

# THE BUSINESS VIEW

DECEMBER/JANUARY 2004

MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOL. XXXV, NO. 11

## Mobile Aerospace Expands

### Company plans to add 300 employees

A major expansion project – several years in the making – was announced last month that is expected to increase ST Mobile Aerospace Engineering (MAE) employment by an additional 300 employees over the next three years and add 120,000 square feet to the company's Brookley Field facility.

"Our customers are growing, and this investment will allow us to grow with them," said **Ronnie Koh**, president of MAE. The Singapore-based company employs more than 1,200 and serves a number of international airlines, chartered operators, freight carriers and leasing companies with maintenance and repair operations.

Through a partnership with the Mobile Airport Authority, MAE and the State of Alabama, two additional hangars will be built onto MAE's existing nose dock facility, giving the company the capability of holding two more 747 aircraft. Bringing the total number of hangars to nine, MAE officials said the additional facilities will make them more proactive when recruiting additional business to Mobile.

Currently underway, the expansion project is expected to be complete in early 2004.

The wide-body hangar expansion is expected to have an estimated economic impact of more than \$13 million, of which \$5 million was earmarked from the State of Alabama's Amendment One money. MAE will fund the remaining costs and, with equipment, is investing more than \$9.3 million in the project.

"The hangar expansion will be seamlessly engineered and designed," said **John Baker**, Thompson Engineering, who is providing the engineering on this project. Rob't J. Baggett is serving as contractor.

Recently, U.S. Air announced several of the airplanes in its fleet would use MAE for maintenance. Company officials say this was not the deciding

factor in expanding its current facilities. Koh said the company forecasts a "turn around" in the aircraft maintenance industry, and that is one of the primary reasons for moving forward on this project.

"These high-paying, full-time jobs will have a



Photo by Thom Scott

Mobile Aerospace Engineering President Ronnie Koh stands next to one of the airline engines serviced at the Brookley facility. With two new hangars under construction, Koh expects to service more customers in the future.

tremendous impact on our local economy," said **Bill Sisson**, the Chamber's vice president of economic development. "We're proud of the work MAE provides its customers and our community."

He credited the diligence of the Mobile Airport Authority for working so closely with MAE to bring this project to fruition, and Sisson expects to continue the trend of growing the area's aerospace industry.

"Because of our infrastructure and the assets at Brookley, aviation continues to be one of the clusters we're targeting. This expansion falls in line with that strategy," he added.

## Partners for Growth Campaign Surpasses \$7 Million Goal

The Partners for Growth campaign, the Chamber's long-range economic development effort, wrapped up in November with more than 90 investors pledging more than \$7 million over the next five years.

The public-private partnership of Mobile County, the City of Mobile and Chamber members will drive new business development, business retention, expansion efforts and infrastructure development projects from 2004-2008 in the Mobile area.

The campaign's impact will be far-reaching, according to **Harris Morrissette**, chair of the campaign and president of Marshall Biscuit Co.

He believes Partners for Growth's targeted goals over the next five years will add 1,100 primary jobs per year to the community with a targeted annual salary of \$32,500 per year, along with \$175 million in capital investment.

The targeted annual salary for newly created jobs represents a 20 percent increase over the average annual wage of jobs created by the Chamber's previous campaign, The Millennium Fund. The salary goal is also 24 percent above the region's annual private industry wage of \$26,278.

**Bill Sisson**, vice president of economic development for the Chamber, says increasing the salary goal is a reflection of the Chamber's new focus on recruiting companies that fit our natural resource model.

"We're targeting several specific industry sectors, including aerospace, maritime, oil and gas exploration, distribution, bio-medical research, transportation and technology transfer," he says. "We believe recruiting in these areas will best utilize our workforce and match the needs in the Mobile area."

Partners for Growth initiatives are three-

fold – existing business retention and expansion, new business development and infrastructure advancement.

The goals and objectives of each initiative were crafted through a process involving a number of investors and community leaders.

"Tapping the expertise of our investors will be an integral piece of the Partners for Growth initiative," according to Chamber President **Win Hallett**.

Morrissette agrees the Chamber will need to use the time and talents of community and business leaders to meet the Partners for Growth's aggressive

goals to be successful in building a stronger region.

"The investments that have been generously made for this campaign are overwhelming," explains Morrissette. "The leadership in the community believes in the program of work the Chamber's created. Now it's time for the staff, in tandem with our volunteers, to begin implementing the initiatives."

Following is a brief summary of the three

initiatives put forth in the Partners for Growth plan.

### Existing Business Retention and Expansion

The area's existing businesses represent significant potential for job creation. Efforts will include exploring new opportunities for collaboration with local vendors and suppliers, assisting in developing plans for spin-off companies, mobilizing community resources to meet immediate needs and identifying and overcoming potential barriers to growth.

*Continued on page 2*

### Job Impact Breakdown of a Successful Partners for Growth Program

Number of New Primary Jobs: 5,500  
 Primary Wage Rate Paid (Hourly): \$16.25  
 Total Direct Payroll: \$185.9 million  
 Calculated Indirect Jobs Created: 4,675  
 Calculated Indirect Wage Rate Paid: \$10.51  
 Total Jobs: 10,175  
 Total Payroll: \$288.15 million

Statistical information provided by the Economic Strategy Center in Atlanta, Ga.

## Low Interest Rates and Affordable Housing Equals Record Sales

The U.S. Department of Commerce recently reported new home sales have risen to the second highest point ever. **Jeff Newman**, Mobile Area Association of Realtors president, says Mobile can top that.

Home sales for the first three quarters of 2003 in Mobile are reported to be at their highest recorded point. The local median home price is \$110,000 or 60 percent of the national median price of \$182,100. Over the last year, the local housing market has experienced 9 percent appreciation, says Newman.

"Our median home price should be a great benefit for people in Mobile as well as people considering relocating to Mobile," says Newman. "The great interest rates along with well-priced housing are equaling more affordable monthly payments. Many people are now able to purchase their first homes and others are moving up to larger homes."

Business has been brisk in the first three quarters of 2003, and up 7 percent over the same period in 2002. Through the Gulf Coast Multiple Listing Service of the Mobile Area Association of Realtors, 4,084 homes were sold this year.

Newman says he has seen some agents selling

as many as four homes at one time when several sales contingencies are in place. "You see a domino effect when the final sale of house A is contingent on the sale of house B, which depends on the sale of house C and down the line."

**Semoon Chang PhD**, director of the University of South Alabama's Center for Business and Economic Research, feels there is a slight danger when considering the new reports on home sales. "In many parts of the country, housing prices have been rising too fast. Where that is the case, a housing bubble may occur and if it pops, prices could drop considerably."

Newman agrees, but says that is not an issue in Mobile. "That is definitely a possibility in other

parts of the country, where the median price is excessive," says Newman. "Mobile's real estate values have traditionally had a very moderate

annual increase. We have a solid base in our real estate values. Our appreciation has been very steady with no peaks or valleys. Even if we don't get a 9 percent increase next year, we should not see any depreciation."

With the national economy slowly improving, some sectors of the commercial real estate market are also doing well. **John Vallas Jr.**, Saad and Vallas Realty Group, says he's pleased with the activity. "The

Southeast is a large growth area for national chains entering our market." Vallas says that can be seen

### National Median home price = \$182,100 Mobile Median home price = \$110,000 What the same house costs around the country:

Mobile – \$110,000  
 Boston – \$409,100  
 Atlanta – \$151,400  
 Baton Rouge – \$123,000  
 Montgomery – \$129,000  
 Birmingham – \$141,900  
 Orange Co., Calif. (Anaheim) – \$471,700  
 Pensacola – \$114,400  
 Jackson, Miss. – \$114,800  
 Biloxi – \$108,600  
 Seattle – \$273,800  
 New Orleans – \$133,200



Season's Greetings

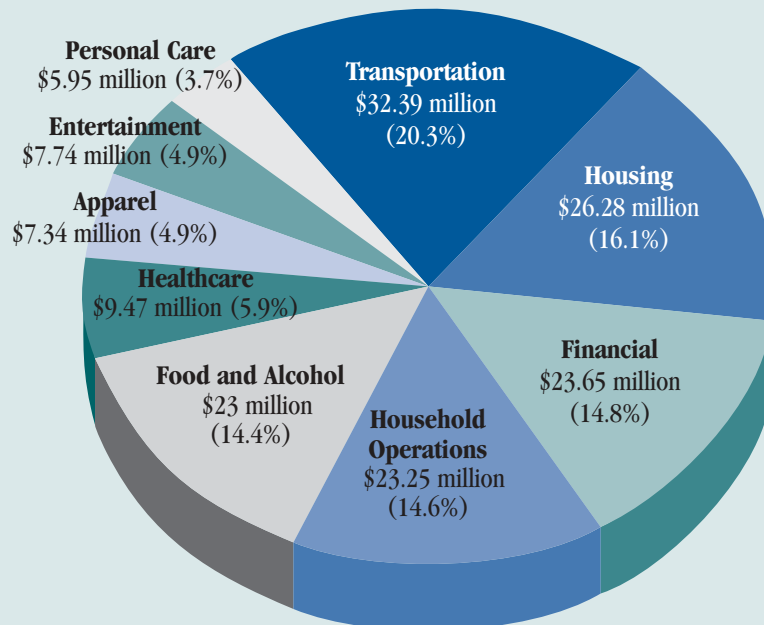
from the  
Mobile Area  
Chamber of Commerce

## Partners for Growth Campaign Surpasses \$7 Million Goal

*Continued from page 1*

### Annual Increase in Personal Consumption from a Successful Partners for Growth Program

Total Increase: \$159.28 million



Statistical information provided by the Economic Strategy Center in Atlanta, Ga.

The Chamber will continue to help area companies increase export and import capabilities through the efforts of our international trade department. Trade will remain a top priority, with strategies including educational briefings on potential international customers, trade missions and participation in trade shows. A strategic approach to providing small business assistance will be a vital component in developing the Mobile area's economic infrastructure.

The Chamber's Center for Workforce Development will continue to collaborate with local industry and representatives from the Mobile County Public School System, colleges and universities to create programs that carry students from school to work. In addition, staff will collaborate with community workforce training and placement providers to support their goals and objectives.

#### New Business Development

Recruiting new industry investment in the Mobile area will be a top priority. Recruiting efforts will target specific sectors that capitalize on the area's natural resources, core industries, growth industries and existing infrastructure.

Implementation activities will include marketing in trade publications, organizing trade missions, participating in trade shows, enhancing marketing, industry research, national targeted public relations efforts, conducting personal visits to select businesses and hosting "red carpet" tours.

#### Infrastructure Advancement

A well-rounded community provides its citizens with jobs, a stable economy and opportunities for growth. To accomplish this, a community must have the necessary infrastructure coupled with a positive business climate. The Chamber's legislative advocacy and lobbying efforts will continue to build the necessary private/public partnerships to address specific infrastructure needs. Community-focused initiatives strengthen citizen commitment to the area and improve the quality of life for all. Envision Coastal Alabama is a two-county partnership fostering a business-friendly climate supporting quality regional growth. Across the region, citizens will be informed and updated about economic development issues, strategies and activities. Nationally, media efforts will continue to promote Mobile as a great place to work and live.

### Partners for Growth Investors

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| Airgas-Gulf States Inc.                | Gulf City Body & Trailer Works Inc.                | Pine Crest Funeral Home                       |
| Alabama Power Co.                      | Gulf Coast Truck & Equipment                       | Providence Hospital                           |
| AmSouth Bank                           | Gulf Distributing Co. Inc. of Mobile               | R.G. Company LLC                              |
| Armbrecht, Jackson LLP                 | Gulf South Pipeline Co. LP                         | Ben M. Radcliff Contractor                    |
| Associated Builders & Contractors      | Hand Arendall LLC                                  | Regions Bank                                  |
| Atlantic Marine Inc.                   | Helmsing Leach Herlong Newman & Rouse              | Rester & Coleman Engineers                    |
| BankTrust                              | Heritage Planning Group PC                         | Robinson Brothers Lincoln-Mercury & Volvo     |
| Barnett Millworks                      | Holcim (US) Inc.                                   | Roy Lewis Construction Corp.                  |
| Bayview Ford Lincoln-Mercury           | Holiday Inn Express                                | S & S Sprinkler Co.                           |
| Beard Equipment Co.                    | Holmes & Holmes Architects                         | Saad Development Corp.                        |
| Bedsole Foundation                     | Home Builders Association                          | Saunders Engine Co. Inc.                      |
| Bellingrath Gardens & Home             | Industrial Development Board of the City of Mobile | Seabulk Towing                                |
| BellSouth                              | INEOS Phenol                                       | Smith, Dukes & Buckalew LLP                   |
| Bender Ship Building & Repair Co. Inc. | Infirmary Health Systems                           | South Alabama Utilities                       |
| Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Alabama      | Integrity Media Inc.                               | Springhill Memorial Hospital                  |
| Boh Brothers Construction Co.          | Irby Strategic Services                            | Springhill Toyota & Lexus of Mobile           |
| Brownell/Abeta Travel                  | Keith Air Conditioning Inc.                        | ST Mobile Aerospace Engineering Inc.          |
| Joe Bullard Automotive Cos.            | Lamar Advertising                                  | Sullivan St. Clair Marketing/Public Relations |
| Chapura                                | Laureate Capital                                   | Thames Batre Mattei Beville & Ison            |
| Ciba Specialty Chemicals               | Lewis Communications                               | Thompson Engineering                          |
| City of Mobile                         | Long's Human Resource Services                     | U.J. Chevrolet Co. Inc.                       |
| Coastal Door & Window Inc.             | Marshall Biscuit Co.                               | Union Planters Bank                           |
| Coastal Ford                           | Midstream Fuel Service                             | University of South Alabama                   |
| Colonial Bank                          | Mitchell Container Service Corp.                   | Barry A. Vittor Associates                    |
| Comcast                                | Mitsubishi Polysilicon                             | Volkert & Associates Inc.                     |
| Commonwealth National Bank             | Mobile Air Center                                  | Wal-Tech Inc.                                 |
| Compass Bank                           | Mobile Area Water and Sewer Sys.                   | Ward Properties                               |
| Cooper/T. Smith Corp.                  | Mobile County                                      | Waterways Towing                              |
| Creola Investment Corp.                | Mobile Gas Service Corp.                           | White-Spinner Construction Inc.               |
| DailyAccess.Com Inc.                   | Mobile Greyhound Park                              | Whitney National Bank                         |
| Dauphin Realty                         | Mobile Register                                    | Bob Williams                                  |
| Degussa Corp.                          | Mobile Rug and Shade                               | World Omni Financial Corp.                    |
| Denny Manufacturing Co. Inc.           | OEC Business Interiors Inc.                        |   |
| Dudley, Ruland & Chateau               | Olin Chlor Alkali Inc.                             |   |
| Enveloc                                | Ollinger Mostellar & Assoc.                        |   |
| Franklin Primary Health Center         | Page & Jones Inc.                                  |   |
| Gardner, Michael Capital               | Pickett & Adams Insurance                          |   |
| Autry Greer and Sons Inc.              |  |   |

\*As of Oct. 27, 2003

## The Bucks Start Here.

\$10,000 +

# 1.25% APY\*

For funds new to Colonial Bank.

Start earning a great rate with our new **Secure Access Account.**

It's secure – FDIC insured.  
It's accessible – available when you need it.

Please visit one of our 12 convenient locations in Mobile and Baldwin counties or call 1.877.502.2265.



YOUR BALANCE	0-\$9,999	\$10,000 to \$24,999.99	\$25,000 to \$49,999.99	\$50,000 to \$74,999.99	\$75,000 to \$99,999.99	\$100,000 or more
YOUR RATE	0.20% APY	1.25% APY	1.25% APY	1.25% APY	1.25% APY	1.25% APY

\*Annual Percentage Yield (APY) for Money Market effective August 4, 2003. Opening deposit \$1,500. Fee may reduce earnings. Limited transaction account. This is a six-tier variable rate product. Rates are subject to change after account opening.

**FINANCIAL STRENGTH IN LOCAL HANDS**

# Chamber Announces Business Retention and Expansion Program

Blending tried and true textbook examples of how an economic development program might look with some radical new "out-of-the-box" initiatives, the Mobile Area Chamber's economic development department's model continues to

change. Its most notable addition is a new division — Business Retention and Expansion — aimed at building existing area businesses.

The program tracks the needs and trends of Mobile area businesses. It then compares the community's economic climate with that of other areas across the state to better gauge how the Chamber can be more effective in helping businesses remain here and expand operations.

Current Chamber employee Brent Ericson has been named the director of this new division. Ericson reports to Bill Sisson, the Chamber's vice president of economic development.

Sisson says that for too long, economic development successes have been based on how many new companies moved to the area and less emphasis was placed on keeping them. "Existing businesses are the lifeblood of any community and it's critical to develop a strong partnership."

"Feedback from (Partners for Growth) investors was consistent that the Chamber needed to provide more attention to existing businesses' needs," says Ericson. "Initially, we're building a plan that involves more one-on-one visits with local businesses to learn more about what their needs are, and then we'll formulate action plans to help them become more successful."

He adds there are dozens of tools available to meet a myriad of business needs that are either free or have a minimal charge, and they could save companies hundreds of thousands of dollars a year. Unfortunately, many times executives are not



**Brent Ericson**

aware of these programs such as the Enterprise Zone, Foreign Trade Zone, NASA, Alabama Technology Network and the Alabama Department of Industrial Training.

The Chamber expects to partner with the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama (EDPA) in building an active statewide database of companies across Alabama. The software is designed to allow local economic development groups access to statewide trends and economic forecasts, while maintaining detailed records of local companies located here.

"The goal is to become more responsive to members' needs," explains Sisson. "Through the (Business Retention and Expansion) plan, we're planning to work better with our business leaders and get them more involved in the economic development process."

Volunteers and Chamber staff will conduct company visits to learn more about a company's successes and challenges. With the EDPA shared software, companies statewide will be asked a series of questions to gauge the needs of businesses. Ericson will integrate these questions into local personal visits.

To learn more about the Chamber's new division, contact Ericson at 431-8654 or [brent@mobilechamber.com](mailto:brent@mobilechamber.com).

# Corporate Community Service Award Nominations Due Dec. 19

Winston Churchill once said, "We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give," and companies in the Mobile area are certainly making lives by giving of themselves and their employees through volunteering.

In partnership with Envision Coastal Alabama and Volunteer Mobile, the Mobile Area Chamber established the Corporate Community Service Award in 1999 to recognize companies making a substantial community commitment through volunteer service.

Organizations supporting the award strive to encourage business leaders to create an environment where employees are motivated to volunteer and have the flexibility in their jobs to do so.

Penny Dendy, executive director of Volunteer Mobile, said she wants these companies who are stepping in as leaders and working vigorously to help better the community to act as "springboards" for other companies.

"Money doesn't solve problems, people do," said Dendy.

Dendy added businesses know their efforts show members of the community they are concerned and

want to be a vital part of the area. She also believes it's a company's way of saying thank you for the area's support.

The deadline for applications is Friday, Dec. 19. The award will be presented at the Chamber's Annual Meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 3 (see page 14 for more information).

The judging process takes into account a company's actual community service projects, program policies and the corporate vision supporting each volunteer activity. The award honors a company that has made employee volunteer efforts an important part of its operations and has ongoing support from company management. Mobile Gas was the 2002 recipient. Previous winners include: Thompson Engineering, 2001; Regions Bank, 2000; and Kellogg, Brown and Root, 1999.

For a nomination and application form contact Kyle Greer in the Chamber's community and governmental affairs department, 431-8621 or visit [www.mobilechamber.com](http://www.mobilechamber.com).

# Alabama in Top 12 of Small Business Survival Index

The Small Business Survival Committee (SBSC) recently released the eighth annual Small Business Survival Index. The SBSC is a national nonpartisan, nonprofit small business advocacy group headquartered in Washington D.C., and the index ranks states according to their respective policy climates for small business and entrepreneurship.

Alabama earned the number 12 position, where it has been consistently rated for the last six years.

The study, authored by SBSC chief economist Raymond J. Keating, compares how state governments treat entrepreneurs and small businesses. "Small business serves as the backbone of the U.S. economy — providing the bulk of new jobs and being a font of innovation — and every state and local lawmaker should be concerned with how their policies impact small business," said Keating.

According to Keating, the Small Business Survival Index manages to capture much of the governmental burdens impacting critical economic decisions state by state. "Starting up, owning and operating a business is a risky venture. But those willing to take such risks, by making investments of resources, time and energy, spur the economy forward," added Keating. "Entrepreneurship and investment serve as the economy's lifeblood."

South Dakota leads the list as the most entrepreneur-friendly state under the Small Business Survival Index 2003 followed by Nevada, Wyoming, New Hampshire and Florida. Texas is ranked as

number six, then comes Tennessee, Washington, Michigan, Mississippi, Alabama, Colorado, Illinois, Virginia and Indiana.

In contrast, at the bottom of list were: Rhode Island, 47; Maine, 48; Minnesota, 49; Hawaii, 50; and the District of Columbia, 51.

The best policy environment for entrepreneurship consists of low taxes, restrained regulation and limited government, and government protecting life, limb and property, according to Keating. He also added states following such a governing philosophy will receive rewards from America's entrepreneurs, including faster economic growth and increased job creation.

Twenty-one major government-imposed or government-related costs affecting small businesses and entrepreneurs across a wide range of industries and types of businesses are considered. These include personal income taxes, capital gains taxes, corporate income taxes, individual alternative minimum taxes, corporate alternative minimum taxes, indexing of personal income tax rates, property taxes, sales, gross receipts and excise taxes. Also included are death taxes, unemployment taxes, health care costs, electricity costs, workers compensation costs, crime rates, right to work status, number of bureaucrats, tax limitation status, Internet taxes, gas taxes, state minimum wages and state legal liability. All of these measures are combined into one index number.

Do your **Sales** need a **JUMP START?**



Let US Help

From promotional postcards to full-color brochures, Gwin's will work with you to develop the products you need to rev-up sales and get your business rolling! Call Gwin's today and you'll know why...

**We make you look better on paper**

Complete Printing Services

Foil/Embossing/Die Cutting • Large Format Printing  
Digital Prepress/Imaging • Design Services • Copies

**GWIN'S**  
COMMERCIAL PRINTING AND ENGRAVING  
SINCE 1913

410 Saint Francis Street • Mobile, Alabama 36602  
P 251.438.2226 • F 251.438.1959 • [www.gwins.com](http://www.gwins.com)

# Keep the Outside, Outside And Leave the Inside to Us.

For nearly 40 years, Keith Air Conditioning has been creating the perfect climate in businesses and homes throughout the Mobile area. Along the way, we've built our reputation with high quality standards and unrivaled customer service.

Keith can help you select the heating and cooling system that will fit your individual air conditioning and heating needs. And it's true, Keith Air Conditioning is the only Carrier factory authorized dealer in the city of Mobile! We offer installation, service and repair from highly-trained technicians.

*We'll make your home so comfortable, you may never want to leave.*

**KEITH**  
AIR CONDITIONING

Mobile: **251-476-3610** Baldwin County: **251-928-6088**

## SMALL BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

# J.F. Pate and Associates Contractors Inc.



John E. Pate holds his Alabama Associated General Contractors of America award for the construction of the Mobile Museum of Art pictured on the wall.

Throughout Mobile and Baldwin counties, it's easy to see the successes of this Small Business of the Month. J.F. Pate and Associates Contractors Inc., a Mobile-based commercial and industrial general contracting company, has built many of the monumental buildings shaping the area's ever-changing and expanding landscape.

Locally, the company's projects include Dauphin Way Baptist Church, the Infirmary Health System building on Springhill Avenue, the University of South Alabama Biomedical Facility, Blue Cross Blue Shield's offices on Airport Boulevard, Integrity Media's new headquarters and numerous high schools and churches. A few of the Baldwin County endeavors include Thomas Hospital and Spanish Fort United Methodist Church.

John E. Pate, CEO, is particularly proud of his company's work on the Mobile Museum of Art in Langan Park completed in 2001. The company won the prestigious Alabama Associated General Contractors of America "New Building Construction" award for the \$15 million project. Pate says the project was selected for the company's ability to complete the museum on time and under budget, saving the City of Mobile approximately \$1 million dollars, and for the design that expanded the former 41,000 square feet to 96,000 square feet.

John Pate's father, J.F. Pate, started the company in 1927. "My father's reputation and expertise is known throughout Mobile," adds Pate. "This company is my family, and my family is the company." It is still locally owned and operated by the Pate

family with John E. Pate serving as CEO and V.L. "Gin" Taylor as president. "Gin was an old friend who started his own construction business, and we decided to merge our experience together," says Pate.

Pate and Taylor have had a 50/50 partnership since 1984. The company employs about 40 people, most of whom have worked for the company an average of 30 years. Some employees are even third-generation employees, according to Pate.

Though the contracting field has become very competitive, Pate says "business is business. When you do a good job for a client, that client will remember the good work experience and call upon you again."

A testament to the company's long-standing excellent reputation is the fact that it has taken the lead on nearly 50 projects in the last five years alone. While Pate's expertise and experience are mostly rooted in commercial contracting locally, the company has ventured into specially designed architectural homes.

Pate also has had projects in central and north Alabama and Mississippi. For more information about J.F. Pate and Associates Contractors Inc., call 476-2500.

*The Small Business of the Month is chosen by the Chamber's Award and Recognition Task Force. For selection guidelines or to submit a nomination, contact Walter Underwood at 431-8652 or walter@mobilechamber.com.*

## Tell Us What You Think

Here's an opportunity to guide the Chamber's legislative efforts. Input from members, board of directors, board of advisors and key partners such as the Mobile Airport Authority, State Docks and the University of South Alabama will be forwarded to the Legislative Affairs Task Force. This group of volunteers, led by Steele Holman of Armbrecht Jackson, is charged with developing the 2004 legislative agenda. The Chamber's board will review and pass the agenda at its January meeting.

### 2004 Community Legislative Survey

The following are issues the Chamber has supported, or has been asked to support (this is not an all-inclusive list). Please tell us if you agree these should be a part of the Chamber's agenda, and how strongly you feel about each item's inclusion in our lobbying efforts. Send your comments on the issues below by Dec. 15 by fax to 431-8646 or e-mail to Ginny Russell, the Chamber's vice president of governmental and community affairs, at [ginny@mobilechamber.com](mailto:ginny@mobilechamber.com).

(Choose answer from 1 to 5, with 1 being disagree and 5 being strongly agree.)

#### Jobs

**The Chamber should lobby on behalf of efforts by the Alabama State Docks and the University of South Alabama Cancer Research Institute to seek state and federal dollars for infrastructure and program development.**

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

#### Tax Reform

**The Chamber should lobby for tax reform that eliminates duplication, is fair and equitable, ensures fairness in our business environment and provides stable sources of funding for public education.**

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

#### Gas Tax

**To address current inequities in the distribution of state gas tax revenues, the Chamber should lobby for increasing the percentage of funds from state gas taxes that come to our region for highway infrastructure needs in Mobile and Baldwin counties.**

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

#### Health Insurance

**The Chamber should lobby for legislation that makes health care insurance affordable and accessible to small businesses.**

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

**What particular challenge is your company facing that you feel might be addressed as a part of the Chamber's Community Legislative Agenda?**

---



---

**What other important issues facing Mobile and Baldwin counties do you feel should be addressed by the Chamber in the 2004 Community Legislative Agenda?**

---



---

## Mobile's Veteran of the Year – Joe Bolton

Joseph M. "Joe" Bolton was medically-evacuated from the battlefield of the Korean War on Sept. 10, 1950, while serving with the 5th Cavalry Regiment of the 1st Division as an Infantry Squad Leader. "It didn't dawn on me that I was leaving," said Bolton.

The 2003 Veteran of the Year was wounded during his service while attempting to help another comrade. After recuperating from his injuries, he spent the remainder of his service in Fort Benning, Ga., until his discharge as a sergeant in 1952.

For the last 50 years, Bolton has been an advocate for veterans and their causes in the greater Mobile area.

The Chamber's Military Affairs Committee and the Veteran's Day Planning Commission annually honor a Mobile-Baldwin area veteran for their excellent military record and support of veterans and their causes. Bolton was recognized at the annual Veteran's Day luncheon on Nov. 11.

He is a charter member of both the Chapter 2202, Military Order of the Purple Heart and the Gulf Coast Chapter of the Korean War Veterans Association where he is serving his second term as president. Bolton continues to find time to be an active member of Council 666 of the Knights of Columbus, the Spring Hill College Alumni Association and the University of South Alabama Alumni Association.



Joseph M. "Joe" Bolton

This involvement helped lead him to receive the Peace Ambassador Medal from the President of South Korea in June of 1997. Representing Mayor Mike Dow, Bolton led a delegation of Korean War Veterans and their spouses to the 50th Anniversary Commemoration of the Korean War Armistice in July 2003.

As chairman of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Committee, he has been instrumental in designing, funding and building what some say is the most magnificent memorial in the country. The memorial,

dedicated in June 2002 at the U.S.S. Battleship Park, represents and honors the 671 Alabamians killed in the Korean War.

Both Montgomery and Pensacola are using him as a resource to build chapters and memorials in honor of veterans in their areas.

In his lifetime, Bolton has received the Purple Heart, the Korean Service Medal, the Japan Occupation Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the ROK Korean Service Medal, the Korean Presidential Unit Citation and the Combat Infantryman Badge.

The awards are nice, but "my family" is where my true awards are, he says. Bolton has a wife of 52 years, a son and daughter-in-law along with two grandchildren.

Make the "Right Choice"  
We Care About Your Company,  
Your Payroll Needs & Your Employees



Mobile's Payroll Leader Since 1984  
Locally Owned & Prepared

A Certified Payroll Professional on Site

251.479.5777  
[www.onlinepayroll.com](http://www.onlinepayroll.com)

# Service Matters

Small and mid-sized businesses around the globe are increasingly relying on technology to support operations, compete effectively and grow in the future. Now, more than ever, it is important for these companies to partner with providers that can deliver great service and local expertise, in addition to the latest technology.

*“With The Computer Broker, I feel like I have personal service from people who understand our business. When it’s time to take the next step in technology, having people locally who can guide and support me is extremely helpful.”*

David Constantine



David Constantine, firm administrator at Lyons, Pipes, and Cook Law Firm, wanted someone who could help him build a highly reliable IT infrastructure that met the firm’s strategic goals, someone who would respond quickly when he or his staff called for help.



Sam St. John, President  
The Computer Broker, Inc.



**Fast, Friendly Service**  
[www.cbroker.com](http://www.cbroker.com)

1678 West I-65 Service Road South  
Mobile, AL 36693  
Phone: (251) 661-3111

## BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH

# Dream Fields Teddy Bear Factory

**Principal Owner:**  
Joan Bordenave

**Location:** 27955 U.S. Hwy. 98,  
Daphne (Magnolia Place  
Shopping Center)

**Date established:**  
November 2002

**Brief description**

**of business:** Dream Fields Teddy Bear Factory is a retail store and a party place for birthdays and special occasions. Customers pick out a "furry friend" and stuff, fluff, dress and name their new buddy, explains Bordenave. They also get a personalized birth certificate.

Private parties are held in the "Pawty" room, where the staff supervises games, activities and story telling.

Customers will also find a number of other unique gifts from jewelry to TY Beanie Babies to Holy Bears, bean-stuffed animals that come with a Bible verse.

A division of the store, Balloon Creations, offers balloon decorating for trade shows, annual meetings, weddings and parties of any type.

**What is unique or innovative about the business:** Bordenave says there isn't another business in the vicinity that offers children the hands-on, creative and self-reflective projects available at the Dream Fields Teddy Bear Factory.

**Most significant challenge:** "Getting the word out about us and our services" is the biggest challenge for this business owner. Bordenave, an area native, returned recently after living away for several years. Success is just a recommendation away, she believes. It's such a unique project, customers will love what they see.

**Hours:** The store is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday - Saturday. Private parties can be scheduled seven days a week by calling Bordenave. Call for extended holiday hours.

**Phone:** 626-4246

**Web site:** www.balloon-creations.com



Joan Bordenave poses with a few friends that can be found at the Dream Fields Teddy Bear Factory.

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

## CEO Profile

**Robert Luiten**



**Title:** Chief Operating Officer, INEOS Phenol Inc.

**Hometown:** Rotterdam (The Netherlands)

**Education:** He holds an engineering degree and a master's degree in chemistry from Leiden University (in The Netherlands).

**Previous Experience:** Luiten says he started out as lab manager at the company's Belgium facility. He climbed the ranks to assistant plant manager in the Antwerp facility, and was responsible for the operational expertise during and after the construction of the grassroot phenol plant in Theodore.

**Career-Changing Moment:** When his wife answered "GREAT!" when he joked that he had volunteered them for an overseas assignment to build a new Phenol plant in the U.S.

**Accomplishments:** Luiten says he is proud of the "great local team (built) from the ground up," assuring that the technology transfer was successful, and giving the new team the tools to do their job. "Not only is this team successful in the operation of a complex phenol unit in a challenging and competitive U.S. business environment, but they also show there is still a place for new, environmentally sound, successful and innovative manufacturing in the U.S., especially Mobile, which can compete with any other location in the world."

**Family:** He and his wife Inge have two children, a daughter Filien (7) and a son Lennard (6).

**Company Info:** INEOS Phenol is the largest phenol and acetone producer in the world, with production facilities in Europe and North America.

## CEO Profile

**William C. Vail**



**Title:** ALLTEL vice president/general manager, covering the Central Gulf Coast from Mobile to Tallahassee

**Hometown:** Chicago (yes, he is a Cubs fan)

**Previous Experience:** Vail has 25 years in management for cable, television and cellular telephones with Centel, Sprint, 360 Communications, ALLTEL and private consulting.

**Career-Changing Moment:** Vail says one of his career-changing moments was starting in cable TV during its beginning stages in 1979. That experience gave him the confidence and knowledge in marketing technology the general public wasn't familiar with. He jumped on another wave of technology in 1989, switching to the cellular industry as it was beginning to broaden its markets from business managers to mothers.

**Accomplishments:** Vail started working in the warehouse in cable TV and progressed to chief information officer for 360 Communications; he also helped launch the first Pay-Per-View boxing match on cable TV. Throughout his career as a manager, he has focused much of his efforts on developing other employees into leaders.

**Family:** Vail and his wife, Mary, have three children, Andrew (26), Sarah (24) and Kevin (21).

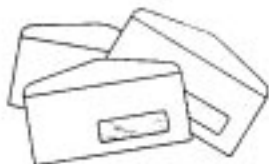
**Company Info:** ALLTEL Communications provides telephone, wireless, long-distance, paging and Internet services to more than 12 million customers in 26 states.

## Your ENVELOPE Source!

Sipco is the source for all your envelope needs. We have all sizes, shapes and papers.



Fit your forms with custom windows. We have more than 100 window dies to choose from.



10% off your next envelope order  
Clip this coupon and present with  
your order for a 10% cash discount.

Original coupon only. Limit one per customer. Offer expires 12/31/03.

Since 1967, Sipco has provided **SUPER SERVICE** to our customers! Call us today and become **SPOILED** to the fast service on supplies and printing.

We are as close as your phone . . . . .

**(251) 343-1221**

**Sipco**

1224 Hutson Drive - Mobile, AL 36609  
Email: rayra@juno.com

~ Having trouble predicting what family and associates want for the holidays? ~



~ Gift certificates can answer all of their wishes. ~

Let them choose the latest in fashions and home accessories with a gift certificate from Colonial Mall Bel Air. Available in any denomination, gift certificates are the perfect gift, no matter what the occasion. To purchase gift certificates for everyone on your holiday list, visit our Customer Service Center or call 478-1893. Visa and MasterCard accepted.

www.colonialmallbelair.com

# THE SENIOR BOWL Quarterback Club

## THE BEST WAY TO SEE AMERICA'S PREMIER SHOWCASE OF COLLEGIATE FOOTBALL STARS



The Senior Bowl Quarterback Club, sponsored by Cingular Wireless, is a game sponsorship program which makes available prime Senior Bowl game tickets to the corporate community. Memberships are sold at six different levels — Platinum Plus, Platinum, Gold Plus, Gold, Silver and Professional — so you can easily match the proper level to your company's needs.

Membership highlights include:

- Prime Senior Bowl Game Tickets
- Corporate Hospitality Pavilion Admittance
- Game Week Hospitality Events
- Stadium Parking Passes
- Official Senior Bowl Gifts And Apparel

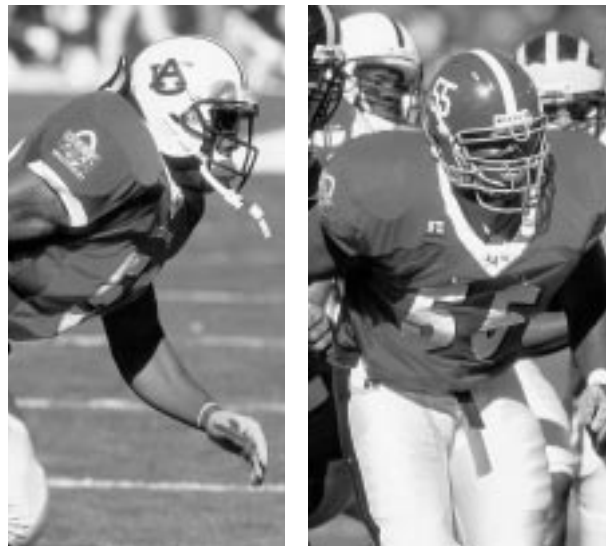


Heisman Trophy winning quarterback Carson Palmer of USC starred in Senior Bowl 2003 and went on to become the first player selected in this year's NFL Draft. In all, a record-tying 14 Senior Bowl players were chosen in the first-round of the 2003 Draft.

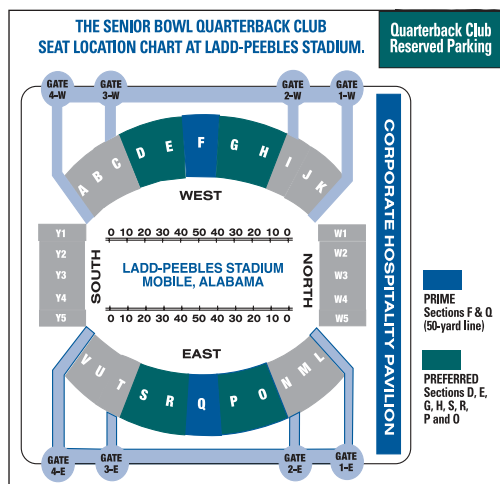
**THE 2004 SENIOR BOWL IS SCHEDULED FOR SATURDAY, JANUARY 24, 2004, IN LADD-PEEBLES STADIUM IN MOBILE, ALABAMA. ONCE AGAIN, THE CONTEST WILL FEATURE THE NATION'S PREMIER SENIOR COLLEGIATE FOOTBALL STARS AND TOP NFL DRAFT PROSPECTS ON TEAMS COACHED BY THE ENTIRE COACHING STAFFS OF TWO NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE TEAMS.**



Above: Quarterback Club members and their guests enjoy the Corporate Hospitality Pavilion at Ladd-Peebles Stadium on Senior Bowl Saturday. Below left: At the Cingular Wireless Quarterback Club Reception during Senior Bowl Week 2003, members enjoyed the opportunity to visit with NFL coaches and other football celebrities including New York Giants head coach Jim Fassel (below).



To join or for further information, contact the Senior Bowl office at 251-438-2276 — [www.seniorbowl.com](http://www.seniorbowl.com) — Post Office Box 1408 Mobile, Alabama 36633



For the ninth straight year, a sellout crowd filled Ladd-Peebles Stadium for Senior Bowl 2003.



- MEMBERS ARE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE:**
- TICKETS / INVITATIONS**
- Prime Game Tickets
  - Preferred Game Tickets
  - Passes to Corporate Hospitality Pavilion
  - Invitations to Cingular Wireless Quarterback Club Reception
  - Invitations to Awards Party
  - Reserved Game Day Parking Passes
- MERCHANDISE**
- Quarterback Club Polo Shirts
  - Senior Bowl Player Caps
  - Senior Bowl Game Programs
  - Special Gifts
  - Senior Bowl Travel Bag
- RECOGNITION**
- Game Day Public Address Announcements
  - Company Listing in Official Senior Bowl Game Program, Sidelines Newsletter, and on [www.seniorbowl.com](http://www.seniorbowl.com)
- OPTIONAL BENEFITS**
- Discount on Game Program Advertisement
  - Right to purchase additional Corporate Hospitality Pavilion Passes
  - Right to purchase additional Cingular Wireless Quarterback Club Reception invitations
  - Right to purchase additional Post-Game Awards Party invitations

**A GREAT WAY TO ENTERTAIN CUSTOMERS, PROSPECTIVE CLIENTS & EMPLOYEES AT THE 55TH ANNUAL SENIOR BOWL. JOIN NOW! 251-438-2276 • WWW.SENIORBOWL.COM**

# Downtown

## Local contractors help create 1.07 million square feet of office space

Mobile's skyline will change completely in just a few short years. New construction will permanently alter downtown, with more impact than the building of Government Plaza in the 1990s. Despite the many changes, the city's 300-year history will be celebrated, not buried beneath the new buildings. Thanks to preservation efforts, landmark buildings like the GM&O and Battle House Hotel will live again. The multi-phased Mobile Landing will tie the city to the water more than ever before. The Centre for the Living Arts will further downtown Mobile's arts and culture renaissance. Once the many pending construction projects are complete, Mobile will be closer to its goal of becoming a destination.

Some of the upcoming construction projects are out of necessity, such as the new federal courthouse. But many of the changes to downtown Mobile are occurring purely for economic development reasons. RSA invested in Mobile when it chose to locate its new office tower here. Others have as well, ranging from private investors to the city and federal government. Local small businesses are benefiting from the construction projects and should continue to do so once all new and renovated buildings are fully operational.

As new projects arise, the Chamber continues to encourage those involved to employ local contractors, vendors and developers.

### Proposed Federal Courthouse

Plans for the proposed \$75 million federal courthouse to be located downtown are moving forward, but the project is still in the design phase, according to U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) spokesperson Mildred Quinley.

The GSA is finalizing architectural design for the facility as well as negotiations on a 3.5-acre tract adjacent to the existing federal courthouse in downtown Mobile. Funding has not yet been finalized, and the GSA officials anticipate that funds may not be available until the congressional fiscal year 2005. Construction is estimated to take about two years.

The new federal courthouse will be a 322,000-square-foot building comprised of six courtrooms and built to post-Oklahoma City and Sept. 11 security standards. The project also includes 50 parking spaces about two blocks away from the building.

Locally-owned Haston Construction Co. will assist with the new federal courthouse as per GSA efforts to include local companies. Quinley said that in 2002, the GSA conducted an outreach presentation to local small businesses to encourage interest in this project. She anticipates more such activity as construction nears. A Massachusetts-based architectural firm and a Florida-based



construction company have been chosen to lead the project.

Once the new federal courthouse is complete, the current federal courthouse is scheduled for renovation. Its major tenant will be the U.S. bankruptcy court, with other federal agencies filling the remaining office space.

Federal officials are still trying to finalize the deal for Mobile's new 322,000-square-foot federal courthouse. Valued at \$75 million, it will be built with post-Oklahoma City and Sept. 11 security standards.

### GM&O



The nearly 100-year-old GM&O building opened for business once again on Oct. 1. Instead of serving as a regional train station, the downtown landmark is now 53,000 square feet of Class A office space with its first tenants moving in. John Toomey, leasing and property manager, said the available space is 40 percent leased by State Farm, Mobile Transit Authority, USDA and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. He expects the building to be fully leased within the next 12 months.

"This is very positive for downtown Mobile. It gives businesses a choice location with modern conveniences, and the building's fine architecture was preserved," he said.

The \$18 million renovation to the 1907 building began in February 2000. Financing was arranged through a public-private partnership including city funds, developer funds, Federal Transportation Authority grants and historical tax credit funds.

R.P. Carbone of Cleveland served as the general contractor for the project. According to Carbone Properties Development Director James Haas, the majority of the sub-contractors on the project were either Mobile or Gulf Coast companies.

Though the interior is completely refurbished with all new mechanical and electrical components, the GM&O remains a historic building

Tenants are moving into the newly completed GM&O building. The \$18 million renovation created 53,000 square feet of Class A office space.

according to the Alabama Historical Commission guidelines. Finishing touches, such as landscaping and a 247-stall parking lot at the rear of the building, are all that remain of the massive renovation project.

"The synergy of the renovated GM&O and the new Mobile Register building have brought the corner of Beauregard and Water streets back to life," said Haas.

# m Update

space and a waterfront park – all valued at more than \$280 million.

## Centre for the Living Arts



The arts community is working to transform 93,000 square feet of the former Mobile Register building into a permanent home for visual and performing arts.

In August, the *Mobile Register* donated its former Government Street headquarters to become a regional arts center. The donation for the Centre for the Living Arts (CLA) is expected to spur growth in the arts community, rejuvenate another area of downtown and add to the city's appeal as a tourist destination.

The 1921 building was first an auto dealership; next it housed the *Mobile Press* and *Mobile Register* for almost 60 years. It will soon become 93,000 square feet of space devoted to arts and culture.

"Your downtown is really your economic and tax base," said *Mobile Register* Publisher **Howard Bronson**. "You just can't allow it to deteriorate. This is how you maintain and develop your downtown."

The property at 304 Government St. covers almost an entire city block and is valued at \$1 million. **Palmer Bedsole**, CLA board chairman, was instrumental in securing the donation. According to **Carlos Parkman**, chief operating officer for the Centre for the Living Arts, it is Bedsole's and the board's vision to provide a permanent space for the visual and performing arts.

The first phase of the transformation was the conversion of the rear warehouse into an 8,000-square-foot showcase – Space 301. The inaugural exhibit is *Southern Current*, a collection of works representing more than 70 regional artists.

CLA has the \$300,000 necessary to fund the first phase of renovation that will temporarily get the building up and running with exhibition space, studio space and administrative offices, said Parkman. The work is being overseen by general contractor Rogers & Willard and architect Nick Holmes Jr. of Holmes & Holmes Architects.

CLA is holding a series of stakeholder meetings this fall. Art space planners will then get the community's prioritized master list of concept design ideas. Next, an architectural firm experienced in designing art spaces will design CLA's permanent space.

Once costs are estimated, a capital campaign will be conducted to fund the permanent transformation of the building. Parkman estimates that it will take several million dollars and five to 10 years before CLA's permanent space is complete.

## RSA Office Tower/Battle House Hotel

Over three years, the 35-story Retirement Systems of Alabama Office Tower and Battle House Hotel construction projects will inject \$162 million into Mobile's economy and employ hundreds in construction.

Once completed, the RSA Office Tower will house 600,000 square feet of Class A office space. It will be Alabama's tallest and most modern office building.

Since tower construction began in January 2003, contractors have been working on the foundation and preparing the site for the base pour, according to **Ron Blount**, project director. Eight thousand cubic yards of concrete, poured over a weekend, became the foundation base in November. A second, smaller pour is scheduled to complete the RSA Office Tower's \$6 million steel-reinforced foundation by Dec. 1.

Tower mechanical and electrical contracts have been awarded to Ivey Mechanical of Kosciusko, Miss., and Wayne J. Griffin Electrical Co. of Pelham. On Oct. 15, the mechanical and electrical contractors met with local vendors interested in working on the project. The \$70 million core and shell contract bids were opened and announced Oct. 29.

According to Blount, renovations to the Battle House Hotel and construction of the RSA Office Tower should both be complete in 2005. The hotel is scheduled to open first.

When renovation concludes on the circa 1852 Battle House Hotel, it will have 250 rooms and status as a four-star hotel with a similarly-rated restaurant. The additional rooms and access to Mobile Landing will help efforts to market the city as a cruise line homeport.

City officials estimate that 600 new jobs will be required to operate and maintain the facilities.

Mobile area companies involved with the RSA/Battle House Hotel project include Bayou Concrete, Burns Dewatering Service Inc., Geotechnical Engineering-Testing Inc., Hill Trucking Co., Service Point, Marshall A. McLeod P.L.S. LLC, W. G. Yates & Sons Construction Co. Inc., Keith Mosley Construction Co., Millry Metal Works, A1 Backhoe & Dozer Service (Wilmer), Allsouth, Batchelor's Mechanical, Terminix International Co., Thomas Roofing Co., Unique Glass and Mirror, Willard Rogers Painting, Safety Signals, Brand Scaffold Building Inc., Buck Taylor Manufacturers Sales, William Henry Contracting, Prime Site Development Inc. and Quick Buildings.

The foundation of the RSA Office Tower was recently completed. The 600,000-square-foot building is destined to become Alabama's largest. The historic Battle House Hotel is expected to achieve four-star status, with 250 rooms.



## Mobile Landing/ Maritime Center

For the first time in Mobile's 300-year history, the public has access to the city's central waterfront now that Phase I of the Mobile Landing / Maritime Center project is complete. Stretching from Cooper Riverside Park to Eslava Street, the \$28 million project has over a half-mile of waterfront pedestrian area and five acres of park and special event space, as well as additional acreage for development.

Over 25 local companies and their sub-contractors participated in building Phase I of Mobile Landing.

Phase II, the Maritime Center, is still in the design portion of the project. Construction should start in spring 2004 with a targeted opening of Christmas 2005. The Maritime Center at Mobile Landing will be funded using federal and private dollars. It will house a mall, visitor's center, passenger ferry terminal, a maritime education and heritage museum all under one roof. Nationally, maritime centers boast large numbers of visitors annually, ranging from about 55,000 in Galveston, Texas, to over 600,000 in New York.

According to Project Director **Dan Dealy** of Thompson Engineering's Watermark Design, the city expects about 150,000 visitors to the Maritime Center during its first year of operation. "The Maritime Center at Mobile Landing is simply going to amaze people. It is like nothing Mobile has ever had before. It is going to raise the bar beyond belief," he said.

The southernmost parcel of Mobile Landing is slated for the city's first cruise line terminal in Phase III.

"Small businesses will receive the greatest benefits from the development of Mobile Landing. Small businesses fuel and thrive on tourism. With the ferry system in place, tourism venues are going to be created," said Dealy.

City officials are exploring a passenger ferry between downtown Mobile and the Eastern Shore and other Mobile Bay coastal communities.

Local firms involved in Phase I of Mobile

Landing, in addition to Thompson Engineering and Watermark Design, were Dorsey & Dorsey Engineering, Mobile Engineering and Southern Earth Sciences, Prime Site Development Inc., Ben M. Radcliff Contractors Inc., P&H Construction, Bagby & Russell Electric, SJ&L, Hoven Steel, Allied Steel, Hill Trucking, Curry Landscaping, CK Lawn & Landscape, Mobile Paint, Melvin Pierce Painting, T.S. Wall & Sons, Robbins Fence Co., Steel Placement, Inc., Bay Area Contracting, The Concrete Company and Riley-Stuart Supply Co.



Watermark Design recently released this rendition of the Maritime Center. Construction of phase two of the \$28 million Mobile Landing project should start next spring.

## Guest Columnist

By Eric Dayton  
Crow, Shields & Bailey PC

## Is it tax time already?



Not quite, but it's certainly not too early to start thinking about it. Tax planning is a ritual for the astute and money-conscious taxpayer. Okay, so not all of us fall into that category. But maybe this year will be different. Consider the following strategies and last-minute ideas that could help cut your 2003 tax bill.

### • Charge deductible expenses on your credit card.

Expenses such as medical bills, charitable contributions, business supplies etc. are deductible even if you don't pay your credit card bill until next year. Be warned that this only applies to what the IRS calls general-use credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, etc.), not department store cards.

### • Pre-pay state taxes before year end.

Paying your fourth quarter state estimate before Dec. 31 means it's deductible in the current year. But watch out, because state tax is not deductible for purposes of the "alternative minimum tax."

### • Adjust wage withholdings from your last paycheck.

If you have underpaid your taxes during the year, you can have additional withholdings on your last paycheck and avoid underpayment penalties. Often overlooked is the rule that withholdings are treated as paid evenly throughout the year, regardless of when withheld. On the other hand, estimated payments must be paid on their prescribed due dates to avoid an underpayment penalty.

### • Time your payment of deductible medical and miscellaneous expenses.

Most medical expenses are deductible only to the extent they exceed 7.5 percent of adjusted gross income (AGI). For example, with an AGI of \$100,000, you can only deduct medical expenses in excess of \$7,500. As for "miscellaneous" itemized deductions, these are only deductible to the extent

they exceed 2 percent of AGI. These expenses include legal fees, investment expenses and unreimbursed employee business expenses.

### • Make charitable contributions of appreciated stock.

A grossly underused tax savings technique, donations of appreciated stock are always preferred over cash donations of the same amount. What if you want to keep the stock? Then buy it back! There is no 30-day "wash sale" rule against buying back the same stock (on the market, not from the charity) that you have just given away. The result is that you get a deduction for the full market value of the stock, you incur no capital gains tax on the appreciation and you get a higher tax basis in the replacement stock.

### • Make gifts by year end.

This year you can make gifts of up to \$11,000 to each donee without paying gift tax or using any of your "lifetime exemption." If you "split" your gifts with your spouse, the annual exclusion amount is doubled to \$22,000.

### • Buy business equipment before year end.

If you are planning to make major business equipment purchases in the near future consider doing so before year end. Part of the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003 (JGTRRA) allows a business to immediately expense up to \$100,000 of qualifying equipment purchases rather than capitalizing and depreciating them. In addition, property purchased after May 6, 2003 is eligible for an additional 50 percent bonus depreciation.

Also, don't forget to talk to your tax advisor about long-term planning opportunities regarding JGTRRA including:

### • Avoid short-term capital gains.

The new tax law allows for gains on the sale of long-term capital assets to be taxed at 15 percent for most taxpayers and 5 percent for those in the two lowest tax brackets. So, selling an asset before you hold it for one year (short-term sale) would mean that you will pay as high as 35 percent tax on the gain.

### • Consider transferring appreciated property to minor child (over age 13) before selling.

Gains on the sale of the transferred property would be taxed at the lower 5 percent rate instead of the parents' rate of 15 percent (assuming the parents are in a tax bracket higher than 15 percent). But wait, there's more. If the child sells the property in 2008, the gain would be zero!

### • Structure installment sales so that all payments are received before 2008.

Because the capital gains rates revert back to the old levels (10 percent and 20 percent) in 2009, it is important to ensure that all payments will be received before the end of 2008.

### • Consider selling low-basis stock before rollback provisions take place.

Capital gains rates are at historic lows, so now may be the time to sell off stock in which you have a low cost basis. For example, assume that you have stock worth \$50,000 and a cost basis of \$10,000. If you sold the stock in 2003 (after May 5), the gain will be taxed at 15 percent (\$6,000). If you sell it after 2008 the gain will be taxed at 20 percent (\$8,000), an increase in tax of 33 percent!

*Eric Dayton is a tax professional with Crow, Shields & Bailey PC. He can be reached at 343-1012 or ericd@csbcpa.com.*

## FYI

### Taxes & Technology

Business owners who file certain state and local tax returns (state sales, state lodgings, state use and state rental tax returns) with the Alabama Department of Revenue (ADOR) must now file their returns electronically, unless they have prior permission from ADOR. Videotapes of the recent Alabama Paperless Tax Filing and Payment System Seminar are available now for \$3. Send a check, payable to ARA TAPES, to Alabama Retail Association, P.O. Box 240669, Montgomery, AL 36124.

### Spring Hill and UM Among America's Best

The University of Mobile and Spring Hill College were among of 166 U.S. colleges and universities recognized as "America's Best Christian Colleges" by the Institutional Research & Evaluation Inc.

Other Alabama colleges selected from 402 Christian colleges and universities included Samford University, Judson College, Huntingdon College and Birmingham-Southern College.

To be considered, institutions must be accredited, four-year schools; offer bachelor degrees and full residential facilities and dining services; and be affiliated with a recognized Christian denomination. In addition, the entering freshman class of fall 2002 must have a high school grade point average and/or SAT/ACT score equal to or above the national average for all freshmen entering Christian institutions of higher education.

Institutional Research & Evaluation Inc. is an independent research and consulting organization specializing in the recruiting and retention of students for institutions of higher education.

## Once upon a time (not so long ago)...

In a land not far from here (the other L.A.), there was a small business owner who wanted to give her yoga studio a unique image. Without the proper brand image, she knew she would never be able to reach nirvana.

One day she heard another small business owner talking about how an unusual marketing firm listened to his problem and created a corporate image package that worked magic on his bottom line at a price he could afford without having to spin straw into gold.

So our yoga maven called the marketing firm.

"My yoga training taught me nothing about how to market myself and my business. Imagery Marketing listened to my needs and together we came up with a solid corporate image. They created a logo that I am proud to use because it perfectly represents the essence of my business. They also taught me to be consistent in its use on my flyers, business cards, newsletters, and workshop brochures. My business is growing and I receive tons of compliments on how professional my marketing materials are."

Rosemary Rowe  
Proprietor, Middle-Earth Yoga  
Los Angeles, California

If you need a little marketing magic for your bottom line... call Imagery Marketing & Research Consultants, 251.490.5699, or email [2hartman@bellsouth.net](mailto:2hartman@bellsouth.net) (subject: "Marketing Magic"). We specialize in small and emerging businesses and non-profits. We know how to work a little magic on a tight budget!

**imagery**  
marketing & research consultants, inc.

marketing magic for your bottom line

**THINGS ARE LOOKING UP.**

**A major orthopaedic center in Mobile.**  
Top regional orthopaedic specialists, advanced technologies for diagnosis and healing, and revolutionary rehabilitation. All under one roof. No more hitching a ride to the big city.

[www.alortho.com](http://www.alortho.com)

**AOC**  
ALABAMA  
ORTHOPAEDIC  
CLINICS, P.C.

\*3610 Springhill Memorial Drive North · Mobile, Alabama 36608  
(251) 661-2366 Knollwood · (251) 342-7621 Azalea · (251) 380-1140 Springhill

\* address for new location coming soon

# Trade Mission to China Brings Home Business

Representatives from industries throughout the state traveled to China as part of a Chamber trade mission delegation in September. Company owners and managers visited with officials and potential customers in Beijing and Shanghai in hopes of developing relationships that would lead into exporting their goods to a country becoming ever more popular on the global playing field.

Although mostly a rural country, China's advances in technology and larger metropolitan cities attract investment from around the world. A country with a population exceeding 1.3 billion, China is an attractive market for U.S. goods.

The U.S. Commercial Service hosted briefings in both Beijing and Shanghai, followed by pre-arranged industry specific appointments. Among the companies that participated in the mission were Excellence Inc., a Huntsville-based manufacturer of high-end ambulances; Masland Carpets, a local producer of high-end carpets; Birmingham Polymers, a Birmingham-based manufacturer of polymers used in the pharmaceutical industry; and Gerhardt's Luggage and Gifts of Mobile. The Alabama Development Office also attended.

The mission received good reviews based on results of the trip. Scott Watson, Birmingham Polymers, believes the insights he gained on China's business climate were excellent, and the potential for his company to do business in the country is good. Robert Munisteri with Masland Carpets received an order from a hotel in Beijing, and is bidding on carpeting a huge development of more than 500 upscale homes in China.

The City of Mobile and the Heping District of Tianjin, a port city southwest of Beijing, signed an agreement encouraging increased business, cultural and port relations between Tianjin and Mobile.

Corresponding with the trade mission, the Alabama Development Office and the Chamber sponsored an Alabama booth at CeBIT Asia, an international Information & Communications

Technology (ICT) exhibition for the Asia/Pacific region.

CeBIT Asia covered the complete range of ICT solutions including: information technology, telecommunications and networks, engineering solutions, software, Internet solutions and services, automatic data capture vision systems and voice processing, IT security and card technology, and banking technology and financial services.

Adtran, a supplier of network access products that enable today's widespread digital telecommunications applications, and GE Fanuc, a supplier of open architecture, embedded computer products and systems for standard computer buses, represented Alabama's high-tech industry in the booth.

A total of 412 exhibitors from different countries exhibited at the trade show, and 50,107 professional visitors walked the trade show floor. CeBIT Asia is a spin-off of CeBIT Hannover, a trade show the Chamber participated in March 2002.

Rick van Nostrand of GE Fanuc says participating in CeBIT Asia was a successful way to promote their product and create business for his company. GE Fanuc received several leads that he anticipates will generate new business.



## SCORE

# Small Business Ownership – Not Always the Answer to Unemployment

As we know, while the economy is struggling to rebound, there are a lot of people out of work and/or working below their competency. A growing number of these individuals are looking to small business ownership and seeking advice from SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives).

Bob Kirby, SCORE counselor and a past chairman of the Mobile chapter, met with a client who had recently been laid off. "This client decided it was time to buy her own business, but was not in a position to pull it off."

"She had not determined the real value of the business, and had no management experience," says Kirby. "She made an offer, which luckily was not accepted."

While an employee may lose a job, a business owner can lose his or her life savings. "Sometimes we serve our clients best when we convince them not to buy or start a business," says Kirby.

A fair number of people find the risk, start-up time and demands of business ownership does not suit their lifestyle. This is valuable information to have before opening a business.

Individuals usually want to start a business to be their own boss, get rich or pursue a self-directed career. All three are valid reasons. Unfortunately, some would-be entrepreneurs forget they need a plan, experience and money to invest.

Kirby offers two important questions for those considering starting a business.

**• Are you prepared for the challenge?**

To start and run a successful small business, owners are chief executive, purchasing agent, personnel officer, bookkeeper, advertising manager and sales director and, often, janitor.

**• Does your background include record keeping, money management, personnel management, market analysis, knowledge of the product or service, communication skills and taxes?**

The decision to open a business requires months of planning and preparation, and a considerable investment of personal assets. Rushing into a venture in hopes of easy success almost ensures failure, advises Kirby.

Business counseling with a SCORE counselor is free and confidential. Located at the Chamber, 451 Government St., counselors are available from 9 a.m. - Noon, Monday through Friday. Call 431-8614 for an appointment.



Recently the SCORE counselors elected their 2003-2004 leadership. Pictured from left to right are Ron Muschel, chairman; Dot Ryan, secretary; and Herman Tinsley, vice chairman.

**\$TOP \$PENDING  
YOUR MONEY.....  
.....AND \$PEND OUR\$!**

**Find out how a Full Service Lease on your transportation equipment from Ward Idealease can put money back into your business.**

*We also have a complete line of rental vehicles for all of your rental needs...*

*16' and 24' Straight Trucks  
24' Flatbed Truck  
22' Reefer Truck  
Tandem Axle Day-Cab Tractors  
Tandem Axle Sleeper Tractors*

**WARD IDEALEASE  
WARD INTERNATIONAL TRUCKS**

2101 Perimeter Road  
Brookley Industrial Complex  
Mobile, Alabama 36615

251-433-5616  
800-476-6841



*Mention you saw this ad and receive a 10% discount on your next rental.*

## Sunday Brunch

11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Complimentary Bloody Marys & Mimosas  
Chef's a la carte Specialties  
Egg & Omelette Station  
Full Breakfast Buffet  
Freshly Brewed Gourmet Mocha Java Coffee Bar  
Gourmet Salad & Soup Bar  
Decadent Homemade Desserts & Pastries  
Only \$15.95

For reservations call 251-432-8000 Ext: 7142

**Radisson®**

RADISSON ADMIRAL  
SEMME'S HOTEL

251 Government Street • Mobile, Alabama 36602

**DIPLOMAT OF THE MONTH**

**Trish Banker**



A Chamber volunteer for more than 17 years and a diplomat for 15 years, Trish Banker says she has made a lot of friends and acquaintances while working on behalf of the organization. Banker, this month's featured diplomat, has been previously recognized as Diplomat of the Year in 1994 and chaired the group in 1995.

Banker began working with the Chamber on the annual membership drive 17 years ago. She likes the networking opportunities being a diplomat offers – the opportunities for meeting other Mobile business people. "It's good for me in my line of work," she said.

Managing the Bel Air branch of Regions Bank, she has been with the bank for 30 years. Her career started when she accepted a secretary position at the Spring Hill branch, then Merchants National Bank.

"I want to thank Regions for allowing me to be involved and supporting my volunteer efforts on behalf of the Chamber. I intend to continue to be active. I feel great pride in being a diplomat for the Chamber."

Trish says the Chamber staff makes it easy to be a volunteer by being helpful and supportive of volunteer workers. In addition to being a diplomat, she is also a member of the Chamber's Chairman's Circle, a group of volunteers who meet monthly to contact members whose dues are outstanding and encourages businesses to get involved with Chamber activities.

"Trish continues to be a remarkable and very reliable diplomat. Her commitment to the program over the past 15 years serves as an outstanding example for new and existing volunteers. She has the longest track record of any of the diplomats," said Maria Bladorn, the Chamber's director of customer service.

*Diplomats are volunteers from member organizations who assist with Chamber activities. To get involved in the diplomat program, call Maria Bladorn at 431-8649.*

**Featured Profiles**

**Board of Advisors**

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



**Dennis L. Shortridge Jr.** is executive vice president/administrator of Mobile Infirmary Medical Center. He holds a bachelor's degree from the United States Air Force Academy and a master of arts from Ball State University. A fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives, Shortridge has also served medical centers in Lakeland, Fla.; Denver; and Salt Lake City. He has completed Wharton Executive Course, and is a graduate of Leadership Denver and Leadership Lakeland programs. Shortridge is co-author of a book entitled *Patients First, Experience of a Patient Focused Pioneer*.



A native of Connecticut, **Paul Altermatt** graduated from the University of Maine's School of Engineering and joined Kimberly-Clark Corp. in 1980. Since that time, he has held engineering and operations management roles at several Kimberly-Clark manufacturing facilities in North America and the United Kingdom, in support of the company's worldwide Tissue and Infant Care Businesses. He began his current assignment as facility manager of Kimberly-Clark's Mobile facility in October of 2001. The Mobile facility is one of three primary tissue mills supporting Kimberly-Clark's Professional Tissue Business in North America. He and his wife Chris reside in Fairhope.

**Chamber Welcomes Kyle Greer to its Staff**

Kyle Greer joined the Chamber's community and governmental affairs department recently as administrative assistant.

Greer graduated from the University of South Alabama (USA) in May of this year, receiving a bachelor's degree in communication with an emphasis on broadcast journalism and dramatic arts.

A native of Birmingham, he has lived in Mobile since 1999. "When people discover a city such as Mobile with its distinct heritage, its values and its growing diversity, its hard to get them to leave," said Greer.

"Ninety-nine percent of what we do is in our attitude. In order to like a city and make it home, you have to discover what the city has to offer and how that benefits you and in turn how you can benefit that city."

Ginny Russell, the Chamber's vice president of community and governmental affairs, thinks Greer is a wonderful match to round out the department's



talents. "Kyle has a great work ethic and a positive approach to business community issues," said Russell.

"His background in communication enhances our efforts to keep our members abreast of the many changing governmental issues," added Russell.

During college, Greer worked as news director for JAG TV, the USA student-run television station, and newsletter coordinator for the university's department of communication. He also spent two years serving as an ambassador for the university to help promote and enhance the quality of education at USA through student recruitment, private fund raising and governmental relations.

"These experiences gave me more than just book sense," said Greer. "They afforded me the chance to put my skills to use and to adjust comfortably into professional life."

Greer can be reached at 431-8621 or kyle@mobilechamber.com.

**The Chamber at Work For You**



**Making a Case**

The Mobile Angel Investor Network (A-NET) met for the first time to hear presentations from three entrepreneurs who passed all phases of the initial review process. A-NET facilitates a group of local and private investors who have stepped up to address the funding needs of start-up companies. Depending on the business plan and strategy, A-NET can invest up to \$1 million in ideas deemed worthy by investors.

**Floating Ideas & Information**

The Chamber hosted a breakfast for maritime industry Chamber members on Aug. 14 to gain additional insight into their industry and current challenges, as well as to update them on organizational efforts. Topics of interest included the cruise industry and its potential impact, and homeland security. This was the fifth in a series of industry-specific meetings held this year by the Chamber.

**Spotlighting Minority-Owned Businesses**

Through a trade out with *Steppin' Out* magazine, the Chamber developed a series of print ads highlighting minority-owned, Chamber member businesses. The first ad featured Willie Davis, owner of Davis Photography, in the November issue. To include your company in the series, contact Ashley Collins at 431-8606 or ashley@mobilechamber.com.

**USA, UA, UAB Heads Meet in Mobile**

Alabama Economic Development Partnership President Jim Hayes helped coordinate a meeting in Mobile between University of South Alabama President Gordon Moulton, University of Alabama Chancellor Malcolm Portera and University of Alabama - Birmingham President Carol Garrison to encourage dialogue and cooperation. This was the first exploratory meeting to search for areas of collaboration between USA and UAB.

**Chamber Awaits News About Accreditation**

The Chamber forwarded its submission to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce for re-accreditation and expects to hear how this organization is ranked soon, based on the U.S. Chamber's criteria of one to five stars. Hundreds of man hours went into this intensive self-evaluation, which targets the Chamber's practices in eight categories: governance, finance, human resources, government affairs, program development, communication, and technology and facilities.

Criteria for economic development, small business development and workforce development were not judged in the U.S. Chamber's review because many metro cities have separate public and private organizations charged with these missions.

**Chamber Attends U.S. Department of Commerce's District Export Council**

Chamber President Win Hallett participated in the District Export Councils meeting in San Diego Sept. 15-19. Topics ranged from security to financing (EX-IM Bank, OPIC) to exports, as well as the new Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) and many other subjects surrounding a healthy export economy.

While in San Diego, Hallett attended a function of BIOCOM, a consortium of more than 400 high-tech companies, and called on Global Connect, a high-tech incubator.

**Alabama Metro Chambers Meet**

The Mobile, Birmingham and Montgomery Chamber executives met in Montgomery recently, along with Business Council of Alabama President Billy Canary and American Chamber of Commerce Executives President Mick Fleming. Discussion included the Sept. 9 amendment referendum, legislative priorities for the coming year and best practices among the organizations. The Chambers representing the state's four metro areas meet periodically to share legislative agendas and to effect issues of mutual concern.

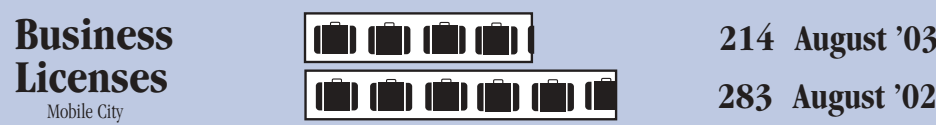
**Creating an International Business Council**

Chamber President Win Hallett addressed the New Orleans World Trade Council's International Business Committee recently. His presentation outlined the Chamber's trade initiatives.

Representatives at the meeting included members of the international business community, the New Orleans airport and port authorities, major industries served by air and water cargo, exporters/importers and the tourism industry.

From this meeting, the Chamber created an International Business Council. Tom Bates of Degussa Corp. will chair the group.

**Comparative Economic Indicators August '03 vs August '02**



# Infirmary Health System... The Regional Healthcare Leader



Throughout Infirmary Health System, emphasis is placed on enhancing health and the quality of life for each member of our community. At the Infirmary you will find modern facilities and equipment, as well as a multitude of highly skilled personnel ready to meet your healthcare needs in a caring and compassionate manner. We touch many lives through our hospital care, drug education program, school nurses, educational programs, and health screenings. In addition, we provide routine and specialty care through our medical clinics, advanced diagnostic and surgical procedures, fitness and rehabilitation services, and many other healthcare services. We strive to provide care that will influence and enrich the lives in our community.

Our commitment to quality care has never been stronger. From hospital care to home care, Infirmary Health System is the regional healthcare leader.

**Infirmary  
Health  
System**

(251) 435-2400  
[www.mobileinfirmary.org](http://www.mobileinfirmary.org)

# CALENDAR VIEW

For information on Chamber events, visit the Chamber's Web site at [www.mobilechamber.com](http://www.mobilechamber.com).

## JANUARY

January  
**14**  
**Networking @ Noon**  
ADAMS AND REESE LLP

**Time:** Noon - 1:30 p.m.  
**Place:** Chamber McGowin Room  
**Cost:** \$8, includes lunch  
**Call:** Robyn Wiggins at 431-8638 or [robyn@mobilechamber.com](mailto:robyn@mobilechamber.com)

January  
**29**  
**Business After Hours**

**Time:** 5:30 - 7 p.m.  
**Place:** Westminster Village,  
500 Spanish Fort Blvd.,  
Spanish Fort  
**Cost:** \$2 members/\$5 potential members  
**Call:** Robyn Wiggins at 431-8638 or [robyn@mobilechamber.com](mailto:robyn@mobilechamber.com)

## FEBRUARY 2004

February  
**3**  
**Annual Meeting** USA

**Time:** 5:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.  
**Place:** Mobile Civic Center  
**Cost:** \$45 per person  
\$425 for a table of 10  
**Call:** Call the reservations line at 431-8630 or e-mail Ashley Collins at [ashley@mobilechamber.com](mailto:ashley@mobilechamber.com)

## Chamber Introduces Networking @ Noon

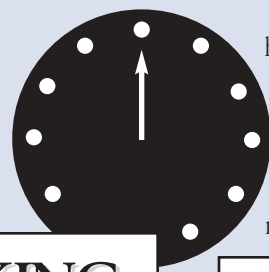
In an effort to consolidate and sharpen the Chamber's networking offerings, the membership staff has combined Business at Breakfast and Mega Marketing Meeting to create Networking @ Noon (N@N).

Sponsors will be the featured speakers, and attendees will have the opportunity to introduce themselves and their business to the entire audience.

Following a brief sponsor presentation, introductions and lunch, attendees are invited to linger and network for a little longer. In total, the event lasts an hour and a half – 45 minutes of introductions and an additional 45 minutes of networking.

"We think this shortened time period will be good for attendees who must return to the office," said Maria Bladorn, the Chamber's director of customer service.

Like Mega Marketing Meeting, but unlike Business After Hours, there will be time set aside for the sponsors to speak to the group and to have their attention, explains Bladorn.



**NETWORKING @ NOON**

N@N is also a way the Chamber can reach out to members who have busy schedules before 8 a.m. and after 5 p.m. Since most people take a lunch hour every day, the Chamber can provide a work-related outlet where members can eat and make valuable business contacts.

Bladorn expects this new event to draw a new group of participants along with familiar attendees at the Chamber's networking events. "We're hoping to appeal to people who want to 'double-dip' and make contacts at both events."

The first Networking @ Noon is set for Wednesday, Jan. 14 from Noon - 1:30 p.m. in the Chamber's McGowin

room. The cost is \$8 per person and includes lunch. It is open to members only. Sponsorships start at \$250 to share a sponsorship or \$500 to underwrite the entire meeting. For more information call Bladorn at 431-8649 or e-mail [maria@mobilechamber.com](mailto:maria@mobilechamber.com). To RSVP call Robyn Wiggins, 431-8638 or e-mail [robyn@mobilechamber.com](mailto:robyn@mobilechamber.com).

## MEMBER RENEWALS

Members Are Our Greatest Asset!

**35 YEARS**

Barloworld Handling

**30 YEARS**

Kelly Temporary Services

**5 YEARS**

Mediacom  
RoCon Inc.  
Rowe Surveying & Engineering Co. Inc.  
Zip Codes

### Member Renewals, Years 1-4

Acme Lock Company Inc.  
Alabama Flag & Banner  
AT&T Wireless  
Booker T. Washington Insurance Co.  
Challenge Engineering & Testing Inc.  
Chase Manhattan Mortgage  
Coastal Conservation Association of Alabama  
Construction Labor Services Inc.  
Crystal Mountain Water Co.  
GE Modular Space  
Global Securities LLC  
J.E. Sandifer Financial Consultants Inc.  
Knodel Associate Architects AIA  
LaTrek Agency  
M & C Association Inc.  
MacKinnon Paper Co. Inc.  
NEXTEL  
Odyssey Networking  
Partners for Environmental Progress  
Primeship Agencies Inc.  
Printing One  
ProDar Video Inc.  
Southeast Technical Solutions Inc.  
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of America  
United Cerebral Palsy of Mobile Inc.  
Willard Rogers Painting Contractors Inc.  
Williams & Associates Architects

Please show your support through the patronage of these businesses.

Thank You!

**Don't miss the largest business event of the year!**

**The Chamber's Annual Meeting**

**Tuesday, Feb. 3, 2004**

**5:30 - 9 p.m.**

**at the Mobile Civic Center**

**Tickets are \$45 per person/Tables of 10 are \$425.**

**RSVP - 431-8630 or e-mail [ashley@mobilechamber.com](mailto:ashley@mobilechamber.com)**

**Keynote Speaker**

**Carol Thompson, Thompson Group**

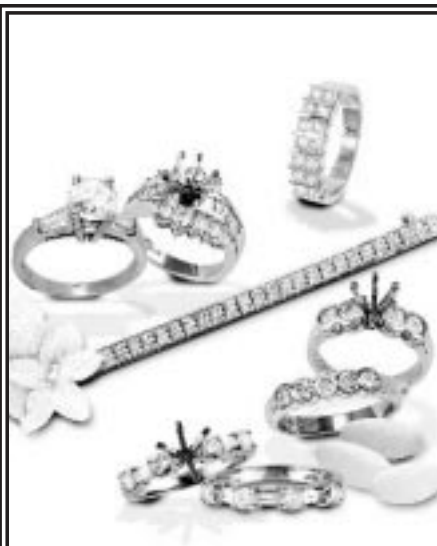
**Sponsored by University of South Alabama**



**SPONSORS:** Alabama Power • ALLTEL Communications  
Charles Schwab • Colonial Bank • Compass Bank • Hand Arendall  
Integrity Media • ITC^DeltaCom • Mobile Gas • Safety Source Inc.  
Service Point USA • Whitney National Bank

**The following restaurants and caterers will be providing food for the event:**

Aramark • Atlanta Bread Company • Bienville Club • Carrabba's Italian Grill  
Copeland's of New Orleans • Everything and More • Fazoli's  
Lassere's Catering • Michelle's Family Restaurant • Naman's Catering  
Outback Steakhouse • Ruth's Chris Steak House • Tyner's Catering



The natural brilliance of fine diamonds is enhanced by the subtle luster of platinum. The purest and most precious of metals, platinum's strength gives diamond jewelry enduring beauty. Pictured are pieces from our extensive platinum and gold jewelry collection.

**Gold Art**  
designs in jewelry

4501 Old Shell Road  
Mobile, Alabama 36608  
251-342-6303

THE BUSINESS VIEW

If your company wants to be seen by the Mobile area business community, look no further. *The Business View* is sent to nearly 4,000 Chamber members, and a recent survey indicates that 96 percent of all Chamber members read *The Business View* consistently – a high percentage for any publication.

Visit [mobilechamber.com](http://mobilechamber.com) and click on *The Business View* for discounted ad rates when you advertise for three months or more or call **Susan Rak Blanchard** at 431-8641.

**ATTENTION MEMBERS!**

If you know of a company interested in benefitting from Chamber membership, please contact our account executive:  
• Erika Dawson at 431-8647 or 402-1472

**WHO'S NEW?**

Terrie Garmendia and Dixon Hory recently joined Praytor Realty as sales associates. Garmendia relocated from Miami, where she was employed with a law firm and was active in community and charitable activities. Hory is a graduate of the University of South Alabama and the Academy of Real Estate.

Dixon has more than 25 years of human resources experience and is looking forward to a new career opportunity.



**Garmendia**



**Hory**

Roberts Brothers announces the addition of Paige Stone, Jennifer Kincade, Sam Inge, David Atigh, Evelyn McClellan, John Sloke and Mike Black to its Airport Square office. Michael Lenz and Brenda Broussard have joined the Cottage Hill West office; Jack Davenport and Jack Showacre joined the Eastern Shore office; and John Kanaly joined the Resort Properties office.



**Stone**



**Kincade**



**Inge**



**Atigh**



**McClellan**



**Sloke**



**Black**



**Lenz**



**Broussard**



**Davenport**



**Showacre**



**Kanaly**

Deborah York Geiger joined Pixallure Design LLC as public relations director. York Geiger previously served as communications director for the Mobile Area Chamber. She has a bachelor's degree and 11 years of experience in public relations and marketing.



**Geiger**

John Frierson joined Colonial Bank as assistant vice president and commercial lending officer at the bank's central office. Frierson has three years of banking experience. Prior to joining Colonial



**Frierson**

Bank, he served as corporate portfolio manager for a leading financial institution. A Mobile native, Frierson graduated from the University of Mobile. He is currently a member of the Risk Management Association and the American Institute of Banking.

Tim Dozier joined the Marketing Details Inc. creative team as junior production/designer. Dozier will develop business communication plans in tourism, travel and retail. He is a graduate of the University of Alabama, where he earned a bachelor's degree in advertising. He completed his master's degree in graphic design at the Savannah College of Art and Design.



**Dozier**

**MEMBER NEWS**

John Williams joined the David D. Williams Appraisal Company Inc. as an appraiser for Mobile and Baldwin counties.

Clark Personnel Services named Guy Storey as vice president/general manager and Meg Alston RN, CCRN as director of clinical services for their new division, MedSource Staffing Services LLC. Storey has more than 10 years experience in the medical staffing industry, and Alston has been in nursing for 12 years in the Mobile area.

Regions Bank-Mobile announces the promotion of five bank personnel. Deborah S. (Debbie) Renfroe was promoted to vice president; Lincoln L. (Lee) Hammons was named private banking officer; Sara M. Anderson was promoted to assistant vice president customer service officer; Sheila "Gail" Kelly now serves as assistant vice president internal control officer; and Cindy M. Lynd was promoted to assistant vice president branch operations officer.



**Janecky**

Johnstone, Adams, Bailey, Gordon & Harris LLC recently announced J. F. (Jack) Janecky joined the firm as a member and will be specializing in municipal liability, surety bond, workers compensation, insurance defense, probate and employment related litigation. Janecky received his bachelor's degree from the United States Air Force Academy and earned his J.D. degree at the University of Alabama.

The law firm of Alford, Clausen & McDonald LLC announced that Mignon M. DeLashmet, E. Larkin Hatchett, Charles C. Wimberly III, Jonathan B. Minchin and D. Brian Murphy have become associated with the firm.

DeLashmet is a Spring Hill College and the University of Mississippi graduate, and is licensed in Alabama and Mississippi. Hatchett is a Georgetown University and the University of Alabama School of Law graduate, and is licensed in Alabama. Wimberly is a Louisiana State University and University of Alabama School of Law graduate, and is licensed in Alabama. Minchin is a University of Florida graduate and Cumberland School of Law, and is licensed in Mississippi. Murphy is an Auburn University and Cumberland School of Law graduate, and is licensed in Alabama.

All five will practice in the areas of medical malpractice and long-term care litigation defense.



**DeLashmet**



**Hatchett**



**Wimberly**



**Minchin**



**Murphy**

**BUSINESS ENDEAVORS**

Assist-2-Sell, a national real estate company distinguished by its innovative "Full Service with Savings" concept, announced the opening of its newest franchise in Mobile. Local real estate agent Richard March opened his doors as the first franchise owner in Alabama on Sept. 16. March operated First Realty Resources with broker Sonya West for the last five years. For more information, contact March or West at 665-4663 or visit their Web page at [www.4mobileareahomes.com](http://www.4mobileareahomes.com).

Sullivan-St. Clair Marketing/Public Relations is the agency of record for Foley-based Synergy Chemicals Inc. Sullivan-St. Clair is working to develop a new graphic identity for the company, along with collateral materials and a new Web site.

Hancock Bank opened a new business financial center at 6312 Piccadilly Square Drive. The center serves as the hub for Hancock's South Alabama commercial initiatives.

EAP Lifestyle Management LLC launched its updated Web site, [www.EAPLifestyle.com](http://www.EAPLifestyle.com). Employees covered by the company's services can now access work/life services on-line, such as financial assistance, childcare and eldercare. The site also offers information and resources for supervisors, management and employees.

Chapura Inc., an innovator of synchronization technology, announced that every Palm Zire 21 handheld will ship with PocketMirror Standard software for synchronization with Microsoft Outlook. PocketMirror Standard offers a convenient, reliable way to use the built-in Palm OS application to carry and update personal information from Outlook on their PC.

The company also released KeySuite 2.1, an update allowing Palm Powered handheld owners to easily manage their information from Outlook.

Daphne-based Logical Communication Services Inc. (LCSI) has joined other U.S. tech companies in partnering with Oculan Corp. to help area firms meet their computer network requirements, such as preventing cyber attacks, keeping e-mails and e-commerce programs up and ensuring that networks run smoothly.

The SSI Group Inc. will provide claims management software for Arroyo Grande Community Hospital of Arroyo, Calif., and French Hospital Medical Center of San Luis Obispo, Calif. These two affiliated hospitals sought an overall solution to improve the revenue cycle management processes in their facilities and chose SSI to provide software solutions.

**WELL DONE!**

John L. Lake has been elected chairman of the USS Alabama Battleship Commission at its annual meeting. Lake served on the commission since 1995, and is a multi-term city council member.

Mary Kay independent sales director Elaine Burks-Goubil earned the use of the new 2004 Mary Kay Signature platinum Pontiac Grand Prix for her personal sales and team building. Burks-Goubil was awarded one of the most prestigious awards, the Double Star of Excellence, along with the keys to her Grand Prix at the company's 39th annual seminar in Dallas.

Mobile Works Inc. selected new officers for the 2003-2004 year at its annual board of directors meeting. New officers are: Robert Greer, Autry Greer & Sons Inc., chairman; Bob Williams, Mobile Paint Manufacturing Co., vice chairman; Stan Chavis, State Farm Insurance, secretary; and Mark Nix, Infirmary Health Systems, treasurer.

Patricia A. Wheat Vanderpool LPC, president of EAP Lifestyle Management LLC, received certification as an EAP professional. Vanderpool also met criteria and passed the examination for qualifications as a Substance Abuse Professional (SAP), qualifying her company to provide substance abuse services as mandated by law to all DOT-regulated industries.

BellSouth received the highest ranking for business broadband data service providers for the second year in a row in J.D. Power and Associates' Major Provider Business Telecommunications Services Study. BellSouth ranked highest in overall customer satisfaction among broadband data business customers. BellSouth received the highest ranking in six out of seven factors driving satisfaction with business broadband data service providers.

Spring Hill College announced its board of trustees. Members: Lawrence E. Ackels Jr., attorney with Ackels & Ackels LLP in Dallas; James D. Brandyburg, attorney with Carter Brandyburg PC; Stephen F. Campbell SJ, chair of the department of fine and performing arts and director of the honors program at Spring Hill College; Sarah L. Damson, owner of Long's Personnel Services Inc.; Christopher Puto, dean of the College of Business for the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota; and Dennis P. Wilkins, founder of CPSI and the Cassiopeia Foundation.

The Student Career Services Offices at the University of Alabama School of Law has been named for Adams and Reese/Lange Simpson LLP for the law firm's donation to the school.

Celia Collins, a member of Johnstone, Adams, Bailey, Gordon & Harris LLC, was elected vice president of Alabama State Bar by the Board of Bar Commissioners at the association's annual meeting. Collins has served on the board since 1998, and is the second woman in the history of the State Bar to hold this position.



**Collins**



**LaTrace**

In other news, Rick A. LaTrace, passed three different state bar examinations during the last 12 months—Alabama, Mississippi and Florida. LaTrace earned bachelor degrees in criminal justice and psychology from St. Louis University and graduated from Illinois Institute of Technology Chicago-Kent College of Law.

Bishop State Community College captured three First Place Medallion awards during the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations (NCMPR) District 2 Conference awards competition held recently in Savannah, Ga. The college received first place in the Brochure II category for its college color brochure, the Photograph category for a picture that appeared on the college's Early Childhood Education brochure and the Video Spot category for a 30-second commercial about the American Sign Language and Interpreter Training program at Bishop State.

The National Council for Marketing & Public Relations represents marketing and PR professionals at community, technical and junior colleges.

**Share the Good News**

Member News features a variety of announcements from Chamber members. Submission deadlines are two months prior to publication. (For example, an announcement submitted on July 1 would appear in the September issue.) Send your information to Member News, The Business View, MACC, P.O. Box 2187, Mobile, AL 36652-2187 or fax to 251-431-8646.

**PROUDLY SERVING THE PEOPLE OF MOBILE FOR OVER 15 YEARS.**



**(251) 443-5930**

# NEW MEMBERS

CLIP AND ADD THESE TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY.

**AFLAC Insurance Co.**  
Kara Blake  
216 Saint Michael St.  
Mobile, AL 36602-2917  
(251) 432-4406  
www.aflac.com  
Insurance

**Arrival Computer**  
Bob Dillon  
8733 Moffett Rd., Ste. A  
Semmes, AL 36575-5503  
(251) 649-4920  
Computers-Service & Repair

**Art Glass of the South**  
Joanna Smith  
2401 Government St.  
Mobile, AL 36606-1608  
(251) 479-3392  
www.artglassofthesouth.com  
Glass Residential

**Azalea City Computer Services**  
Lonn Spencer  
5508 Kaiser Ct.  
Mobile, AL 36618-2475  
(251) 344-9997  
www.azaleacityservices.com  
Computers-Software & Service

**Blue Palm Consulting Inc.**  
Mark Devoe  
5761 Duchess Ct.  
Mobile, AL 36609-3305  
(251) 342-2722  
www.bluepalmconsulting.com  
Computers-Systems Designers & Consultants

**Sharee L. Broussard Consulting**  
Sharee Broussard  
7691 Mallard Dr.  
Mobile, AL 36695-4224  
(251) 653-5483  
Public Relations Counselors

**Cornerstone Investment Management & Consulting**  
Mark Davison  
1716 Main St., Ste. B  
Daphne, AL 36526-4442  
(251) 379-0297  
www.investwithcornerstone.com  
Investment Services

**Dauphin House**  
Carol Clark  
730 Cadillac Ave.  
Dauphin Island, AL 36528-4402  
(251) 861-3514  
www.dauphinhouse.com  
Bed & Breakfast

**Dream Fields Teddy Bear Factory Inc.**  
Joan Bordenave  
27955 Hwy. 98, Ste. N  
Daphne, AL 36526-4727  
(251) 626-4246  
www.balloon-creations.com  
Entertainment Facilities

**Goodloe & McDermott CPA**  
Edward McDermott  
4636 Bit & Spur Rd., Ste. D  
Mobile, AL 36608-2646  
(251) 343-4335  
Accountants-Certified Public

**Douglas H. Grant DMD**  
Douglas Grant  
5047 Cottage Hill Rd.  
Mobile, AL 36609-4204  
(251) 600-8600  
Dentists-Pediatric

**Hancock Bank**  
Michael O Sullivan  
6312 Piccadilly Square Rd., Ste. 3  
Mobile, AL 36609-5143  
(251) 343-1273  
www.hancockbank.com  
Banks

**Home Instead Senior Care**  
Nick Logiotatos  
1141 Montlamar Dr., Ste. 2015  
Mobile, AL 36609-1720  
(251) 342-6655  
www.homeinstead.com  
Home Health Service

**Horst GMAC Real Estate**  
Brian Horst  
1230 Montlamar Dr.  
Mobile, AL 36609-1711  
(251) 460-4622  
www.horstgmac.com  
Real Estate

**Jackson Myrick LLP**  
Thomas Woodford  
64 N. Royal St.  
Mobile, AL 36602-3804  
(251) 432-1811  
Attorneys

**The Lafayette Plaza Hotel**  
Shawn Dixon  
301 Government St.  
Mobile, AL 36602-2608  
(251) 694-0100  
www.lafayetteplazahotel.com  
Hotels

**Mobile Yoga**  
Nadia Jenkins  
128 L. Durlin Dr.  
Mobile, AL 36608-1209  
(251) 533-4953  
www.fromstresstosuccess.org  
Fitness

**OBG Shipping Inc.**  
John Evans  
36611 Lake Rd. S., Bldg. 305  
Mobile, AL 36605-6001  
(251) 443-9899  
www.obggroup.com  
Shipping Agent

**Pop A Lock**  
Jim Barnett  
4904 Oak Cir. Dr. N., Ste. 203  
Mobile, AL 36609-4250  
(251) 602-8050  
www.popalock.com  
Locks & Locksmiths

**Prosthetics South**  
Michael Dumars  
3654C Airport Blvd.  
Mobile, AL 36608-1616  
(251) 343-9848  
Prosthetic Devices

**Ruby Tuesday**  
Bill Cheatham  
5205 Service Rd. S. Higgins Rd.  
Mobile, AL 36619-9541  
(251) 662-1287  
www.rubytuesday.com  
Restaurants

**Ruby Tuesday**  
Maynard Winchester  
1206 Shelton Beach Rd.  
Saraland, AL 36571-3017  
(251) 679-4072  
www.rubytuesday.com  
Restaurants

**Ruby Tuesday**  
Craig Bailey  
6255 Airport Blvd.  
Mobile, AL 36608-3133  
(251) 342-4588  
www.rubytuesday.com  
Restaurants

**Ruby Tuesday**  
Phillip Abernathy  
3160 Colonial Mall - Bel Air  
Mobile, AL 36606-3206  
(251) 476-5144  
www.rubytuesday.com  
Restaurants

**Ruby Tuesday**  
Mark Aguilard  
2617 Dauphin St.  
Mobile, AL 36606-4810  
(251) 476-3847  
www.rubytuesday.com  
Restaurants

**Safeware Data Backup**  
Scott McCall & Joe Hickman  
P.O. Box 09188  
Mobile, AL 36691-0188  
(251) 458-4814  
www.safe-ware.net  
Computer Backup

**Sea Pines Manufactured Home Community**  
Melissa Parrish  
1451 Cedar Crescent Dr.  
Mobile, AL 36605-3561  
(251) 478-0281  
www.chateaunomm.com  
Manufactured Homes

**SGM Sales**  
Sheila Murphy  
7261 Ching Dairy Ln. S.  
Mobile, AL 36618-4233  
(251) 209-5611  
Consulting Actuary

**Signs Now**  
Susan Pigott  
3747 Government Blvd., Ste. B  
Mobile, AL 36693-4307  
(251) 660-0639  
Banners

**Vance Smith - American Artist**  
Vance Smith  
P.O. Box 1102  
Mobile, AL 36633-1102  
(251) 432-6541  
Artists

**Stonegate Town Homes**  
Lois Smith  
6701 Dickens Ferry Rd.  
Mobile, AL 36608-3975  
(251) 344-8000  
Apartments

**Tiny Town**  
Sunny Boothe  
3958 Airport Blvd.  
Mobile, AL 36608-2224  
(251) 341-1480  
www.tinytowninc.com  
Children & Infants Wear

**United States Postal Service**  
Fonda Ganit  
250 St. Joseph St.  
Mobile, AL 36601-2001  
(251) 694-5904  
www.usps.com  
Mailing Services

**Unlimited Sitter Service**  
Rylandee James  
P.O. Box 66411  
Mobile, AL 36606-1411  
(251) 666-2760  
Dry Care Center-Adult

**Wings Sports Grille**  
Gene Bishop  
3673 Airport Blvd.  
Mobile, AL 36608-1615  
(251) 344-2131  
www.wingsportsgrille.com  
Restaurants

**Workers Temporary Staffing Inc.**  
Randy Grimes  
50 N. Broad St.  
Mobile, AL 36602-1304  
(251) 433-4577  
www.workerstemp.com  
Employment Agencies & Consultants

As of Oct. 1, 2003

Periodicals  
Postage  
Paid  
Mobile, AL



MOBILE AREA  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

www.mobilechamber.com

THE BUSINESS VIEW (USPS 952-700) is published monthly, except for the combined issues of January/February 2003 and December/January 2004, by the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, 431 Government Street, Mobile, Alabama 36602 (251) 433-6951. Subscription rate is \$24 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Mobile, Alabama. Winthrop M. Hallett III, publisher; Leigh Perry Herndon, executive editor; Susan Rak Blanchard, managing editor; Angie Baldwin, Sharon L. Broussard, Ashley Collins, Rene Eiland, Patricia Y. Hartman APR and Michelle Roberts Matthews, contributing writers and editors. Office Supplies Inc., printing services. Wise Design Inc., graphic services. POSTMASTER, send address changes to Attn.: Finance Department, THE BUSINESS VIEW, MACC, P.O. Box 2187, Mobile, Alabama 36652-2187 or e-mail us at info@mobilechamber.com. © 2003

# THE BUSINESS VIEW

DECEMBER/JANUARY 2004 MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE VOL. XXXV, NO. 11



Photo by Thom Scott

## CONTENTS

3

**ON THE COVER:** The team at Mobile Aerospace Engineering is expected to increase by 25 percent, as two new hangars are being added to the Brookley facility. Pictured here is company President Ronnie Koh (center) with a team of employees.

7-8

Local companies are involved in more than \$280 million of potential capital investment in downtown Mobile. Here's an update on the construction activity changing the downtown landscape.

10

Expert advice for end of the year tax tips.