about the ethical dilemma posed in the July issue of *The View*, two words came to mind — responsibility and consequences. The first question to ask is, to whom am I responsible? Is it myself, my boss, my company, the supplier? The answer, of course, is all of the above. The trick then becomes the balancing of these responsibilities.

David L. Thomas PhD of The Ethics of Choice Training Program suggests "to behave ethically is not only to do 'the right thing' but also to do the thing that must be done . . . if we are to achieve our full human maturity." Thus he gives first priority to the responsibility to one's self. He goes on, however, to say, "It is ethical to serve, refine and advance the organization you have chosen to join. It is unethical to harm it." This statement brings to mind the second word, consequences.

What are the consequences of my behavior to myself, my boss, my company, the supplier? To assess the consequences, we can use criteria from the Institute for Global Ethics, a nonprofit organi-

zation with an international board and advisory council. An "Ends-based" analysis focuses on the final conclusions of the situation. The consequence to myself in this analysis could be that I would either be sanctioned for going over budget or I could be lauded for catching the oversight and correcting it. The consequence to my company could be that it would suffer a cash flow problem or that it would be thought of as a company with integrity in its dealings with other companies. The consequence to the supplier could be that its cash flow would either increase or decrease and it may or may not be a supplier to my company in the future depending upon my behavior.

A "Care-based" or "Golden Rule" analysis focuses on how each of the stakeholders feels about the situation. In this case, the supplier would have quite different reactions to being paid or not being paid.

The final choice, among the alternatives presented in the dilemma, would be governed first by the ethical standard of responsibility to one's self and one's "full human maturity." The choice is to notify both my boss and the supplier of the error. It may then be possible to sit down with my company representative and the supplier's representative and work out a schedule of payment that would shift some of the cost to next year's budget.

D. Kent Welsh PhD, a local psychologist, offers personal and organizational development and consultation.

Situation: (reprinted from July issue of *The View*)

Your company made a major purchase that cost several thousand dollars. The money for the purchase came from your department budget because the item is being used by your staff. It's the middle of the year and your budget is already getting tight due to some unexpected expenses. You're not sure if you will be able to stay within budget by the end of the year.

Several months later, in October, you realize you were never billed for the purchase. The supplier is a small company so it is likely that they made a mistake and didn't send your receipt to their billing department.

Choices:

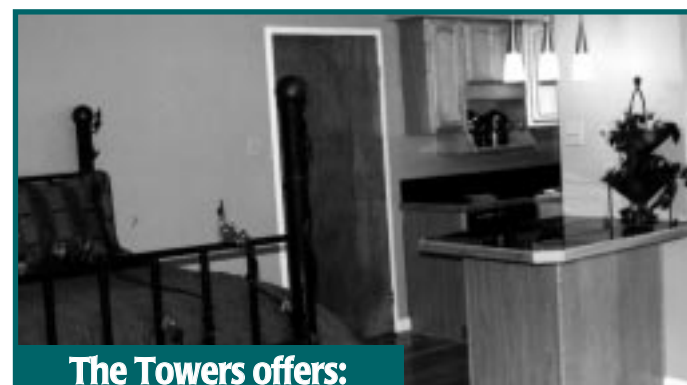
You would:

- Not worry about it since it was the other company's mistake
- Not worry about it since this expense will put you way over budget and you'll get in trouble
- Tell your boss the supplier never billed you and let him or her decide what to do
- Tell your boss the supplier company never billed you and the expense will put you over budget but you think you should call them
- Call the company and remind them that you need to be billed by the end of the year, then call your boss and tell him or her that you called to remind the company. You also mention that the expense will put you over budget
- Call the company and remind them that you need to be billed by the end of the year, but you don't call your boss because you don't want him or her to think you're responsible for getting the bill
- Call the company, remind them that you need to be billed and leave it at that

Now go back to each of the previous questions and CIRCLE the option that best states what you think you should do (what is most ethically proper). Is it different from what you think you probably would do? Why?

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Board of Advisors

The Board of Advisors represents many of the Chamber's most generous supporters, and provides member company CEOs, owners and principals an avenue for valuable input on critical Chamber and community issues. This group meets three times a year at various locations. Meetings offer opportunities to receive advance information pertinent to Mobile's progress from a business perspective, to hear from business and government leaders, and other pertinent speakers.

Past meetings have featured speakers such as Gene Schreiber of the New Orleans Trade Center; Neal Wade, Economic Development Partnership of Alabama; former Gov. Fob James; Jack Kelly, former United States Olympic Committee member; Bailey Thomson, University of Alabama; Gov. Don Siegelman; and Elmer Harris, Alabama Power Co.

For more information contact Katrina McCrory at 431-8611.



W. Bill Ainsworth
Union Planters Bank



Gigi Armbrecht
BellSouth



Owen Bailey
Thomas Hospital



Thomas B. Bender Jr.
Bender Shipbuilding & Repair Co. Inc.



Richard A. Braswell
BEEK Engineering Company



W. Howard Bronson Jr.
Mobile Register



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Chamber Campaign Hits Goal, Keeps Going

This year's total resource development campaign, Chamber Chase 2001, is winding down. Last month volunteers celebrated at a victory celebration co-sponsored by the Adam's Mark Hotel and Equity Technologies Corp. hitting their \$600,000 goal, and efforts are continuing.

Through the end of August, 19 teams and more than 120 volunteers will continue to bring in additional sponsors, new and renewing members, cash, goods and services – all of which will count toward individual and team goals.

This is the second time in the campaign's 5-year history that the effort has reached its goal in July. Chamber Chase Chairman Jeff Weston Jr. of Cooper/T Smith Corp. says he is "excited and relieved" to get this point in the campaign. "I am so proud of the volunteers who worked so hard to get us to our goal."

During the next several weeks Weston expects volunteers to spend much of their time renewing members who joined in previous campaigns. Many volunteers, including Angela Grice with Whitney Bank, have at least a few things in the works.

"As a former Chamber staff member, I know the true value of the Chamber. I started early in April, working on this year's campaign and I'm not finished yet."

Grice is this year's top producer overall, raising \$60,460 in cash, goods and services to date.

The Chamber's Vice President of Membership Carolyn Golson urges volunteers to keep up their efforts to recruit new members in hopes of reaching the campaign's goal of 200, and also continue to let current members know about the number of sponsorships still available.

Mark Eiland with AmSouth Bank is the Campaign's top cash producer bringing in \$20,000 sponsorships and advertisers, and \$31,820 overall. He started working in March to make the AmSouth team successful. "I enjoy the socializing, along with the altruistic portion of the campaign, not to mention that I have a great reason to meet people that could potentially become new customers to the bank."



Chamber Chase volunteer leaders celebrate with Win Hallett, the Chamber's president, at a victory celebration in July. Pictured are from left to right, top row: Jeff Weston, Win Hallett, Jo Shannon, Chris Teague, bottom row: Eliska Roe and Jody Dunn.

Right now, he's tabulating time sheets for 600 employees.

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Sweet "Ps" Everywhere

Finding qualified employees ready to work is one of the most important issues facing businesses in the Mobile area today. Created to address these concerns is a program offered by the Mobile Housing Board called the Summer Work Employment Experience Training Program (SWEET-P).

Started in 1997, SWEET-P gives 120 young adults between the ages of 16-21 an opportunity to receive on-the-job training in a variety of career choices. Participants in the program are paid, and therefore expected to play an important role at their jobs. Unlike prior years where the housing board paid participants' salaries, this year wages are paid from a blend of housing board and private sector monies.

"This is the first year that the Mobile Housing Board has solicited partners from the private sector to contribute half of the cost needed to support a SWEET-P participant. Their contributions allowed the (housing board) to increase the number of participants to the program," explained Shirley Knight, a human resource officer for the housing board and coordinator of SWEET-P.

Prior to their arrival, SWEET-Ps attended a 10-day job skills training course to learn the importance of acting responsibly on the job, customer service skills, teamwork, dress and telephone etiquette.

Three of this year's students enrolled in the program are spending their summer at the Chamber. Havist Hardy and Rosezina Kelly, both high school seniors, and Lakeshia Simon, a junior, are working in the Chamber's Center for Workforce

Development, the community development department, administration and the reception area. Throughout their session, staff members have been working one-on-one with each student to teach them skills they'll need after high school.



Lakeshia Simon is one of 120 students enrolled in the Housing Board's summer work program. She is working in the Chamber's community and governmental affairs department.

Aleida Hill, coordinator for the Chamber's Center for Workforce Development, says, "These are a group of hard-working young adults who realize the value of hard work and the valuable skills that they are gaining as a result of Mobile Housing Board's program. Because they have participated in this program each of them will return to class next year with a better sense of what the working world is like."

For more information about the Sweet P program, call Knight at 434-2321.



The Seal of Pride and History - Local Committee Urges Companies to Use Tricentennial Logo

Only a handful of American cities have a 300-year history and members of the Mobile Tricentennial Commission hope that area businesses and residents will help spread the word.

"By the time the calendar page turns to 2002, we hope virtually every car, lapel, shop window and business letterhead will display the colorful Tricentennial logo," said Ann Bedsole, president of the organization. "This is a unique opportunity to be involved with the yearlong effort to celebrate 300 years of history and prepare for the next century of progress."

With the new area code (251) for South Alabama becoming official in December, many businesses are in the process of reprinting stationery, making it a convenient and cost effective time to add the Tricentennial logo to the letterhead.

The logo will not expire once the Tricentennial celebration is over. "It's a symbol of pride and history for decades to come," said Bedsole.

The Tricentennial logo can be sent to you on disk or by email. For more information, call the Tricentennial headquarters at 342-4386.

Keeping Your Cool This Summer

Summer's here and so is the heat. With the local temperatures averaging in the mid 90s, the American Red Cross has offered tips to help you stay cool this summer.

- Drink water – carry water or juice with you and continuously drink even if you do not feel thirsty.
- Avoid alcohol and caffeine which can dehydrate the body.
- Dress for the heat – wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. It is also a good idea to wear hats or use umbrellas to provide shade and protection from the sun's harmful rays.
- Eat small meals and eat more often. Avoid foods that are high in protein which increase the body's metabolic heat.
- Slow down – avoid strenuous activity. If needed, perform the activity during the coolest part of the day, which is usually in the morning hours between 4 and 7 a.m.

For more information on how to stay cool, contact the American Red Cross at 436-7906 or visit their Web site at www.siteone.com/redcross.

What's LoDa?

There are still few people wondering what LoDa is. Many who don't spend a lot of time downtown believed it was a new downtown bar. But LoDa is Main Street Mobile's new ad campaign to promote the Lower



Dauphin Street area and refers to Lower DAuphin. By branding the area, Main Street officials are hoping to bring attention to the historic district's entertainment and retail core and label the district as a specific destination.

The campaign, led by Lewis Communications is using the branding technique used in other cities such as New York's SoHo (South of Houston), LoDo (Lower Downtown in Dever) and NoDa (North of Davidson in Charlotte).

Alabama's Drinking Water Ranks High

Alabama ranks in the Top 10 states for drinking water quality in a recent report published in *Governing* magazine's 2001 Sourcebook. Editors compiled water systems violations by state from the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Water, Safe Drinking Water Information System's Web site, www.epa.gov/safewater/data/00factoids.pdf.

Alabama was listed as 44th out of the 50 states with the fewest violations reported. (In this case the higher the ranking the better). Rhode Island ranked 50th with the fewest violations and Washington ranked worse, in the number one position, with the most.

Other Central Gulf Coast states were listed: Florida, 22nd; Louisiana, 14; and Mississippi, 31.

Play Ball

Next month, Sept. 6 – 9, the Black American Softball Association will be holding its 2001 World Softball Tournament in Mobile. More than 200 softball teams from the U.S. and Canada will play in parks in West Mobile, Spring Hill and Baldwin County, bringing with them more than 5,000 players and fans.

During their stay participants will have an estimated economic impact of \$3.48 million according to Richard Mack, director of sales for the Mobile Convention and Visitor's Corp. (MCVC).

Festivities will begin with a golf tournament at Azalea City Golf Course and the public is invited to participate. MCVC is also helping recruit sponsors and volunteers for the event.

The Mobile Convention and Visitor's Corp. recruited the event for 2001 and 2002.

For more information call Mack at 208-2004.

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Swiderek Leaving Chamber to Pursue New Goal

After 15 years with the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, Jodi Swiderek, vice president of communications and community development, is leaving to pursue a dream that has captured the imaginations of her and her husband, Ben, for more than a decade.

"We have always wanted to live near the Smoky Mountains and rent cabins," said Swiderek of her new venture, "so we're moving to Tennessee to try our hand at being entrepreneurs."

The Chamber hired Swiderek in 1986 to develop a communications department. Later, she also took on the membership department, and about six years ago switched with another vice president to work with community development.

"It's been great," said Swiderek. "I feel like I've had three different jobs since I've been here. The Chamber gave me the opportunity to reorganize some areas and try new things such as launching the Morning Marketing meetings, starting a grant-writing program and bringing the topic of business ethics to the forefront."

Back in 1989, when Mobile was looking for positive national attention to boost its economic development efforts, Swiderek applied for and won a place in the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, Calif. For the next five years, Mobile's floats were seen by millions of parade goers and TV viewers around the world.

In 1995, Swiderek coordinated Mobile's competi-



Jodi Swiderek

itive process to become an All America City, which it won that year.

"Without a doubt, it is one of Jodi's most impressive accomplishments," said Win Hallett, president of the Chamber. "She literally pulled the presentation out of the ditch when a troop of volunteers forgot their lines and realized the video was too long just hours before the competition. She took herself out of the line up to coach and re-edit the video ensuring a quality presentation that helped Mobile earn the title of All America City."

Two years later, she, along with Linda Ingram with Keep Mobile Beautiful, led the charge to host the All America City competition in Mobile where hundreds of representatives from 30 cities came seeking the coveted All America City title.

Another project that will live on is Envision Mobile-Baldwin, the area's long-range strategic plan. In 1997, Swiderek's community development department solicited suggestions from more than 1,000 citizens and helped mold the plan still being implemented today.

"From All America City to school referendums to Amendment One to the Chamber's Monday morning staff meetings, Jodi's uniquely vibrant personality will not be easily replaced. People warm to her kind of leadership," said Hallett.

Swiderek will remain at the Chamber through the end of August.

Chamber Names Russell to Head New Department



Ginny Russell

Ginny K. Russell will head the Chamber's newly created department, community and governmental affairs. Formerly the departments were separate as community development and governmental affairs.

As the department's vice president, Russell will oversee programs including governmental relations and lobbying, the Envision Mobile-Baldwin strategic plan, grant writing, military affairs and a number of events and activities providing the business community with opportunities to network with elected officials and impact public policy.

Chamber leadership was faced with making some changes when Jodi Swiderek, the Chamber's vice president of communications and community development announced she would be leaving to pursue a second career with her husband at the end of the summer. Scott Posey, the Chamber's former vice president of governmental affairs left in December to run his grandfather's real estate management company in Freeport, Fla.

When evaluating the future of these departments the Chamber realized most of its successful community projects were those with strong public/private partnerships. Two recent examples of this are the passage of Amendment One and funding for schools, explained Chamber President Win Hallett.

"In both cases, we had a combination of grassroots coalitions, local government participation and support from our legislative delegation. These partnerships are strong, effective and productive and we plan to form more such alliances through the community and governmental affairs department," said Hallett.

A new initiative planned for the department includes a community legislative agenda. "One of the Chamber's roles in the community is that of facilitator," said Chamber Senior Vice President

Bob Chappelle. "We would like to bring key community and governmental groups together and create a common agenda to present to the legislature each year."

"Ginny has been with this organization (the Chamber) for the past 15 years and has, among other things, coordinated the Envision program. Her ability to bring people together to work on community projects has been invaluable to the Chamber. Her skills and background are perfect for the job," said Chappelle.

Formerly director of community development, Russell began her tenure with Chamber in 1986 as the organization's first education director, and worked on several of the community's attempts to pass a school funding referendum. She also worked with early community strategic plans such as "Goals for Mobile" and "Mobile 2000." Russell has been the lead staff in charge of developing the current citizen-based plan, Envision Mobile-Baldwin. In addition, she has coordinated the annual Leadership Trip where local leaders study successful programs in various cities around the country.

Russell holds a bachelor's of arts degree in American Studies from the University of Alabama. Prior to joining the Chamber, she taught English as a second language in Belem, Brazil. She and her husband, David, have one daughter Ann Marie.

Chamber Hires Vice President of Communications

Leigh Perry Herndon returned to the Mobile Chamber to serve as the vice president of communications. Having been the Chamber's director of communications for nearly three years, she rejoined the organization on July 9.

As the department's new vice president, Perry Herndon will be responsible for overseeing various special events such as Annual Meeting and the Business and the Arts Competition, Show and Sale, act as the Chamber's spokesperson, coordinate all local, state and national media efforts and work one-on-one with Chamber members to help them better communicate with the media and their customers.

"Having worked closely with Leigh for the past three years, I know the Chamber's communication efforts are in good hands," said Swiderek.

"It's a great feeling coming back to an organization that I have so much respect for," said Perry Herndon. "It's tough that we're losing such a great leader and innovator in our community, but I'm



Leigh Perry Herndon

thrilled to be continuing the leadership."

Perry Herndon will replace Jodi Swiderek who has served as the department's vice president since 1986. At the end of this month, Swiderek and her husband, Ben, will be moving to the mountains of Tennessee to pursue a second career.

A graduate of the University of South Alabama, Perry Herndon most recently served as public relations director for Sullivan-St.Clair Advertising/Public Relations.

In addition to working at the Chamber, she was the public relations director and grant writer for Dothan City Schools, and worked for *The Dothan Eagle* and *Mobile Register*. Professionally, she is on the boards for the Public Relations Council of Alabama and Mobile Christmas Parade, and serves on committees for Do Dah Day, Mobile Tricentennial and the Ground Level Ozone Reduction Initiative.

She is married to Mike Herndon.

Comparative Economic Indicators

May '01 vs May '00

Unemployment Rates

Mobile/Baldwin counties



4.5% May '01

4.1% May '00

Business Licenses

Mobile City



290 May '01

333 May '00

Homes Sold

Mobile County



413 May '01

437 May '00

Air Passengers From Mobile

Mobile Area



35,326 May '01

34,662 May '00

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◆ **Businesses need to begin the process to make governmental agencies their newest customers.**

Public agencies have been slow to buy from suppliers over the Internet, but businesses that get their foot in the door now are in a booming market, a new research report concludes.

The report by Jupiter Media Matrix, an Internet research company, estimates that only 1 percent of government spending occurred over the Internet in 2000 but that figure is expected to rise to nearly 7 percent or \$286.1 billion, by 2005.

By comparison, business-to-business e-commerce is expected to reach \$6.3 trillion by 2005.

Although the federal government has taken the lead in on-line purchasing, the Jupiter study reports that state and local governments do the majority of government buying and "represent the largest business opportunity for suppliers."

Trying to sell to government agencies on-line can be cumbersome and frustrating for suppliers. Often, agencies require either an approved price list or competitive bids. Moreover, the tools for converting on-line catalogs to the formats and standards for connections used by government agencies are generally lacking. And the selection criteria in government buying differ from those in the private sector. Government officers worry as much about fairness and equal access by bidders as they do about prices.

For example, many agencies give preference to small, women or minority-owned businesses and the federal government insists on pricing that begins with the best available to the private sector.

"Suppliers that are new to government procurement should start small, using a local agency as a pilot to start learning before taking on the more substantial risks and investments of dealing with state or federal agencies," the report says.

"Also, suppliers should sign up to receive electronic notifications of RFP opportunities. Current government suppliers should move immediately to electronic procurement; early movers will gain a competitive advantage.

"The report advises suppliers to join networks — whether it be a state agency or private vendors linking suppliers to state and local agencies — that allow them to sell to multiple entities.

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Charlotte Cruthirds Joins Chamber

Overseeing accounting records, administering payroll and preparing monthly financial statements are just some of the tasks assigned to the Chamber's new Director of Finance Charlotte Cruthirds.

In addition to her day-to-day accounting functions, Cruthirds will also manage all records for the Chamber Foundation and paperwork for new employees.

A native Mobilian, Cruthirds attended William Carey College. Prior to her coming to the Chamber in June, she'd worked for Marshall Biscuit Company in Saraland for the past 9½ years as the office manager and sales administrator. At Marshall Biscuit, Cruthirds was responsible for the company's accounting, cost and financial reporting, as well as



Charlotte Cruthirds

human resource issues.

"An air of professionalism and excellence floats throughout the Chamber," believes Cruthirds. "I am in awe of the many good things they make happen every day."

Joe Mareno, vice president of finance and operations, is pleased to have Cruthirds on staff. "With so much experience and a positive attitude, I'm confident she's going to excel at the Chamber. We're pleased to have her on board with us."

For Cruthirds, she believes working for the Chamber is a perfect match. "Based on the

cooperation I've received so far from the entire staff, I look forward to a long career at the Chamber. Who would want to work anywhere else?"

Brent Ericson Joins Chamber

Providing Chamber members and new business prospects with demographics and statistics about the Mobile area is vital to recruiting industry, developing business plans and researching potential customers.

The Chamber's new Director of Research and Information, Brent Ericson, is committed to streamlining this process by making all statistical information available via the Chamber's Web site — www.mobilechamber.com.

With a background in sales and marketing, Ericson recently moved to Mobile from Charlotte, NC. He spent 14 years in sales, most recently with Nortel Networks where he also worked in Market Development.

An Auburn native, Ericson is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a bachelor's degree in economics.

The research and information division is part of the Chamber's Economic Development department. As Jim Apple, vice president of Economic



Brent Ericson

Development sees it, research and information is a key component in bringing the right businesses and industries to the Mobile area. Without it, recruiting might be more like a "shot in the dark."

In addition to compiling statistics and researching prospective companies, Ericson will be working with the Chamber's project managers in recruiting new business to Mobile, managing the Mobile Commerce Park, and overseeing the Industrial Park Board for the City of Mobile.

It's Ericson's goal to be more proactive in supplying economic data to Chamber

members and to consolidate research into a user-friendly format.

"Research and Information arms the economic development team with the ammunition it needs to lure companies to Mobile and helps justify expansions in current industries," said Ericson.

To get in touch with Ericson, call 431-8654 or e-mail brent@mobilechamber.com.

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CALENDAR VIEW

August 14 What's Up Mobile?

Time: 7:45 - 9:30 a.m.
Place: Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center
Cost: \$12 and includes breakfast
Call: Ashley Collins at 431-8606

August 15 Net Gain: Stress Management

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

August 16 Net Gain: Retirement Planning

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

August 22 Pork and Politics in the Park

Time: 5:30 - 8 p.m.
Place: Chamber Lawn
Cost: \$15
Call: Shelley Mattingly at 431-8612
 (See story on page 1)

August 23 Business After Hours Exhibit Showcase

Time: 4 - 7 p.m.
Place: Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center
Cost: \$2 for everyone
Call: Reeda Taylor for booth space at 431-8649

August 28 Noon Marketing Meeting

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

COMING IN SEPTEMBER

September 7 First Friday Business at Breakfast

Time: 7:45 - 8:45 a.m.
Place: Bienville Club
 34th floor AmSouth Bank Building
Cost: \$10 and includes breakfast buffet
Call: Maria Bladorn at 431-8638

September 11 Member Open House and Breakfast

Time: 7:30 - 9 a.m.
Place: Chamber Atrium and McGowin Room
Cost: No charge
Call: Maria Bladorn at 431-8638

Net Gain: Stress Management

Is stress bringing you down? The Chamber has an answer. On Wednesday, Aug. 15, the Chamber will present the NetGain seminar "Stress Management" from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. in the Chamber McGowin Room. Patricia Wheat LPC and owner of EAP Lifestyle Management will lead a discussion on ways to assess individual levels of stress and the impact it has on our productivity as well as physical and psychological health. Get suggestions on how to reduce these levels.

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

Net Gain: Retirement Planning

On Thursday, Aug. 16, hear Scotty Waters and Pete Peters with Financial Securities LLC lead a discussion on retirement planning for small businesses. Find out answers to how your business will benefit from a retirement plan, the different types of plans available and how to understand which plan is right for you. Held from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. in the Chamber McGowin Room, don't miss this important discussion on your future.

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

FUTURE EVENTS

October 19 Fall Golf Tournament

Time: Shotgun start at 8:30 a.m.
Place: Magnolia Grove Golf Course
Cost: Individual tickets \$150
 Hole Sponsorships \$800
Call: Maria Bladorn at 431-8638

Business After Hours

The August Business After Hours is a special event featuring exhibits from 100 companies who will have the opportunity to showcase their business. Presented at the Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center Exhibition Hall on Thursday, Aug. 23 from 4 until 7 p.m. This event is a unique marketing opportunity and an evening setting filled with fun, food and door prizes.

For more information on how your business can host an exhibit, contact Reeda Taylor at 431-8649. The cost for a tabletop display is \$100. The cost to attend is \$2 for everyone.

Noon Marketing Meeting

On Tuesday, Aug. 28, the Chamber will host the Noon Marketing Meeting, sponsored by Forté Inc. from Noon until 1 p.m. in the Chamber McGowin Room. Participants will get the opportunity to market their products or services. Be sure to bring handouts and flyers.

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



Member Open House & Breakfast

Want to meet the Chamber staff and find out what they can do for you and your business? Find out at the Member Open House and Breakfast on Tuesday, Sept. 11 from 7:30 until 9 a.m. in the Chamber Atrium and McGowin Room.

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

What's Up Mobile?

◆ Briefing offers in-depth update BayBank

With everything going on in the Mobile area, it's hard to keep up with who's doing what and how local projects are coming along.

On Tuesday, Aug. 14 the Chamber and the Mobile Convention and Visitor's Corporation (MCVC) will host "What's Up Mobile?". Designed to give it's audience the latest details about a wide range of topics, this year's session will include: downtown redevelopment, the film industry, environment and conservation efforts, and the Tricentennial celebration.

Sure to peak the interest of every curious citizen, this event will be especially helpful for those who deal with outside visitors in business, tourism and service sectors.

On the agenda:

Steve Walker will discuss downtown redevelopment including the new RSA Tower and Battle House renovation, the GM&O renovation and more.

Eva Golson will talk about the Mobile Film Commission and films that are being made in Mobile and as well as future projects.

Riley Boykin Smith will cover the environmental and conservation efforts in the Mobile Delta and throughout the State.

Carol Hunter will speak about the events surrounding Mobile's Tricentennial celebration.

Brenda Scott will update everyone on the MCVC's participation in SouthCoast USA, a marketing effort of convention and visitors bureaus in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Florida.

Win Hallett will give an overview of the Chamber's activities such as new economic development projects, regional partnerships and international trade.

Don't miss this opportunity to hear first hand what's up in Mobile. The event is scheduled for Aug. 14 from 7:45 until 9:30 a.m. in the Arthur R. Outlaw-Mobile Convention Center. A full breakfast will be served. The cost is \$12 per person.

Reservations are required and can be made by calling Ashley Collins at 431-8606 or online at www.mobilechamber.com.

First Friday

On Friday, Sept. 7, First Friday presents Business at Breakfast at the Bienville Club on the 34th floor of the AmSouth Bank Building. Come by at 7:45 a.m., and enjoy a breakfast buffet while networking with fellow professionals. Featured speaker is Carol Hunter with the Mobile Tricentennial.

The cost to attend is \$10 and includes breakfast. For reservations, call Maria Bladorn at 431-8638.



Local Artists – Showcase and Sell Artwork at Upcoming Competition

Local artists and photographers have the opportunity to showcase their work capturing the unique sites and features of the Mobile-Baldwin area at the Chamber's annual Business and the Arts Competition, Show and Sale.

This event is held in conjunction with Business After Hours, and encourages businesses to purchase artwork for their lobbies, conference rooms and boardrooms, thus supporting the art community in Mobile.

This year's competition will be held Thursday, Oct. 25 at Morris Galleries at 1011 Hillcrest Rd. from 5 to 7:30 p.m.

In addition to local artists displaying and selling their artwork, awards will be given in three event categories: painting/drawing/graphics, photography, and sculpture/mixed media. There is a \$10 entry fee for each category and a limit of three pieces of art per artist.

Last year more than 90 artists displayed their paintings, photographs and sculptures.

Interested businesses can sign up as Art Patron sponsors of the event for \$200 and the commitment to purchase a piece of art for their offices. Last year prices for the art ranged from \$50 up to \$1,000.

For more information, call Ashley Collins at 431-8606 or ashley@mobilechamber.com.



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?

Dauphin Realty of Mobile and Baldwin County welcomes several new agents: Wyatt C. Beard, Fairhope office; Shasta Lunsford and Terri Somme, Mobile office.

Kay Oliver joined the firm of Wilkins Miller PC. She has more than 25 years experience in the accounting and bookkeeping fields and is a graduate of Mississippi State University.

Regions Bank announced four recent promotions. Walter T. (Terry) Ankerson was promoted to executive vice president Retail Division. He has been with the bank since 1965 serving in several areas before his assignment to the Retail Division.

Patrick E. Hicks was named executive vice president Credit Administration Division. He joined the bank in 1970 and also serves as a group credit officer for the South Alabama Bank group.

Susan C. Cunningham was promoted to corporate trust officer. She has worked with the bank since 1980 serving in a number of areas in the Commercial Division before her present assignment.

Donna K. Houston, who joined the bank in 1997, was promoted to mortgage loan officer.

Cardiology Associates announced the association of William D. Denney MD, FACC. He will practice clinical and invasive cardiology.

Whitney Bank announced Tiffany Landrum was promoted to assistant vice president. Her position will include training duties in Alabama, Mississippi, Florida and Texas. Landrum has a bachelor's and master's degree from the University of South Alabama.

**Landrum**

The Bank hired Cecelia Pfeiffer as mortgage loan originator. Pfeiffer has 15 years of banking experience and a certificate from the American Institute of Banking. In her new position, Pfeiffer will process mortgages and handle refinancing and special lending programs.

**Pfeiffer**

The Mobile Mysticks announced Nathan Voytek and Eric Garayoa joined the organization. Garayoa is the organization's director of Group Sales. He comes to the Mysticks following a season with the Idaho Steelheads of the West Coast Hockey League.

Voytek, is a corporate account executive and will work with local businesses to incorporate the Mysticks into their marketing, entertainment and social environments. Previously he worked with the Fresno State University Athletic Marketing department.

Jill R. Haynes joined Sullivan-St. Clair Advertising/Public Relations as the firm's director of public relations. Most recently she was quality manager for Ciba Specialty Chemicals Corp.

Marie Katz and Julian Katz also joined the agency. Marie will serve as art director and previously worked for Power Creative in Louisville, KY.

Julian, formerly a freelance writer in Louisville, will serve as copywriter.

ERA Marie

**M. Katz****J. Katz****MEMBER NEWS**

McConnell Realty hired several new agents who will work out of the company's corporate offices: Bob Hankins, R.B. Rubira, Tracey Rouse, Ann White-Spunner and Marcia Gilmore.

BUSINESS ENDEAVORS

Clark Temporary Services LLC finalized its acquisition of Clark Temporary Service Inc., formerly owned by a national staff leasing company in Arkansas. The company, now headquartered in Mobile, also has offices in Alexander City, Daphne and Foley and Gulfport, Miss.

Bob Alston is chief operating officer of the company.

TeleVox Software Inc. and IDX Systems Corp. joined forces to improve patient service and reduce costs for physician organizations using IDXtend®. Working in conjunction with other programs, TeleVox can now deliver telephone appointment reminders by tapping into patient information contained in scheduling programs.

WELL DONE!

Infirmiry Health System won two Gold Awards in the Annual Healthcare Advertising Award competition. One in the category of newspaper advertising/insert for the Infirmiry's community publication and the other, in the logo/letterhead category for the design of its "Woman to Woman" seminar brochure.

The national competition drew 3,000 entries, making it one of the 10 largest advertising competitions in the world.

Mary Cane of Dauphin Realty's Fairhope office recently earned the Graduate of the Real Estate Institute Realtor designation. Awarded to real estate agents that complete a series of advanced training courses, less than 15 percent of industry employees attain this distinction.

ERA Marie McConnell Realty sales executives Sonja Fowler, Jeanette Ellis, Leanne Carpenter and Karen Singleton recently completed the requirements of the ERA Top Gun Academy, an advanced training course offered by the ERA Real Estate network. Each Top Gun session introduces new techniques to help participants be more productive in their market while focusing on customers.

Dana Scott, relocation director manager and Gayle Grabert, sales manager, both with Dauphin Realty, recently received the Accredited Buyer Representative Manager (ABRM) designation from the Real Estate Buyer's Agent Council of the National Association of Realtors. The ABRM helps managers working with real estate agents.

In other news, Louise Houston received the Accredited Buyer Representative distinction. Requirements include a comprehensive two-day course in buyer representation and a written exam.

Providence Hospital received full accreditation for autologous stem cell transplantation from the Foundation for the Accreditation of Hematopoietic Cell Therapy. The procedure is used for treatment of cancer patients and allows the patient to be the donor. Providence is one of only three facilities in the state where the procedure is done and the only accredited facility in southwest Alabama.

Robert Brooks of B&R Architecture and Interior Design LLC graduated Cum Laude from Auburn University's School of Architecture. He also received recognition for graduating with the highest grade point average in his class.

The Pulmonary Laboratory at the University of

South Alabama Medical Center was awarded accreditation by the Commission on Laboratory Accreditation of the College of American Pathologists (CAP). The award is based on an on-site inspection that examined records and quality control of the lab for the past two years as well as the education and qualifications of the staff.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Spring Hill College was awarded a \$147,000 grant through the U.S. Department of Education's Directed Grants program. The monies, distributed over the next two years, will fund the first phase of a project aimed at enhancing teaching and learning spaces and includes a prototype wireless classroom.

The grant represents 7 percent of the funds needed for phase one. The College is seeking donations and additional grants to complete the project.

The Salvation Army lost two large air conditioning compressors for when the remnants of Tropical Storm Allison came through the area. The damage is beyond repair and the compressors must be replaced for a price of close to \$38,000. The nonprofit agency is seeking tax-deductible donations from the public to help defray the cost. Donations designated for "Heat Relief" can be sent to The Salvation Army, P.O. Box 1025, Mobile, AL 36633-1025.

Mobile Gas employees have published a company cookbook. Proceeds are going to two local charities. For more information, call 476-2720.

The 15th Annual Mercy Medical Charity Golf Tournament will be held at Rock Creek Golf Club on Thursday, Sept. 20 at Noon. A \$150 entry fee includes lunch. Reservations can be made by calling 621-4464. The deadline is Sept. 15, and proceeds from the event benefit Mercy Medical's Patient Charity Care program.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Senior Citizen Services is hosting movie and TV personality, Mark Harmon, for the fifth year. A celebrity bowling tournament is set for Friday, Aug. 17 at Florida Bowl, and the public is invited to participate.

Call 470-5224, registration is \$25 per player. On Saturday, Aug. 18, Harmon's Bombers take on the Spirit Team, Mobile's local celebrities, at Hank Aaron Stadium. For tickets to the baseball game, call 479-2327.

The University of Mobile's Upper Room Dinner Theatre released its 2001-2002 schedule recently. The season begins in August with "An Evening with Gershwin" and continues with "The Music Man," "Annie Get Your Gun," and a drama to be announced later. Season tickets are \$88 per person. Tickets to individual shows are available for \$25 per person. For more information, call 442-2383.

Spring Hill College Division of Lifelong Learning/Graduate Studies deadline for application for fall semester is Aug. 10, and Aug.20 for evening classes. Call 380-3065 for information or to request a fall semester schedule.

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

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