

# THE BUSINESS VIEW

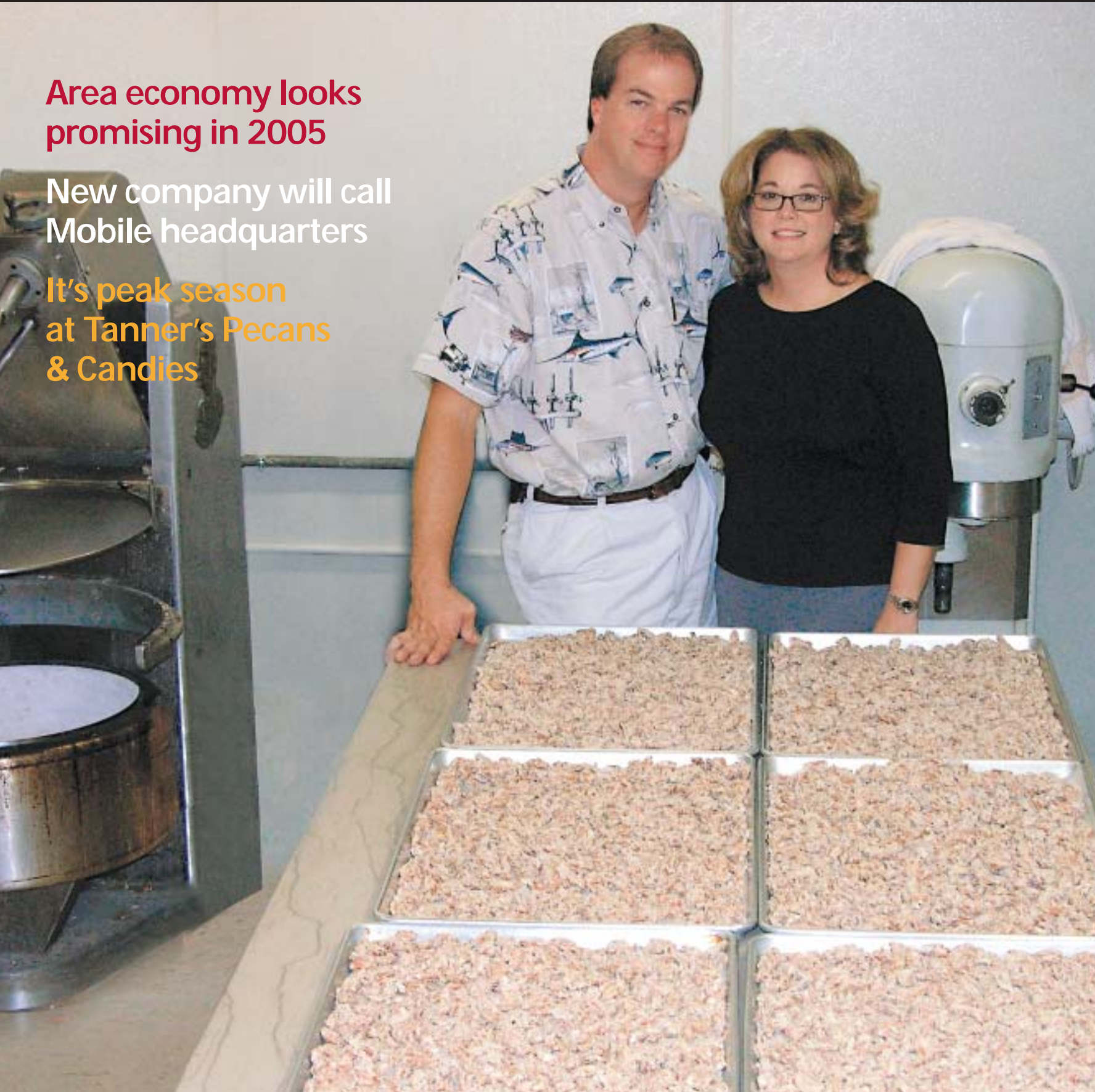
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MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**Area economy looks promising in 2005**

**New company will call Mobile headquarters**

**It's peak season at Tanner's Pecans & Candies**



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*Cover photo by Susan Rak Blanchard.*



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# Economic Expectations High

## 2004 Indicators Show Strong Results



Many economic indicators show the area's economy is continuing to grow, and anticipated holiday sales are expected to continue the momentum, propelling Mobile's economy to even stronger levels for the start of 2005.

"It looks like we moved past recovery and consistently into growth mode," said **Semoon Chang PhD**, director of the Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of South Alabama.

### City Tax Receipts Up

City of Mobile tax receipts for the first time in several years registered larger increases than Mobile County.

According to **Paul Arnold**, a revenue manager for the city of Mobile, the new sales and use tax that went into effect Oct. 1, 2003 is the reason for the increase. "We can see the numbers," said Arnold. The new tax structure has boosted overall sales and secured Mobile's share of Internet and catalog sales that went previously untaxed. Mobile County is still using gross receipts tax.

The major difference between the two is the new formula calculates taxes based on where the customer accepts delivery (point of delivery) and gross receipts taxes are based on point of sale.

On the flip side, Chang is concerned about the Eastern Shore Centre retail development and its possible effect on city and county sales tax receipts. But retailers in Mobile expect the impact to be short-term.

"We're not panicked at all," said **Tim Nolan**, general manager of Colonial Mall

Bel Air. The first year the new center at Malbis is open, Nolan estimates it will cost his mall 3 to 5 percent. "That's what happens when competition enters the market. After the first year, we'll go back to sales increases because, as people make more money, they spend more money." Colonial Mall Bel Air, one of few in the country that are 98 percent occupied, recently has drawn a number of national retailers like Hollister and Abercrombie & Fitch.

Last year, the state of Alabama collected more than \$6 billion in taxes, recording another annual increase. In 2004, sales and individual income taxes rose again through August.

### Housing Market to Remain Red-Hot

**Mickie Russell**, president of Dauphin Realty, said, "2004 is the best year we've ever had."

According to the Multiple Listing Service, home sales surpassed 5,400 last year, and economists expected rising interest rates to curtail activity. The Federal Reserve has raised the prime interest rates three times since June by .25 percent each time, but mortgage rates continued to be among the lowest in 40 years and Mobile's housing deals are still consistently beating the area's banner 2003 year.

"Building is up, sales are up in both Mobile and Baldwin counties – everything is up," said Russell. She added low interest rates are allowing young couples to move into larger second homes a little earlier, and continue to be a driving influence in overall sales.

**Ellen Maxime**, Mobile Bay Area Apartment Association president and property manager for Delaney Development,

said the housing boom has had a negative impact on apartment occupancy since 2001.

"When interest rates dropped, people were buying and occupancy fell close to 5 percent. Now things are leveling off and things are getting better."

### The Population Factor

Mobile County's population has held steady at about 400,000 for the past five years, while the city population dropped slightly and the unincorporated areas grew moderately, a trend **Lynn Stacey**, executive director of the Business Innovation Center, said is common.

"Typically families that are migrating are generally high income. Some counties will grow faster than others, some will hollow out. Mobile will be in the middle." Stacey adds that depending on whether population statistics are being affected by net birth-to-death ratio or by net in-to-out migration, Mobile could end up in the negative, economically.

Stacey recommends the city continue with the demolition of run down areas, such as the housing development along I-65, and efforts to recruit tenants and tourists downtown, referring to Carnival Cruise Lines and the RSA office tower.

"We should be focusing on importing dollars versus people," said Stacey.

### Employment Opportunities Will Remain Key

County employment peaked in 1998, with manufacturing closings taking its toll on county employment. The first employment increase was recorded in 2003, and sharp gains have been reported through 2004. "Impressive growth is charted month by month," said Chang.

**Bill Sisson**, the Mobile Area Chamber's vice president of economic development, believes local companies are responding to the national economy. "There's a lot of pent-up growth and demand, and people are feeling a lot more optimistic about Mobile."

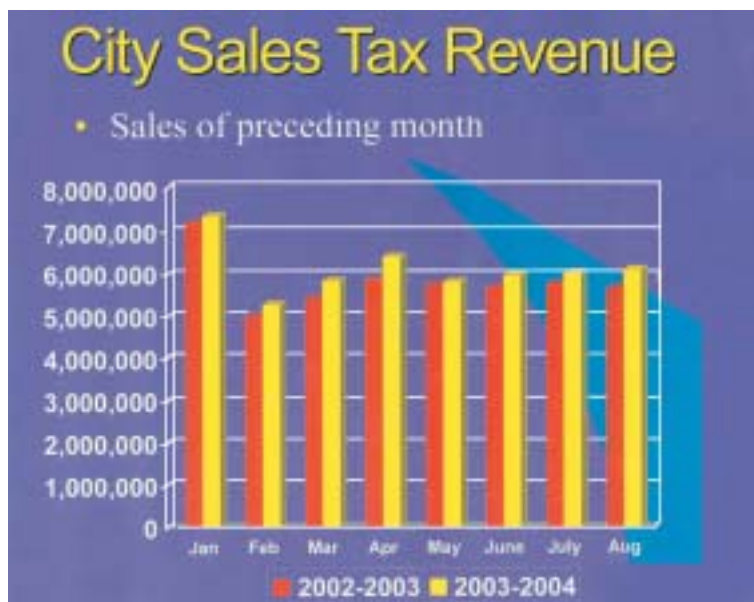
Statewide unemployment is 6 percent, and in Mobile, 7.4 percent. So far, 18,700 jobs have been added to the state economy. According to Chang, there has been a net gain of 2,040 jobs in Mobile from August 2003 through August 2004.

Sisson said area maritime, high-tech and other companies are contributing to that number. "Austal is looking to hire 600 workers over the next two to three years. Mobile Aerospace Engineering needs to increase its workforce, and companies like Mentor Graphics, TeleVox and Integrity Media area also hiring."

Early indications from a survey conducted by the Chamber have projected area companies will hire 1,176 employees and invest \$357 million in capital over the next four years. "Area executives are seeing good things ahead," said Sisson.

Business licenses issued in the city of Mobile are nearly double what they were through the same time period of 2003. From January through August 2003, there were 1,892 business licenses granted. In 2004, the number is 3,429.

**Darrell Randle**, small business development vice president for the Chamber, said that doesn't surprise him. "Mobile has been recognized for a number of years as an entrepreneurial-friendly city – the numbers show a lot of people are aware of the resources available to small business owners who have the courage to pursue their dream."



## Outlook Positive for Mobile

Results of the statewide Business Leaders Confidence Index (BLCI) show the economy and the confidence factor improving side by side. "It (BLCI) is a good predictor of how the economy is actually progressing," said **Ahmad Ijaz**, economist with the University of Alabama Center for Business and Economic Research.

In June, the Alabama consumer confidence index had the strongest reading in nearly two years, according to the third quarter BLCI report. Navigating the Alabama economy, automotive manufacturers and suppliers are ahead of the national curve, growing at 21.5 percent, according to Ijaz.

The Port of Mobile is already seeing an impact from the state's accelerating automotive industry.

"We're the closest deep water port and have excellent transportation connections via rail or highway to these manufacturers and suppliers," said **Judith Adams** with the Alabama State Port Authority. "This is one of the driving reasons behind Choctaw Point, the intermodal facility aimed at increasing the port's container traffic."

Adams estimates there will be 40,000 TEUs (20-foot equivalent units) for

Hyundai alone. She also emphasizes the importance of the South American markets as well as increasing imports from Europe and the Far East. "The infrastructure is in place. Choctaw Point is enhancing what we have so we can capture our share of the container market."

There are a number of infrastructure projects Chang lists that will continue to impact the Mobile economy well into 2005 including:

- RSA Tower & Battle House Hotel (valued at \$160 million);
- Mobile County Public School System renovations and repairs (\$100 million, and will increase with the repairs needed from Hurricane Ivan);
- Choctaw Point Intermodal Facility (valued at \$300 million);
- National Maritime Museum of the Gulf Coast, Welcome Center and High-Speed Ferry Terminal (\$26 million);
- University of South Alabama Technology Park (\$10 million);
- University of South Alabama Cancer Research Institute (\$40 million); and
- Voters recently approved an estimated \$92 million worth of "pay as you go" infrastructure projects, including an additional shed at Austal USA.

## Factor X – The Unknown Economic Influence of Hurricane Ivan

Hurricane Ivan's economic impact is yet to be determined, said **Semoon Chang PhD**, director of the Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of South Alabama. But as damage estimates are still being tallied, Ivan is expected to be the costliest storm on record. Locally, the impact will be felt as property owners and companies shell out funds to meet insurance deductibles, municipalities underwrite clean-up fees and tourism-dependent businesses suffer in Alabama's coastal areas.

The silver lining comes when calculating the economic injection of insurance claim funds and FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Assistance) funds. And weeks after the hurricane, area hotels and motels remained full. Emergency workers and volunteers stayed as far away as Gulfport and commuted by bus.

**Barbara Estes**, president of the Associated Builders and Contractors, said, "There was already a ton of work scheduled before the hurricane. A number of local companies have a six-month backlog of work. The project lists span residential, commercial, schools, landscaping, flooring, roofing – just about everything imaginable."

"There is a possibility of a post-hurricane construction boom," said Chang, depending on the number of home and condo owners who are able to afford to meet the new hurricane codes.

The latest statistics such as tax collections, employment, home sales and more through August 2004 show even with the uncertainty of Hurricane Ivan, the area's economy met expectations.

Another critical unknown in the economic picture is the cost of gas and oil. "Many of the rigs in the Gulf of Mexico were damaged in the hurricane, and then came along Tropical Storm Matthew. It's going to be a while before all the repairs are made and anything remotely tied to petroleum, like roof shingles or the cost to run a concrete truck, is going to be affected," said Estes.

## Fast Facts By the Numbers

The average economic growth for the last 100 years averaged 3 percent. That's why any year meeting or exceeding that percentage qualifies as a growth year. Here are key economic predictions by local, state and national economists:

### National

• The national economy is expected to achieve 4.6 percent growth for 2004,

the fastest since 1984;

- Growth in 2005 for the nation, is estimated at 3.9 percent;
- Interest rates are predicted to increase above 6 percent, and possibly stretch to close to 7 percent in 2005;
- Inflation is estimated at 2.5 percent for 2004 and 2.0 percent for 2005;
- Unemployment should decline to 5.3 or 5.4 percent.

### State

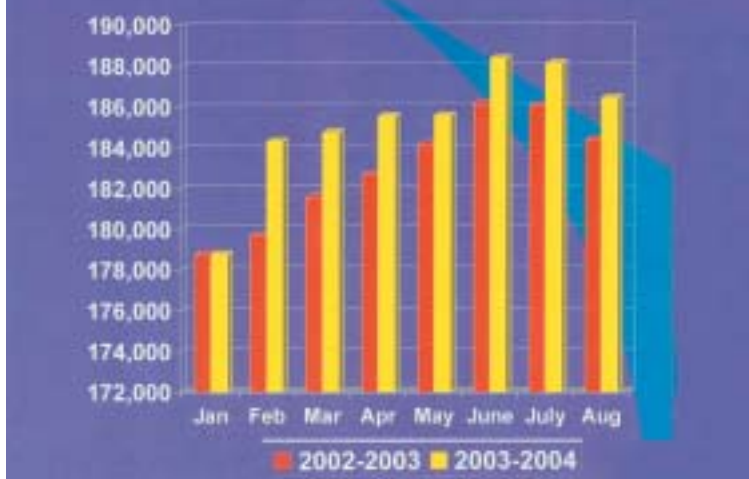
- The state economy will grow by an estimated 3.5 - 4 percent for 2004;
- Alabama added 18,700 new jobs between January and May 2004;
- Payroll will rise 0.3 - 0.5 percent;
- Interest rates were named the most influencing factor in the latest survey of the Business Leaders Confidence Index.

### Local

- Continued growth at a rate of 3 - 5 percent is expected at least through the first half of 2005, and may slow to 2 - 4 percent in the second half of the year.

*Sources: Semoon Chang PhD, University of South Alabama Center for Business and Economic Research; Ahmad Ijaz, University of Alabama Center for Business and Economic Research; and the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce economic development department.*

## Mobile County Employment



## Local Population Trend



# Mobile Wins IPSCO's \$45 Million Addition

IPSCO Steel (Alabama) Inc. selected Mobile to locate its continuous plate heat treating operation, that will be one of the most modern facilities of its kind in the world. The facility is expected to be fully-operational in the first quarter of 2006. The Mobile site was in competition with IPSCO's sister plant in Montpelier, Iowa.

The \$45 million facility will produce 170,000 tons per year of steel ranging in thickness and sized to fill a supply void in North America.

IPSCO will build a 140,000-square-foot building that will be fully automated. Company officials expect to add an additional 25 jobs, with average annual wages of \$50,000.

With this announcement, IPSCO is increasing its portfolio of steel products and will offer customers even more choices.

"(This expansion project) will add to the company's strategy of providing value-added capability to the market," said **John Tulloch**, IPSCO executive vice president. "IPSCO has had a very positive experience building and operating its steel operations in Mobile, and the support of customers, regulatory authorities, employees and the community has justified locating this new processing line in Alabama."

The Mobile Area Chamber worked on this project for the last six months, according to **Green Suttles**, project manager for the Chamber. Currently approximately 350 people are IPSCO employees, with another estimated 200 contract workers on site full-time.

"IPSCO has been a good corporate citizen," Mobile County Commissioner **Samuel Jones** said. "I am really happy to see the continued expansion of the facility, which creates employment opportunities for the citizens of Mobile County."

"This is exactly the type of downstream project the community was hoping to land when we first recruited IPSCO here in 1998," said **Bill Sisson**, vice president of economic development for the Mobile Area Chamber. "We hope

IPSCO will continue to invest and attract other investors as the mill matures."

The company's main site opened in 2001, and produces discreet-plate and hot-rolled steel. An investment in 2002 with Blastek Corp. brought a blast and prime facility to the campus, enabling IPSCO customers a wider variety of products.

IPSCO Steel is used in a variety of construction industries, including maritime, automotive and industrial equipment.

**"This is exactly the type of downstream project the community was hoping to land when we first recruited IPSCO here in 1998,"**

**Bill Sisson**

# Chamber Recruits New Company to the Area

## ◉ Vimax Industries will locate on U.S. Amines Site

The U.S. Amines manufacturing facility on U.S. Hwy. 43 in Bucks has a new tenant scheduled to open its doors in December. Vimax Industries Inc., which produces sodium hydrosulfite (SHS), a non-chlorine bleaching agent used in the paper, textile and kaolin industries, will be headquartered in Mobile County.

SHS makes paper white, prepares fabrics – particularly denims – to be dyed and bleaches the orange color out of clay so it can become the clear varnish for magazine covers.

Vimax is opening on a portion of the U.S. Amines site once owned by Virginia Chemicals, after investing more than \$10 million in capital improvements to the facility.

Company President **Jim Glauser** estimates the company will initially employ 30 to 40 workers, with a short-term goal of increasing that number to 60 to 70. According to the company's cost-benefit analysis for this project, average annual salary will be \$48,000. A second plant is being opened in Montreal, Quebec, to produce the same chemical.

Vimax is set to become the largest producer of SHS in North America, and the second largest producer worldwide. The company's two facilities will also become the world's largest consumer of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>). The two plants are strategically positioned to service the pulp and paper, textile and kaolin industries worldwide. According to Glauser, having two sites producing dry SHS is part of Vimax's long-term strategy to provide a reliable source for liquid and dry SHS.

The Vimax site is collocated at the U.S. Amines facility. Collocation maximizes infrastructure, such as roads and bridges, and resources. The partnership can save millions of start-up dollars needed for capital improvements.

Glauser said the company signed a long-term lease on the site, yet owns the equipment on it.

Virginia Chemicals at one time operated the same type of facility at the site. The Vimax product, however, is cleaner, with newer processing technology.

"Our short-term goal is to become a zero-discharge chemical facility. We're currently considered a very, very low emissions facility," said Glauser.

Locating on the U.S. Amines site offers advantages, such as sharing wastewater facilities, lab space, security and safety resources and some utilities.

"This project is an excellent opportunity to put high-paying jobs back into an abandoned facility," said **Bill Sisson**, vice president of economic development for the Mobile Area Chamber. "Vimax has successfully capitalized on existing infrastructure at a manufacturing site, and the Mobile Area Chamber is aggressively seeking additional partnerships such as this one."

Last year, the Chamber's economic development department attended a trade show and promoted Degussa and Ciba Specialty Chemicals in Washington County

as two site options for companies looking to collocate.

Manufacturing companies in the Mobile area are consistently looking at best practices around the world to make their businesses stronger.

Ciba Specialty Chemicals and Degussa Corp. are two established industries actively recruiting companies to locate on their properties. Amenities abound on both campuses, and throughout Mobile County. In addition, both Ciba and Degussa sites have access to the county's dense infrastructure already in place. This includes two major Interstates – I-10 and I-65, five railroad systems, two airports, a full-service port and the Tennessee-Tombigbee waterway.

To learn more about collocation, contact **Green Suttles**, Chamber project manager, at 431-8648 or [green@mobilechamber.com](mailto:green@mobilechamber.com).

### Potential Benefits and Property Amenities of Colocation

Colocation is a partnership in which businesses choose to locate on the campus of another company, sharing resources and infrastructure. By collocating, companies can save millions in initial capital investment. Several manufacturing facilities in the Mobile area are collocation sites, including Degussa Corp., Ciba Specialty Chemicals and DuPont.

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Saavy business owners are lining up to meet with their accountants to take advantage of year-end tax tips.

### Small Business Tax Tips

- Unlike personal income, business income is not taxed – only the profit on a business is subject to taxes.
- The Self-Employment Tax is independent of profit.
- Keep all your receipts.
- Deducting your home office and associated expenses provides excellent tax breaks.
- Turn non-deductible vacation expenses into deductible business travel.
- You must set up most retirement plans by Dec. 31 in order to get a tax deduction for the current year.
- Hire your kids and save on taxes.
- You can deduct up to \$100,000 of capital equipment costs ranging from computers to certain sport utility vehicles.

Source: [www.turbotax.com](http://www.turbotax.com)

## Planning Ahead Can Lower Tax Bills

It's not too soon to be thinking about tax season. Planning carefully before 2004 ends could make a big difference in a company's tax bill in 2005.

"Small business owners need to get their books in order, find out where they stand and determine whether any planning opportunities exist," said **Briley Shirah**, a certified public accountant (CPA) and tax manager at Mobile accounting firm Russell, Thompson, Butler & Houston LLP. "It's very important to do (plan) ahead of time to minimize taxes."

Many experts recommend deferring income until next year and pre-paying some 2005 expenses to minimize taxes. Shirah noted companies using accrual-based accounting may have more options than those operating on a cash basis.

"Accrual-basis taxpayers can accrue employee bonuses that don't have to be paid until the tax return due date," said Shirah. "You can also accrue charitable contributions."

Accrued expenses must be documented correctly and paid by the time the 2004 return is filed.

Expediting equipment purchases is another way to reduce taxes. Business owners should be aware of deadlines and limits.

"2004 is the final year for bonus depreciation," said **Mark Hieronymus**, a partner with Hieronymus, Gaillard & Jones LLC of Mobile and a CPA. "Bonus depreciation allows businesses to write off up to 50 percent of the asset cost of new personal property the first year and then depreciate the remainder over the life of the asset."

Both CPAs recommend using section 179 deductions. This provision allows

business owners to expense up to \$102,000 in personal property acquired in 2004 if total qualifying asset purchases do not exceed \$410,000. Unlike bonus depreciation, section 179 also covers used equipment purchases. "You want to use section 179 as much as you can," said Hieronymus, noting this provision is available through 2007.

In the wake of Hurricane Ivan, both Hieronymus and Shirah advise small business owners to use business casualty losses to reduce their tax bills.

"Since this area has been declared a disaster area as determined by President George Bush, businesses and individuals are allowed either to take a casualty loss in the year the loss occurred or to carry it back to the prior year," said Shirah.

Carrying a casualty loss back to 2003 requires amending the 2003 tax return before the 2004 return filing date.

To take the casualty loss in either year, "Business owners need to make sure they file their insurance claims," said Hieronymus. "If they have inventory damage, they need to write that off in this year."

The accountants' number one recommendation is sitting down and meeting with a certified public accountant to determine the current tax status of the business for the year's end.

"If you're having a good year and were planning on adding some equipment next year, we can expedite the purchase to help you save some money this year," said Hieronymus.

Shirah agreed. "We want them to consult us before the end of the year," he said. "We can analyze their current situation and plan accordingly."



### Mobile Area Chamber Member Accounting Firms

Cherry Bekaert & Holland LLP  
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 Dudley, Ruland, & Chateau PC  
 Goodloe, McDermott & Headrick CPA  
 Keith A. Graham CPA  
 Gregory, Ladner & Koger  
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 Hieronymus, Gaillard & Jones LLC  
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McKean & Associates PA  
 Morrison & Smith CP LLP  
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 Seibert, Baxter & Co. PC  
 Smith Dukes & Buckalew LLP  
 Wilkins Miller PC  
 Wood, Singleton, Hicks & Haisten

For contact information, visit [www.mobilechamber.com](http://www.mobilechamber.com). As of Oct. 20, 2004

# Local Experts Offer Advice on New Overtime Rules

New overtime regulations effective Aug. 23, 2004 should prompt employers to review their pay practices but are not a cause for alarm, according to local experts.

The most significant change in the new regulations, part of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), is the increase in minimum salary (to \$455 per week) for employees exempt from overtime pay. Other required exemption tests have changed as well.

For example, under the new regulations, exempt administrative employees must regularly exercise "discretion and independent judgment with respect to matters of significance," according to employer resources published by the Department of Labor. The new law also abolishes certain percentage-based duties tests formerly required for some exemp-

**Kelly Woodford**, assistant professor at the University of South Alabama's Mitchell College of Business, said the new regulations reflect how federal courts had interpreted the old regulations.

"There were some issues that were being litigated a lot, and the courts were coming down essentially the same way in all of the cases," Woodford explained.

Employers hoping for clearer guidance from the new regulations may be a bit disappointed, however. According to **Wade B. Perry**, an attorney with the Mobile law firm Johnstone, Adams, Bailey, Gordon & Harris LLC, the new law "has not provided a redline litmus test" for determining overtime exemptions.

"It's still a case-by-case analysis and calls for the application of factors to particular job descriptions and duties," said Perry. "The only thing that has become

easier is that a salaried employee making less than \$455 a week will never be exempt."

Publicity surrounding the new regulations has also focused employer attention on pay practices, and that's a good thing, according to Perry.

"We're encouraging employers, even without the advent of the new regulations, to take a look at their determinations of exemption annually," said Perry. "Job descriptions tend to change over time, and the tendency is not to re-examine whether that employee is exempt."

Woodford, who is also special counsel to Mobile law firm Jackson Myrick LLP, agreed. "My advice has been for clients to go ahead and review their pay practices because it's not a bad idea to do it anyway," Woodford said.

Indeed, the new regulations are prov-

ing educational for some business owners.

"Many employers apparently believed that the only test for an overtime pay exemption was the 'salary test'; that is, as long as you paid an employee the minimum salary required for the exemption, the employee was exempt from overtime," said **Paul Myrick**, a partner with Jackson Myrick LLP. "That was never the law." Employees must meet both the "duties test" and the "salary test" to be exempt, Myrick explained.

Employers needing a quick primer on overtime exemption can click "FairPay Overtime Rules" on the Department of Labor's Web site, [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov). "FairPay" resources include a side-by-side analysis of the old and new exemption tests, a video training seminar and frequently asked questions on the new rules.

## Overtime Security for the 21st Century Workforce

### COMPARING THE TESTS FOR EXECUTIVE EMPLOYEES

#### Short Test Before 8/23/2004

**Salary Level:** \$250 per week

**Primary Duties:** Consist of the management of the enterprise in which the employee is employed or of a customarily recognized department or subdivision thereof; and includes the customary and regular direction of two or more other employees.

#### Standard Test Effective 8/23/2004

**Salary Level:** \$455 per week

**Primary Duties:** Consist of the management of the enterprise in which the employee is employed or of a customarily recognized department or subdivision thereof; who customarily and regularly directs the work of two or more employees; and who has the authority to hire or fire other employees or whose suggestions and recommendations as to the hiring, firing, advancement, promotion or any other change of status of other employees are given particular weight.

### COMPARING THE TESTS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEES

#### Short Test Before 8/23/2004

**Salary Level:** \$250 per week

**Primary Duties:** Consists of the performance of office or non-manual work directly related to management policies or general business operations of the employer or the employer's customers; and includes work requiring the exercise of discretion and independent judgment.

#### Standard Test Effective 8/23/2004

**Salary Level:** \$455 per week

**Primary Duties:** Consists of the performance of office or non-manual work directly related to the management or general business operations of the employer or the employer's customers; and includes the exercise of discretion and independent judgment with respect to matters of significance.

### COMPARING THE TESTS FOR PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES

#### Short Test Before 8/23/2004

**Salary Level:** \$250 per week

**Primary Duties:** Consists of the performance of work requiring knowledge of an advanced type in a field of science or learning customarily acquired by a prolonged course of specialized intellectual instruction and study; and includes work requiring the consistent exercise of discretion and judgment; or the performance of work requiring invention, imagination, or talent in a recognized field of artistic endeavor.

#### Standard Test Effective 8/23/2004

**Salary Level:** \$455 per week

**Primary Duties:** Consists of the performance of work requiring knowledge of an advanced type (defined as work which is predominantly intellectual in character, and which includes work requiring the consistent exercise of discretion and judgment) in a field of science or learning customarily acquired by a prolonged course of specialized intellectual instruction; or the performance of work requiring invention, imagination, originality or talent in a recognized field of artistic or creative endeavor.

### COMPARING THE TESTS FOR COMPUTER EMPLOYEES

#### Short Test Before 8/23/2004

**Salary Level:** \$250 per week *or, if paid hourly, 6 x \$4.25 (i.e., \$27.63 an hour)*

**Primary Duties:** Performing work requiring theoretical and practical application of highly-specialized knowledge in computer systems analysis, programming and software engineering, and employed and engaged in these activities as a computer systems analyst, computer programmer, software engineer or other similarly skilled worker in the computer software field, as provided in section 541.303, which includes work requiring the consistent exercise of discretion and judgment.

**Section 541.303(b):** Whose primary duty consists of one or more of the following:

1. The application of systems analysis techniques and procedures, including consulting with users, to determine hardware, software or system functional specifications;
2. The design, development, documentation, analysis, creation, testing or modification of computer systems or programs, including prototypes, based on and related to user or system design specifications;
3. The design, documentation, testing, creation or modification of computer programs related to machine operating systems; or
4. A combination of the aforementioned duties, the performance of which requires the same level of skills.

#### Standard Test Effective 8/23/2004

**Salary Level:** \$455 per week or \$27.63 an hour

**Primary Duties:** Computer systems analysts, computer programmers, software engineers or other similarly skilled workers in the computer field are eligible for exemption, but only if the employee's primary duty consists of:

1. The application of systems analysis techniques and procedures, including consulting with users, to determine hardware, software or system functional specifications;
2. The design, development, documentation, analysis, creation, testing or modification of computer systems or programs, including prototypes, based on and related to user or system design specifications;
3. The design, documentation, testing, creation or modification of computer programs related to machine operating systems; or
4. A combination of the aforementioned duties, the performance of which requires the same level of skills.

### COMPARING THE TESTS FOR OUTSIDE SALES EMPLOYEES

#### Short Test Before 8/23/2004

**Salary Level:** No minimum salary required

**Primary Duties:** Who is employed for the purpose of and who is customarily and regularly engaged away from the employer's place or places of business in making sales; or obtaining orders or contracts for services or for the use of facilities for which a consideration will be paid by the client or customer; and who does not devote more than 20 percent of the hours worked in the workweek by nonexempt employees of the employer to activities that are not incidental to and in conjunction with the employee's own outside sales or solicitations.

#### Standard Test Effective 8/23/2004

**Salary Level:** No minimum salary required

**Primary Duties:** Making sales or obtaining orders or contracts for services or for the use of facilities for which a consideration will be paid by the client or customer; and who is customarily and regularly engaged away from the employer's place or places of business in performing such primary duty.

An excerpt from: [http://www.dol.gov/esa/regs/compliance/whd/fairpay/side-by-side\\_PF.htm](http://www.dol.gov/esa/regs/compliance/whd/fairpay/side-by-side_PF.htm)



## Guest Columnist

By Cynthia D'Amour  
Owner, People Power Unlimited

### Channel the Challenger

Harold was known throughout the organization as a royal pain to have on one's committee. He was famous for slowing down meetings and bringing up issues that the rest of the room was fine ignoring.

Some people even wondered why he stayed involved. Sure, he had chaired some amazing projects and even slipped in as team leader when no one else was willing

to say "yes" – but gosh, the organization would run so much smoother if he just disappeared...

This year, the group was launching a new project.

Lindsay, who transferred to the area last year, had previously been involved in a similar project. The board was thrilled when Lindsay agreed to chair their debut effort this year.

The list of volunteers who agreed to serve with Lindsay was distributed via e-mail. It was a strong team – several of the top volunteers.

"Oh no," moaned one of the volunteers upon reviewing the list. "You'd think Harold would need a break or something. He's going to make Lindsay nuts."

Lindsay was warned about Harold by several people – and disturbed by the comments.

As a leader, she appreciated a dissenting opinion – and had been saved on several occasions because a team member forced her to think about something the rest of the team had overlooked.

What really bothered Lindsay was how meanly the other members were talking about Harold.

"We're going to have to nip that in the bud!"

At the first meeting, the entire team showed up – including Harold.

Lindsay talked about the big picture they would achieve together and then launched into a discussion about ground rules for the team.

The typical rules were quickly suggested... be on time, do your work, etc.

Lindsay offered up, "I would like to make it a team rule that we always have a 'challenger' in our discussions."

"What?" a volunteer said rolling her

eyes, "What are you talking about? We need a challenger like we need a hole in our heads. We don't have a lot of time to get this done and certainly will move much faster if we agree easily."

Heads around the room nodded. No one wanted to give Harold any encouragement. Didn't Lindsay know what type of a person he was?

Lindsay held strong, "Actually, having someone act as the challenger will inspire us to make better plans – and save us lots of time in the long run. We'll be able to avoid more of those last minute crises."

Still not sold, another team member challenged, "If you encourage people to challenge our strategies, it's going to create chaos. We don't have

time for it."

"Have you ever had an official challenger before?" Lindsay volleyed.

"Official, no. Unwanted, yes." Several heads nodded. Harold rolled his eyes.

Lindsay held strong, "Well then, that's your problem. When you welcome the challenge, it makes all of us think through our ideas that extra step. The final decision becomes a team effort."

She smiled at her team, "Why don't we give it a try? I'm quite skilled at working with a challenger on the team and think you're going to enjoy having that voice present – once you get used to it."

Realizing that Lindsay was going to hold strong, the team agreed to having an official challenger on the team.

The discussion moved on. Members all agreed to take on a variety of responsibilities to prepare for the next meeting. Nothing more was mentioned about the challenger role – and the team was relieved.

At the start of the next meeting, Lindsay asked, "Okay, who would like to be our challenger today? Your job will be to ask questions that encourage us to think through our plans further than we had originally."

All eyes turned to Harold. "Well, I guess I could give it a try," he offered. This was the first time anyone had officially asked

him for help this way.

As the meeting progressed, Lindsay would turn to Harold regularly and ask, "Harold, any questions about this idea we should discuss more?"

In the beginning it was slightly rough going.

The volunteers were used to resenting Harold's questions – however, Lindsay loved them. She enthusiastically commented on some of his questions and appreciated all.

Lindsay's enthusiasm and positive approach was contagious. Before the first half of the meeting was over, a few additional members of the team were also asking questions.

Before ending the meeting, Lindsay had everyone share a comment or two about their experience together.

While the whole team wasn't completely sold, several commented on enjoying the discussions around the table generated by Harold's questions.

The biggest shock of the day came when Sue, a normally quiet person, asked, "Can I be the challenger next meeting? I think I've got the hang of asking the challenging questions."

Harold smiled and offered, "Give me a call if you want some coaching." Everyone laughed.

Lindsay was glad to have the meeting end on a light note. She had already begun spinning strategies in her mind for how to get the remaining members on the team to at least see the value of having a challenger in the room.

Too many teams like to avoid debate and challenges to ideas. Limited conversation often overlooks potential hazards – as well as potential new opportunities.

How do you encourage your leaders and chairs to channel the challenger?

*Cynthia D'Amour is an author and leadership coach based in Ann Arbor, Mich. She can be reached at damour@peoplepowerunlimited.com or 734-994-3375. (c) 2004*

**Too many teams like to avoid debate and challenges to ideas. Limited conversation often overlooks potential hazards – as well as potential new opportunities.**

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# Paving the Way: 75 Years of Women

The year 1929 saw the birth of some of the last century's most complex, enigmatic and successful women, including Anne Frank, Audrey Hepburn, Imelda Marcos, Grace Kelly and Barbara Walters. The achievements and exploits of American women in that year were also as varied and unique.

Philanthropist and dog breeder Dorothy Wood Eustis founded The Seeing Eye Inc. to train dogs for the blind. The Ninety-Nines, a club for women pilots, formed with Amelia Earhart as its first president. Myrtle Bennett of Kansas City shot her husband because of his poor bridge-playing skills. In Schenectady, N.Y., Rose Jacobs bowled a perfect 300 game in the Rainbow League. And way down South, **Doris Van Aller** passed the bar exam to become the first woman attorney in Mobile.

To commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women practicing law in Mobile, the Women Lawyers Section of the Mobile Bar Association celebrated with numerous events honoring four pioneering women lawyers: **Van Aller, Rosa Gerhardt, Janella Wood** and **Alice Meadows**.

Gerhardt passed the bar a year after Van Aller. Although Gerhardt spent time in the courtroom early in her career as part of the defense team for a woman who shot and killed attorney Foster Hale Jr. in 1931, both Van Aller and Gerhardt lived out most of their careers as court reporters.

Wood began practicing law in 1935 and was hired by Miller Hamilton, the oldest law firm in Alabama. She became the first female partner in Mobile and is the only woman recognized by the Mobile Bar Association for having had her license more than 50 years.

Focusing in domestic relations, Meadows began her career in 1951 and later joined with a male attorney to open the first law practice in west Mobile. More notably, she started informal monthly meetings of Mobile's women lawyers, a legacy that continues today with monthly luncheons.

In November, the Mobile Bar Association held its annual women lawyers luncheon at the Admiral Semmes Hotel. For the fifth consecutive year, they recognized Mobile women celebrating their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary practicing law, including Mobile Area Chamber board member and tax attorney **Shirley Justice**, partner with Sirote & Permutt PC.

In discussing the obstacles women lawyers faced in the not-so-distant past, Justice said people tend to focus on the negative, on "what was taken away, rather than those who paved the way." She



**Doris Van Aller**



**Rosa Gerhardt**



**Janella Wood**



**Alice Meadows**

**Recognized as Mobile's pioneer women lawyers, these four ladies paved the way for a number of women practicing law today.**

believes what we lose sight of are the cutting-edge decisions made out of necessity, not any desire to push the envelope. When she applied to law school a quota of only 10 to 12 women were accepted annually. "I wasn't burning my bra," she said, "I was just trying to get there."

Years later, while working for her mentor and future Circuit Court Judge William H. McDermott, who passed away in 2003, Justice's young son asked, "What does Mr. McDermott do at your office?" When she told him McDermott was an attorney, her son replied, "He can't be a lawyer, he's not a woman."

Up to that point, the boy had never met a lawyer other than Justice's friends, who were all female. Looking at other women's careers at the time, she says "nursing and teaching were what we saw."

Attorney **Mary Margaret Bailey** of Frazer, Greene, Upchurch & Baker LLC began practicing law almost 20 years after Justice joined the bar. Bailey echoed Justice's statement about looking to other women for career examples. She recalls taking an interest in law after **Kathy**

**Miller** of Armbrecht Jackson LLP spoke at Bailey's high school. It was then that Bailey "realized a woman was a lawyer."

Bailey worked on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary events and said learning about Mobile's pioneering women lawyers made her "realize how fortunate I was I had it so easy... These women had no one to say, 'Hey, here's a woman lawyer.' That took guts."

Other events this year celebrating the pioneers' "guts" included a group photo of approximately 150 active and retired women who served or currently serve on the bar and bench in Mobile. In addition, seventeen descendants and family members of the four pioneer attorneys attended the August meeting of the Mobile Bar Association, which commemorated the event with an anniversary cake cut by one of the women's descendants.

Also in August, banners depicting photos of the four attorneys surrounded the downtown courthouse. As the wind whipped off Mobile Bay down Government Street, the ladies were causing a flap once again.

## These Mobile Area Chamber member firms have female lawyers:

Adams & Reese LLP  
 Alford, Clausen & McDonald  
 Anders, Boyett & Brady PC  
 Armbrecht Jackson LLP  
 The Atchison Firm PC  
 Bowron, Latta & Wasden PC  
 Briskman & Binion PC  
 Cabaniss, Johnston, Gardner, Dumas & O'Neal  
 Carter Brandyburg PC  
 Coale, Dukes, Kirkpatrick & Crowley PC  
 Crane Legal PC  
 Fowler, Rodriguez, Kingsmill, Flint, Gray & Chalos LLP  
 Frazer, Greene, Upchurch & Baker LLC  
 Gale & Gale PC  
 Irvin Grodsky PC  
 Hand Arendall LLC  
 Helmsing, Leah, Herlong, Newman & Rouse  
 Hudson & Watts LLP  
 The Huntley Firm  
 Jackson Myrick LLP  
 Johnston Druham LLP  
 Johnson, Adams, Bailey, Gordon and Harris LLC  
 Kennedy, Bell & Adams PC  
 Lane & Harris  
 Phillip M. Leslie PC  
 Joe Little Jr.  
 Lyons & Crane  
 Lyons, Pipes & Cook PC  
 Gregory B. McAtee PC  
 Edward B. McDonough Jr. PC  
 McDowell, Knight, Roedder & Sledge LLC  
 McFadden, Lyon, and Rouse LLC  
 Miller & Mather LLC  
 Miller, Hamilton, Snider & Odom LLC  
 Pierce Ledyard Hudgens PC  
 Wesley Pipes LLC  
 Silver, Voit & Thompson  
 Sirote & Permutt PC  
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 Whitfield & McAlpine PC  
 Ziemann, Speegle, Jackson & Hoffman LLC

For contact information, visit [www.mobilechamber.com](http://www.mobilechamber.com).

As of Oct. 20, 2004

# Lawyers in Mobile



Women lawyers in Mobile pose for a 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary photo. These women celebrated their accomplishments recently during a luncheon, which honored the four female pioneers who first practiced law in Mobile.



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## SMALL BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

# Wintzell's Oyster House

It's the oldest restaurant in Mobile and still occupies the same location in Mobile's oldest wooden building as when it first opened its doors in 1938. Wintzell's Oyster House, a staple in downtown Mobile, is the Mobile Area Chamber's Small Business of the Month.

Originally an oyster bar started by J. Oliver Wintzell, the restaurant quickly began to grow in size and infamy for its quirky decorations and amazing seafood. The restaurant's walls are covered with hand-painted signs that convey clichés, words of wisdom and quotes from customers who have patronized the establishment over the years. The signs started when Wintzell's brother began writing down what customers would talk about as they enjoyed their meal.

Today, the original signs cover almost every inch of the establishment's walls.

"When we were getting ready to open the west Mobile location, it just didn't seem like Wintzell's until we put the signs up. Then it felt right," said **Bob Donlon**, president of Wintzell's Oyster House.

With locations in downtown Mobile, west Mobile, Fairhope and, soon to come,

Saraland, Wintzell's is still known for its famous oysters, but their shrimp and gumbo have gained popularity among customers along with an array of other menu items. In addition, they have rooms available for private parties.

Since the Wintzells sold the business, the restaurant has changed hands a few times, but in 2000, Donlon purchased the establishment as an enticement to lure his daughter to move back to Mobile. It worked, and once again, Wintzell's Oyster House is a family restaurant. Son-in-law **Bob Omainsky** is the operating manager for all the Wintzell locations. Donlon, who has 35 years of restaurant experience, is looking to open Wintzell's restaurants all across the Gulf Coast.

"We want to make each restaurant look and feel the same to keep the tradition and reputation of Mr. Wintzell," said Donlon.

Another tradition started by Oliver Wintzell was his involvement in the Mobile community. His contribution is evident from the posters of Wintzell's numerous runs for public office on the walls and his political quote featured on the menu.

Keeping with Wintzell's dedication to



Jessica Jones, director of public relations and catering, and Bob Omainsky, director of operations, pose in front of Wintzell's oyster bar.

community, Donlon also believes in sponsoring numerous community events and contributing to many charitable organizations. One such organization is America's Junior Miss. Wintzell's maintains the reputation as the oldest continuous sponsor and proudly exhibits its commitment to the program with photos on the walls of the restaurants and on their menus of Junior Miss contestants eating raw oysters.

For more information about Wintzell's Oyster House, visit their locations at 605 Dauphin St., and 6700 Airport Blvd. in west Mobile, 805 So. Mobile St. in Fairhope, or

visit their Web site at [www.wintzells-oysterhouse.com](http://www.wintzells-oysterhouse.com).

### Nominating Guidelines for Small Business of the Month:

- Current Mobile Area Chamber member in good standing
- 100 or fewer employees
- Apparent solid financial base
- Considered successful by peers
- Expanding number of employees
- Sales growth and/or profit growth
- Outstanding public service contribution
- In business a minimum of one year
- New product line

For more information or to submit a nomination, contact **Walter Underwood** at 431-8652 or [walter@mobilechamber.com](mailto:walter@mobilechamber.com).

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Home-made roasted and candied pecans, plus an assortment of other delicious treats and gifts can be found at Tanner's.

## Mobile's Nutty Tradition – Tanner's Pecans and Candies

From estimating the amount of concrete needed for industrial projects to estimating the number of pecans for a batch of pralines, **Danny Fox** has made huge changes in his life.

Four years ago, he sold his industrial contracting business and 12 months later bought the established, locally-owned, family business, Tanner's Pecans and Candies.

Previously, Fox spent 17 years in the fast-paced industrial contracting field, working with the company his father started and then running it after he retired. He found himself traveling more and more in pursuit of out-of-state projects, and Fox said he was away from home more than he cared to be. He sold the business in 2000 and began looking for something else to do.

Both Fox and his wife Leslie are from Louisiana, and moved here with his business. "We love Mobile and the opportuni-

ties available to our children. We wanted to stay."

It was Fox's CPA who mentioned that B.C. Tanner Jr. was looking for a buyer for Tanner's Pecans. B.C. Tanner Sr. started selling pecans in the shell in 1940 and expanded the

company to a pecan processing plant in 1948. About 20 years ago, the family started making candy. The company moved to its Springdale Boulevard location in 1990.

The Foxes had no retail experience, Leslie said, but both were long-time customers of Tanner's and had a "let's-go-for-it" motto when it came to trying new things. A nurse by trade, she had taken a break from her career to raise their two boys.

The idea of a company that would include his wife and give him more time for his family was very appealing, Fox explained.

"This is something we could do together. Leslie runs the gift shop and I do all the

cooking," he said.

After spending two months with Tanner, the couple took the reigns of the 60-year-old company in October 2001.

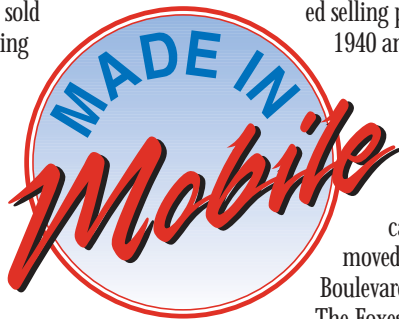
Fox makes roasted pecans, candied pecans, pecan clusters, divinity, pralines, fudge, pies, cakes and more, all from scratch. His favorite is the pecan clusters, and he has at least one a day.

"The same things customers have always loved about Tanner's are still here – the same top quality, the same variety, the same recipes," said Fox.

The Foxes have added several items to an already delectable menu, including gourmet pretzels,

chocolate-covered potato chips, chocolate-covered cherries and his mother-in-law's instructions for marble fudge.

"We just haven't found a shape that chocolate doesn't taste good," said Fox. "And all of our candies are hand-coated."



Each pecan and cluster is chocolate-coated by hand. Neva Aiken has worked at Tanner's for eight years following her retirement from a local book store.

Tanner's has also added a variety of coffees, expanded its sugar-free selections and even has low-carb cheese straws.

The revamped gift shop offers a wide selection of trendy, eclectic and collegiate items from jewelry to stationery to cookbooks to accent dishes in addition to the gift baskets stuffed with Tanner's nuts, cookies and candies.

The company ships its products all over the world with the majority of its sales in the U.S. and Canada.

It takes 300,000 pounds of pecans for a year's worth of recipes. That's enough pecans to make a praline about the size of Colonial Mall Bel Air.

Behind the storefront is a 19,000-square-foot shelling plant and warehouse. Pecans come in 40,000-pound batches starting in October. During peak season, employees shell 8,000 pounds a day.

The pecans are separated by size within one-sixteenth of an inch and sorted into bins. Then they are rinsed and soaked in water overnight to prevent the meat of the nut from breaking. Pecans are cracked by

machine, sorted again and dried. The nuts move by conveyor belt to the picking room, where employees sort through one final time to get rid of any remaining shell fragments. The pecans are then boxed and weighed.

According to the National Shellers Association's Web site, "The shelling process reduces a pecan's weight by 59 to 65 percent."

The company does 60 percent of its annual volume between October and December. Sales peak significantly again around Easter.

Eight employees work at Tanner's year-round, and at peak seasonal times, the roster grows to 40.

Fox predicts the biggest industry challenge, especially this year, will be finding pecans. When the estimates come in, he expects Hurricane Ivan will have virtually destroyed most of South Alabama's and Florida's crops, hitting just six weeks prior to the start of the season. Fox expects prices to increase 20 percent over last year, but doesn't believe it will impact his sales significantly.

Fox believes his small request for pecans when compared to large processors will be met fairly easily. In addition to Alabama pecans, Tanner's also buys much of its pecans from Georgia growers.

It looks like the Foxes have achieved

their goal. While the seasonal spurts are more hectic than they anticipated, it is also more exciting than they ever imagined, said Leslie.



Danny Fox, right, and Tony King display a batch of newly coated butter-rum candied pecans

## Pecan Fast Facts:

- The history of pecans can be traced back to the 16th century.
- The only major tree nut that grows naturally in North America, the pecan is considered one of the most valuable North American nut species.
- The name "pecan" is a Native American word of Algonquin origin that was used to describe "all nuts requiring a stone to crack."
- The U.S. produces nearly 80 percent of the world's pecans, mostly grown in the Southeast and Southwest. Top producing states include Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina and Texas.
- The U. S. Department of Agriculture predicted that approximately 324 million pounds of in-shell pecans were to be produced in 1999 alone.
- Between 1986 and 1996, pecan export sales rose almost 900 percent.

Source: <http://www.ilovepecans.org>, a Web site maintained by The National Pecan Shellers Association (NPSA), a nonprofit trade association.



Tanner's call this array of pecan yummys its "family portrait."

# World-Renowned Scholars Coming to Mobile for Dead Sea Scrolls Presentation

Ten world-renowned scholars from North America and Israel will be in Mobile between Feb. 15 and April 19, 2005, to share their expertise and insight into the significance and mystery of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The Gulf Coast Exploreum is offering the lecture series in conjunction with The Dead Sea Scrolls exhibition featuring these rare and important manuscripts. The exhibit will be on display at the Exploreum Jan. 20 to April 24, 2005.

Each scholar will give one presentation during the 10-week adult lecture series. Emanuel Tov, who has been editor-in-chief of the official publication of the scrolls since 1991, will launch the series on Feb. 15. Several other guest lecturers include James Sanders, James VanderKam, Lawrence Schiffman and Eugene Ulrich, who have been or are still members of the international editorial team working to publish the scrolls.

In 1961 in Jerusalem, Sanders had the honor of being the first to



The Psalms scroll (above) will be the largest fragment displayed measuring over 33 inches long.

unroll the large Psalms scroll, a fragment that will be on display at the Exploreum. He published the scroll text in two volumes in 1965 and 1967.

The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls is considered one of the most important archaeological finds of the 20th Century. The exhibition puts these extraordinary relics, rarely seen outside Israel, in a religious, historical and archeological context. The world-

famous Dead Sea Scrolls – written more

than 2,000 years ago – include the oldest surviving texts of the books of the Hebrew Bible, known to Christians as the Old Testament, and a wide variety of ancient Jewish literature, including many books never before known.

The first of these rare manuscripts were discovered in the Judean Desert by a Bedouin shepherd in 1947, where they had been stored in jars in 11 caves surrounding the settlement of Qumran on the shores of the Dead Sea. More than 100,000 scroll fragments, pieced together into over 930 separate documents, make up the collection, and contains text from every book of the Hebrew Bible except Esther, as well as Apocryphal texts and Sectarian writings.

The Mobile venue will feature fragments of 12 different scrolls, including segments from the biblical books of Genesis-Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Psalms, Isaiah and Jeremiah. The Psalms scroll will be the largest fragment displayed measuring over 33 inches long. The Deuteronomy fragment includes text from the Ten Commandments.

The exhibition will also feature sectarian documents, such as the Community Rule, that detail the lives and beliefs of the ancient Jewish community that wrote them.

Also on display will be artifacts including pottery, coins and sandals that tell the story of the people who lived at the site of Qumran, near the caves where the scrolls were unearthed. Other sections of the exhibit trace the history of the scrolls since their discovery in 1947 and explain the efforts of the international scholars and IAA (Israel Antiquities Authority) conservators to publish and preserve them.

The lectures are scheduled on consecutive Tuesday evenings, beginning Feb. 15, with the exception of the third lecture by Sanders that will take place on Wednesday, March 2. Each lecture will be

presented in the Exploreum IMAX® Theater from 7 - 8:30 p.m. and most include audio-visual aids. Seating for each lecture is limited to 177. Tickets are now on sale for each individual lecture, for a series of five or all 10 lectures, and for a combo ticket that includes admission to the adjacent The Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit gallery prior to and after the lecture. The exhibit gallery will remain open on lecture evenings until 9 p.m. Ticket prices for the lecture series range from \$10 per lecture to \$26 for a lecture and exhibit admission ticket.

Ticket prices for the exhibit range from \$17 per adult to \$12 for children, with discounts available for group packages. To order tickets, call 208-6808 or log onto [www.scrollsmobile.com](http://www.scrollsmobile.com).



Clara Amet, photographer

The exhibit includes artifacts such as these jars, similar to those in which the scrolls were stored for over 2,000 years. Courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority.

The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls is considered one of the most important archaeological finds of the 20th Century.

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## BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH

# AQUALife Water & Coffee Service

**Principal owner:** James A. Layton

**Location:** Serving the Gulf Coast from Pensacola to New Orleans. Headquartered in Mobile.

**Member since:** 2003

**Date established:** 1986

**Brief description of business:** AQUALife offers pure drinking water in bottles and through purification systems, along with a unique coffee system designed for businesses.

**What is unique or innovative about the business?** The company provides FLAVIA brand coffee and teas from the makers of M&M Mars, the innovator of brew-by-the-cup coffee. The FLAVIA menu includes more than 27 choices of gourmet beverages such as coffees, espresso, cappuccino, mochaccino, chai latte and real leaf teas. Each filter pack is roasted, ground and quickly sealed from oxygen to provide the freshest brewed coffee available. Each drink is brewed right into the cup, in about 30 seconds, with no measuring, mess or waste.

**Most significant challenge:** Layton said that as a service company, they work every day to help businesses overcome a challenge – keeping employees satisfied and motivated.

**Telephone number:** 251-653-5555

**Web site:** www.flavia.net or www.h2-only.com



Company owner James Layton stands with his Flavia Coffee products at the Chamber's 2004 Annual Meeting.

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

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The Wave Transit System is taking the city by storm, but this is one storm you won't want to see pass you by! The newly reinvented system has added many new services and expanded others. From taxi-style service for western parts of Mobile County to fixed route service covering the entire city limits to free electric trolleys downtown, the Wave is easier to ride than you think.

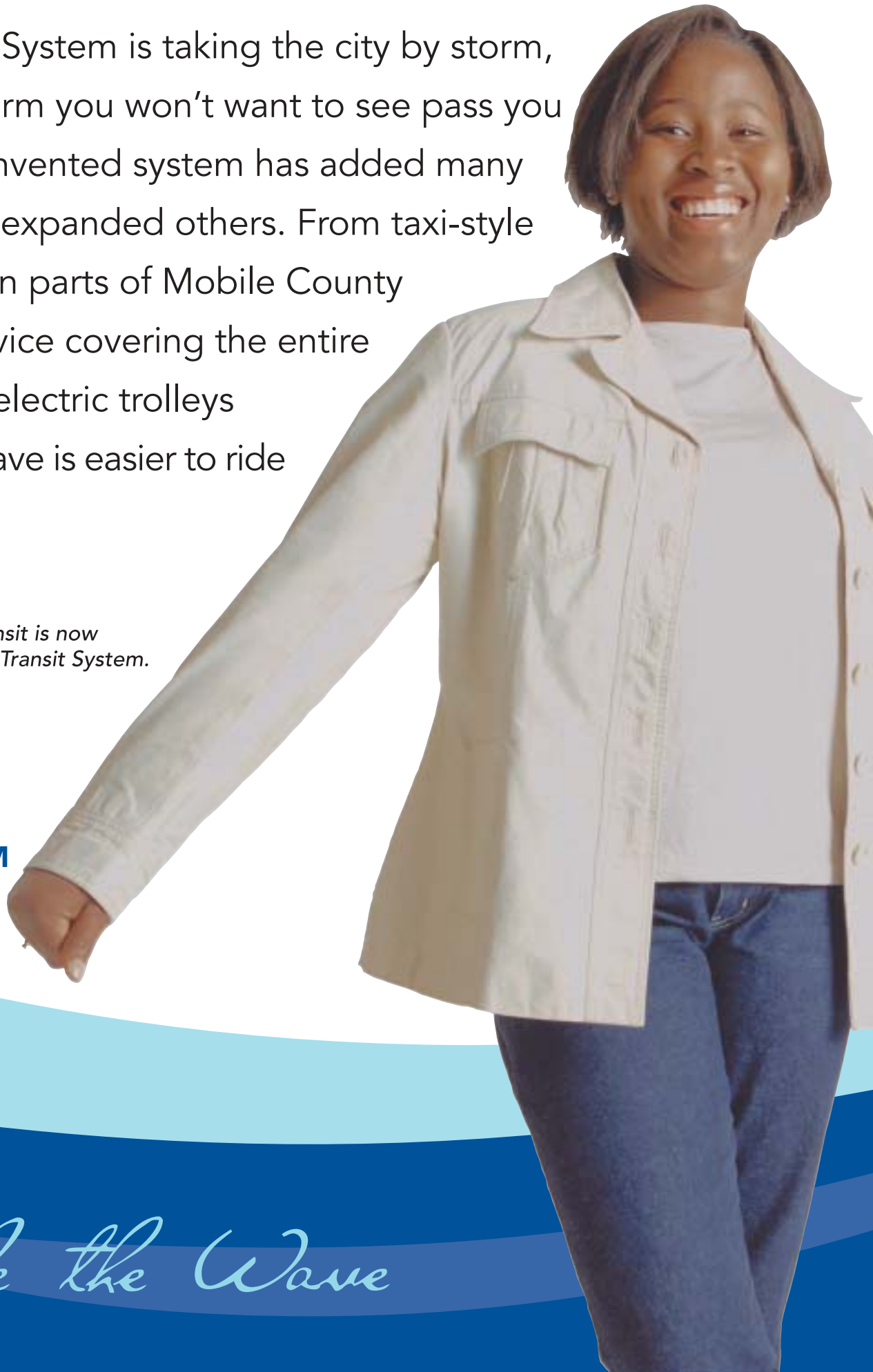


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## Every dreamed of having your own personal driver? Try our Neighborhood Service.

This curb-to-curb service works like a taxi. One day advance reservation required. \$1.25 each way. 10¢ transfers (within two hours) are available to existing fixed routes throughout the city limits. Service runs from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday.



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## Mobility Assistance Program (M.A.P.)

One-day notice required. Fares: \$2.00 each way. Monday through Saturday, 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. Wheelchair accessible.

## Access-A-Ride

2-hour advance notice required. Fares: \$5.00 each way. Monday through Saturday, 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sundays 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wheelchair accessible.



344.6600  
TheWaveTransit.com

TRANSIT SYSTEM

## BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH

### Adams & Associates Inc.



Adams & Associates Inc. offers a wide range of financial services to area residents. Pictured here is company President Jeff Adams.

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

**Principal Owner:** Jeffrey P. Adams CLU, ChFC, president

**Location:** 917 Western America Circle, Ste. 350, Mobile

**Member since:** 1987

**Date established:** 1986

**Brief description of business:** Adams & Associates Inc. provides estate, business and personal financial management allowing clients to have more control of their money by utilizing unique cost recovery and tax recapture strategies. The company is a non-fee based business offering an assortment of financial products and services, including annuities, mutual funds, life insurance planning and disability income replacement products.

**What is unique or innovative about the business?** The firm is the only local company licensed to teach the "LEAP" program, a financial management process incorporating wealth-building and protection processes that allow clients to achieve an accelerated rate of return on their money. The company also uses the "Cotton" marketing system, an integrated and comprehensive marketing process that empowers potential new clients to choose the direction for their financial objectives, thus allowing greater flexibility and choices. "We are not a product or selling system," said Adams. "Our goal is to educate our clients on the whole story of financial opportunities existing in the marketplace today, and then develop the strategies that they, the clients, choose. We then work closely with them over the years to implement, monitor and adjust the results of those strategies."

**Most significant challenge:** As financial advisors we are an important element to the field. The company is constantly challenged to find the type of trusted advisor needed to work at Adams & Associates.

**Telephone number:** 251-304-1178

**Web site:** [www.adamsandassociates.net](http://www.adamsandassociates.net) or [www.leapsystems.com](http://www.leapsystems.com)

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# Local Delivery Companies Go the Extra Mile

🌀 Mobile-based competitors are driven to succeed in the courier market

It's 2 a.m. and you wake in a cold sweat, your heart pounding. An important meeting is set to take place in your company's Birmingham office in just eight hours, and the documents they need – the ones you worked hard to produce – are still sitting on your desk. You forgot to drop them off in the FedEx box. A panic attack ensues.

You think about stopping by the office, picking up the package, and high-tailing it north on I-65. But then everyone will know about your stupid mistake. What to do?

Call Hackbarth Delivery Service, said the company's regional director, **Tom Michener**. Within 30 minutes, a courier will meet you at your office, pick up the package and have it waiting in Birmingham before your co-workers there have their first cup of coffee.

"We're an on-demand company," Michener said. "That's what we're paid to do."

Neither FedEx nor other big national delivery companies can do that. It's that kind of flexibility, and willingness to do what it takes for its customers, that has helped both Hackbarth and Coastal Courier Inc. (CCI) not only stay alive but experience steady growth since they were founded in the 1970s.

## Off and Running

CCI began in 1978, when owners **Eddie Upchurch** and **Bill Fite** started a local express trucking company originally known as Gulf Coast Delivery. Starting with a Mobile-to-Pensacola route, the company expanded to New Orleans in 1981, then to Panama City, Fla., and Orlando, in the mid-'80s, eventually growing to cover the Southeast – and changing its name to Coastal Courier to reflect its coverage of the Gulf Coast – in the 1990s.

Today, Upchurch serves as president, overseeing the marketing and operations end of the business, and is based in Mobile; Fite, as CEO, runs the business end in Pensacola. CCI has about 460 employees, with 400 routes.

Similarly, Hackbarth started small. Founded by **Rob and Carol Hackbarth** in 1975, the company has grown to its current 450

employees, with offices in nine Southeastern cities. But Michener stressed that Hackbarth isn't limited to its fleet of some 200 vehicles that range from economy cars to 24-foot box trucks. "If someone needed a 53-foot truck loaded, and we didn't have one in our fleet, we'd find one," he said. "We consider ourselves a single source for anyone's logistics needs."

Hackbarth Delivery Service is committed to going the extra mile – literally – for its customers, according to Michener, who oversees operations along the Gulf Coast from Mobile to Tallahassee. They call themselves "the KYSO company," and the acronym "KYSO"

("knock your socks off") is embroidered on all employees' uniforms. When new clients ask what it means, the drivers proudly tell them: "I'm here to knock your socks off."



Locally-owned Hackbarth Delivery, opened in 1975, has grown to 450 employees in nine Southeastern states. Picture here are (left to right) Sonja Bibbs, Sylvia Osborne, Barbara Hanson, Derrick Mitchell and Joe Thames.

Michener describes his employees as "diverse," but they do share a couple of things in common: They must meet strict requirements and demonstrate their com-

mitment to KYSO service. With so many drivers on the road every day, safe driving records are crucial. "We have a tremendous safety record going for us in 2004, and we have ambitious goals for 2005," he said. "We want our employees to be safe and happy."

Hackbarth's regional director had his own socks knocked off, so to speak, following Hurricane Ivan, when he watched his employees work diligently until the storm hit; then, the following day, "We had people with no houses and people with trees through their living rooms come to work," he said. "It was just amazing." To reward them for their efforts, the company bought refrigerated food, water and fuel for employees who needed them in the Mobile and Pensacola areas.

In addition to providing timely delivery service for an array of clients that includes the banking and health care industries as well as pharmaceutical companies and law firms, Hackbarth also gives companies the option of storing inventory in a warehouse. Hackbarth employees can pull and deliver whatever their clients need from that inventory, when they need it.



CCI has expanded several times since the company was started in 1978. The company employs 450 and has 400 routes. Picture here are (left to right) Charlie Harris and Owner Eddie Upchurch.

*Continued on next page*

**Signs of Change**

Likewise, CCI adapted to the changing needs of its clientele in the early 1990s, when the company changed its name and began doing "dedicated logistics" – providing drivers in company uniforms and vehicles sporting a client's logo. (In other words, 80 percent of CCI's couriers are contracted to a route, meaning they know where they're going each day.) Among other benefits, this prevents businesses from dealing with personnel problems and workers' compensation issues and saves money spent on vehicle maintenance and accidents.

"That's been our claim to fame," said Upchurch. "We were one of the first companies to do that, but there's plenty of competition now." Still, he estimates that 80 percent of CCI's business is devoted to dedicated logistics, with 20 percent to general deliveries.

Upchurch cites changes in banking – especially the Check Clearing for the 21st Century Act (known as Check 21), that went into effect in October – as one of the reasons his own company has changed its focus. "Check 21 eventually will eliminate the need for banks to use companies like ours," he said.

Although the banking industry was once the lifeblood of the delivery services business, CCI is now "jockeying to do more hard-goods carrier work," said Upchurch. "Banking won't be the billion-dollar market in courier that it used to be. Technology has really taken a toll on this business."

Instead, Upchurch "sees the future in medical, office and industrial supplies as well as bio-tech and lab work."

One of his longtime customers, Al Scott with Business Cards Tomorrow, uses CCI every day to run three routes in the Mobile area and Birmingham, delivering business stationery to his customers. "CCI is the most cost-effective and efficient courier I've found," Scott said.

While CCI has been successful and profitable – a fact Upchurch attributes to his business partner's conservative financial management – he would like to see improvement. At \$12 million a year in gross revenue, he said he had hoped the company would have reached

\$15 million by now. "But I don't know any small business owner who's satisfied," he conceded.

At rival Hackbarth, Michener sees exciting times ahead. "We're enjoying significant growth," he said. "It's only a matter of time before we grow in additional cities. It's not a matter of 'if,' but 'when.' That's a neat situation to be in."

**Mobile Area Chamber Member Delivery Services**

- ▲ CCI (Coastal Courier Inc.)
- ▲ Hackbarth Delivery Service Inc.
- ▲ Rush Delivery Service

For contact information, visit [www.mobilechamber.com](http://www.mobilechamber.com).

*As of Oct. 20, 2004*

**In a Rush?**

For anyone who's in a real hurry to have a package (or just about anything else) delivered, there's Rush Delivery Service. The small business's owner and sole driver, Genie Abrams, started Rush over a year ago after he retired in 2002 from Kimberly-Clark, where he worked in the shipping department for 36 years.

"I needed something to do," he says of his decision to start a post-retirement courier career. "I didn't want to sit around doing nothing every day."

Licensed and bonded to deliver anywhere in the United States, Abrams frequently drives to Atlanta and Birmingham for small businesses and individuals who need his service. He also specializes in delivering subpoenas in Mobile County.

Abrams enjoys owning his own business, and he operates out of his home. He says he has a hard time competing with larger delivery companies. "There's so much competition out there," he says. "They can carry so much cheaper than I can."

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# The Name Game

## and How it Defines a Company

What is the value of your company's name, really?

Ask five business people that question, and they will give five different answers most likely ranging from "my brand, my reputation and how I distinguish myself" to "what I do." All these answers are on target. In fact, a corporate name is all of the above, and it's so much more.

According to a number of local marketing experts, a company name is the personification of its internal culture and the experiences the customer has with the company – every touch point, every conversation, every business transaction all rolled into one word or a group of words that define who the company is. It is the company's truth, the reality of what it's like to walk through your doors or talk to your associates on the phone. In today's hyper-competitive market place, your name represents your uniqueness.

Terry Edeker, president and brand development director at Pixallure Design, a corporate identity and brand development firm in Mobile, said, "It is a fact that most consumers make buying decisions based not on factual information, but on an emotional connection. The company that makes an emotional connection is the company that wins the sale."

Edeker points out that a great company name has tremendous impact on revenue growth and corporate culture.

In this month's issue of *AdAge*, Al Ries, chairman of Atlanta-based Ries & Ries and co-author of 11 marketing books, takes the point one step further in his article "Bad Names Can Kill a Brand's Potential" by saying a company's demise is rarely placed on the most obvious factor, the name itself.

Speaking on the recent bankruptcy petition by Schlotzsky's Deli, Ries implies it was more than intense competition from other fast-food operators and a stale menu that caused the company to file for Chapter 11. "Schlotzsky's? Who can spell it, who can pronounce it? Furthermore, the name is dangerously close to 'schlock,' Yiddish slang for poor quality."

Rich Sullivan, president of Mobile-based marketing and public relations agency Sullivan-St.Clair, commented that naming

is big business and should be high on the list of priorities for anyone branding a new company or considering rebranding an existing one. The name should say and mean something, and you should feel comfortable living with it long-term, he said.

"Company names today must stand out in a relevant way. Cute names often feel contrived, and the ridiculous doesn't last more than five minutes. At the end of the day, your company name needs to survive for the long haul."

In addition to high-profile organizations going through rebranding processes (such as Metro Transit, for example\*), many local small businesses are heeding these words of advice from industry leaders and renaming their companies to more appropriately reflect their true brand experience and the services they offer.

The Computer Professionals recently went through such a renaming process. When the company first opened its doors in 1987, it was called The Computer Broker. The personal computer market was just taking off and the company competed locally with IBM and Compaq.

"We either built the computers ourselves or brokered them for our clients," said President **Sam St. John**.

After 10 years in the business, St. John realized he wasn't in the computer brokerage business anymore. Instead, his company had become more of an outsourcing option for IT services. He still sells computers, but the business today is more about computer service and support.

Changing the name from The Computer Broker to The Computer Professionals was not about rebranding for St. John, as there was tremendous equity already built into the company name. It was about renaming.

"I believe in naming things what they really are," said St. John. "I think this recent change will bring us new business because people will better understand what we do."

**Brad Robertson**, a local artist and designer, is also intimately familiar with the branding process. Over the past three to four years he has been in business for himself, he has struggled with his company's name. Nothing he tried seemed to be inclusive enough of his full service range.

"There is a trend among freelance designers to get their own name out in the market place. I knew I wanted to use my name in my company's identity," said Robertson, who offers his clients a multi-disciplinary approach to creative services, from art reproduction and photography to graphic design and photo restoration.

Robertson settled on B.R. Creative as the company name for his new art studio and fine art printing press, which he believes accomplishes both of his branding goals and allows the name to grow with him as he might expand his service offerings or add staffing resources down the road.

"I hope my new identity will become synonymous with art and creative services in this area."

So, if you are thinking about renaming your company or naming a new company, dive deep. Local branding executives offer this set of questions and suggestions as a guideline: Soak in your options. Do they feel good? Are they relevant and truthful? Are they trendy or long lasting? Can you live with them? Turn them around, and look at them from the inside out and the outside in. Consider your clients' point of view. Do your research. Ask the experts. And remember, the name does matter.\*

*Editors Note: Read more about Metro Transit's recent rebranding campaign in The Business View's October 2004 article entitled "Ride the Wave," located on the Chamber's Web site at [www.mobilechamber.com/view/view.html](http://www.mobilechamber.com/view/view.html).*

## The World's Most Powerful Brand Names

In its Aug. 2, 2004 issue, *Business Week* ran its annual ranking of the most familiar and powerful brands. According to the magazine, to be considered, each brand must be valued at \$1 billion with at least one-third of its earnings derived outside its home country, and have publicly available marketing and financial data. (At least one of these prerequisites ruled out such giants as Wal-Mart, Visa, Mars and CNN.) Researchers also did not list parent companies such as Procter & Gamble or airlines.

Other factors included "market leadership, stability and global reach – its ability to cross both geographical and cultural borders," according to the magazine.

1. Coca-Cola
2. Microsoft
3. IBM
4. GE
5. Intel
6. Disney
7. McDonald's
8. Nokia
9. Toyota
10. Marlboro
11. Mercedes
12. Hewlett-Packard
13. Citibank
14. American Express
15. Gillette
16. Cisco
17. BMW
18. Honda
19. Ford
20. Sony
21. Samsung
22. Pepsi
23. Nescafé
24. Budweiser
25. Dell

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 Teague Marketing Solutions Inc.  
 The Bellwether Group  
 Timbes & Yeager Inc.  
 Tom Mason Communications  
 TriCor

For contact information on these companies, visit [www.mobilechamber.com](http://www.mobilechamber.com). As of Oct. 20, 2004



## Guest Columnist

By Glenn Geiger  
Pixallure Design

# Monitor Your Web Site for Maximum Performance

Every business needs to know how it is doing. That's the idea behind exit surveys, customer feedback forms, suggestion boxes and other devices. Without feedback from the customer, monitoring inventory, expenses, revenue and other benchmarks, a business can take a quick slide down a slippery slope, without the owner ever seeing it coming – or being able to stop it.

Webmasters should also be monitoring their Web sites. While a majority of these reports can deliver an excess amount of information, there are several key statistics that you should know about and watch closely. Most of these can be classified as traffic-related or server-performance-related.

### Monitoring Web Site Traffic Traffic Totals

You want to know how much traffic you are generating. Since you really don't see people coming to your "Web front door" it is reassuring to know just how many are visiting.

### Referrers

It is just as important to know where these visitors are coming from. We discovered that we were getting several hits by people searching for previous articles of ours on Google and other search engines. This is valuable information.

### Searches

What words are people searching for in order to find you? This is possibly the largest factor that everyone focuses on. If the copy on your site has good placement then you will do well. Keywords play a role as well, however that role is diminishing as search engines place a greater importance on Web site copy. This information, used and executed properly leads to properly optimized pages and even more traffic.

### Pages Viewed Per Visit

If people visit only one page per visit, you have some work to do to convince them to visit more pages, like those that have your services or products available for purchase.

### Pages Visited

So you added something cool to your Web site? How were you to know that other Webmasters would link to it and send a whole bunch of traffic your way? Well, now you know, so add some copy to the page to pull visitors into the rest of your site.

### Monitoring Web Site Performance Forms

Are they all functioning? The last thing you want is to have lost hundreds or thousands of subscribers because a sign-up form stopped functioning.

### Shopping Carts

Slow and complicated shopping carts are responsible for an estimated \$25 billion in lost sales. Make sure yours is functioning properly.

### Download Speed

Clear your cache and test your pages. Hmm. Maybe those images are a bit large. Time to compress them, or even remove some. Remember that some people are on a much slower connection than you are.

*Glenn Geiger is the director of interactive services for Pixallure Design. He can be reached at 432-6003 or ggeiger@pixallure.com.*

## Geiger Adds – Listen to What the Statistics are Saying

When the Web design phase starts, there are some very important things that must be taken into account. It's not the colors or the logos or even the navigation – it's the viewing trends of the users on the Internet.

In order to design and develop a site that as many users as possible can view and use correctly, this information can help you make important decisions before you even start the design phase.

### Latest numbers and trends:

- 1 out of every 8 people in the world is on the Internet.
- 3 out of every 4 Americans have access to the Internet.
- Over 50 percent of the United States is wired for high speed Internet access.
- 92 percent of all Internet users are using the Web browser, Microsoft Internet Explorer.
- Top 3 Continents with Internet users:
 

#1 Asia	258 million
#2 Europe	231 million
#3 North America	222 million

These top three represent 87 percent of Internet users in the world.

### Screen Display Resolution:

60 percent of all computers have 1024x768 or greater resolution. That is great news for designers because they can now get more information on each page without the user having to scroll left and right.

35 percent of users are still using the 800x600 resolution setting. This has been the standard for about 10 years now.

• More great news for Web designers is that 96 percent of users' browsers can display 65,536 colors and 66 percent of users' browsers can display 16,777,216 colors, meaning the days of the restrictive Web-safe colors is all but gone.

All this information means that designers can now build larger pages with more color and copy, and designing for Microsoft browsers hits the majority of the market. In addition, sites in English will surely capture millions of viewers, but remember that two-thirds of the population on the Internet speak and read in other languages and make purchases in other currencies. Keep target markets in mind and pay attention to what these statistics mean for you and your business. If you don't, you could be missing all kinds of opportunities.

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# Chamber's Web Site Undergoes Transformation

Updated, renewed, streamlined and efficient. These are just a few terms used by volunteers and members to describe the Mobile Area Chamber's new Web site – [www.mobilechamber.com](http://www.mobilechamber.com). The site has recently undergone a major overhaul designed to help Web visitors gain easy access to information they need.

"We looked at the content on our old site and it was overwhelming," said Leigh Perry Herndon, vice president of communications for the Chamber. "The information on it was great, but I liken it to that of a junk drawer at home – we knew what we were looking for was there, but we'd never find it until we cleaned out the drawer."

Through the course of three months, Herndon and Judy Winfield, Chamber Webmaster, met with each department individually and held several "group think" sessions to develop the new site. Now visitors to the newly updated Web site, which mirrors the Chamber's national economic development marketing efforts, are offered four options for their first click through from the home page –

- The Chamber
- Doing Business in Mobile
- Visiting Mobile
- Relocating to Mobile

Information on the site ranges from trade statistics and advertising rates for *The Business View*, to an interactive list of elected officials and board members. And each section of the Web site is concisely packaged and e-mail addressed throughout.

"We listened to our members' needs and gained valuable feedback from visitors to the site about what they wanted," said Herndon. "I believe this site now offers something for everyone. We didn't think that was possible nine months ago."

Internet users are encouraged to log on and use the Chamber's Web site. All feedback is welcomed and appreciated. To do so, e-mail [info@mobilechamber.com](mailto:info@mobilechamber.com).

## Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce



Despite our reputation as a laid-back Southern community, Mobile Bay is on the move. Basking in a prime coastal location, Mobile Bay enjoys all the business and leisure benefits of being on the water. It's just one of the many appealing aspects of our quality of life that includes affordable housing, a rich history and endless recreation.

### The Chamber

Why Members Join the Chamber, Member Benefits, Member Directory, Members Only, News Room, Board of Directors/Advisors, Community/Governmental Relations, Publications, Business Resources, Contact Information

### Doing Business In Mobile

Demographics, Labor Market, Economic Overview, Infrastructure, Business Costs, Incentives, Quality of Life, Available Buildings and Sites, Multiple Realtor Listings, International Trade, Small Business, Workforce Development

### Relocating to Mobile

So you're Interested in moving to Mobile? We think you've made a great choice! From the young to the young at heart, Mobile offers year-round activities for everyone.

### Visiting Mobile

Every season in this coastal city has something to offer to visitors, and the warm climate lends itself to many outdoor activities.

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

## The Business View Weekly... the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce's E-newsletter

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The Chamber's weekly e-mail newsletter highlights Chamber members' business news and events in the Mobile area, and is a supplement to *The Business View*.

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## CEO Profile

### Steve Asbill



**Title:** Plant manager, Olin Chlor Alkali Products

**Hometown:** Augusta, Ga.

**Education:** Bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from the University of Texas

**Previous experience:** Asbill has been with Olin for eight years, primarily in manufacturing. Prior to that, he worked for OxyChem for 11 years, also with a focus in manufacturing.

**Career-changing moment:** After spending many years in manufacturing, Asbill was asked to assume a role on the business side of the Olin Chlor Alkali as director of marketing. He believes this role allowed him to learn more about the company's market and customers.

**Accomplishments:** Helping the company's Augusta plant to obtain OSHA VPP Star status was a huge accomplishment, according to Asbill. (A voluntary protection program, OSHA approval recognizes employers and employees that have achieved "exemplary occupational safety and health," according to the OSHA Web site.)

**Family:** He and his wife Lisa have two children – Greg, 14, and Paige, 11.

**Brief company description:** The Olin McIntosh plant first began production of chlorine and caustic soda in 1952. It is one of four plants in the Olin Chlor Alkali Division, one of three divisions within Olin Corp., a leading producer of chemicals, metals and Winchester sporting ammunition, headquartered in Norwalk, Conn.

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## DIPLOMAT OF THE MONTH

### Debra Kenny



When Mobile Area Chamber diplomat **Debra Kenny** joins a group or a project, she does it wholeheartedly. Kenny's level of commitment is evident in her participation with the Chamber's diplomat team.

Involved in the program for two years, Kenny is a three-time winner of the Diplomat of the Month honor. She is the public relations coordinator for Jason A. Embry, a financial advisor with Waddell & Reed Financial Services. She coordinates financial training seminars and speaking engagements for Embry as well as develops business relationships within the Mobile community. Kenny enjoys attending many Chamber activities such as Business after Hours, New Member Welcome, Diversity Business Network and Networking at Noon.

"It is a true pleasure to work with the Chamber staff, diplomat team and fellow members," Kenny said. "I thoroughly enjoy the many networking and business advantages there are in having a membership with the Mobile Area Chamber."

A firm believer in community and church volunteerism, Kenny is actively involved with her church, St. Mark United Methodist Church, where she is a youth leader, outreach coordinator and a member of the advisory board. She spends a great deal of time working with the Waterfront Rescue Mission, Interfaith

Hospitality Network and the St. Stephen's Society food and clothing pantry. She is also on the board of directors of the Mobile Historic Preservation Society and the American Business Women's Association.

Married for 33 years to Mark Kenny, a city of Mobile firefighter and small business owner, she enjoys singing and playing the guitar for community and church events, frequently playing for services at the Waterfront Rescue Mission. When she isn't hard at work with her many activities, she enjoys songwriting, reading, fishing, aquajogging, four-wheeling and cooking dinner for friends.

"Deb continues to be a hard-working and dependable diplomat," said **Maria Bladorn**, director of customer service for the Chamber. "Her distinction as Diplomat of the Month three times in the past two years proves what an asset she is."

*Diplomats are volunteers from member organizations who assist with Chamber activities. To get involved in the diplomat program, contact **Maria Bladorn** at 431-8649 or [maria@mobilechamber.com](mailto:maria@mobilechamber.com).*

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## Hand Arendall

**Local company head(s) and titles:** Preston Bolt, managing lawyer; Bruce McGowin, Steve Crawford, Brooks Milling and Roger Bates, executive committee

**Years in business in Mobile:** Since 1941.

**Brief company description:** Hand Arendall was organized in 1941 and has more than 65 lawyers. With offices in Birmingham, Mobile and Baldwin County as well as Jackson, Miss., Hand Arendall is situated among the Southeast's major law firms to provide legal direction to its clients.

The firm provides legal services in all areas of traditional civil practice, including business, personal injury defense, construction, labor and employment litigation; corporate organization and transactions; banking, commercial and public finance; tax and estate planning; real estate planning; real estate; municipal law; bankruptcy; health care; intellectual property; environmental law; oil and gas and admiralty.

**Why are you located in Mobile?** The firm was founded in Mobile by Charles C. Hand (1890-1980) and Charles B. Arendall Jr. (1915-1993). The Mobile office has since grown to 46 attorneys making it the largest law firm in the city of Mobile.

**Why do you support the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce's Partners for Growth initiative?** The firm and its lawyers are committed to the communities in which they live and practice law. "We recognize that our success is dependent on the success of our clients, present and future. The Mobile Area Chamber's Partners for Growth initiative is a win-win situation. It will stimulate business growth and make Mobile an even better place to live," said Bolt.

**What do you see as Mobile's greatest potential?** "Mobile's diversity of resources, location in the middle of the Gulf Coast, and especially the strength and work ethic of its citizens, makes Mobile a great location for businesses of all types," said Bolt.

**Length of Chamber membership:** Since 1963.



Pictured here are three of the 46 members of the Hand Arendall LLC firm from left to right are: Ginger P. Gaddy, Brooks P. Milling and Harold D. Parkman.

**Other Chamber involvement:** Bolt is currently chair of the board of directors and Envision Coastal Alabama executive committee and advisory board and has participated in the Leadership Trip and Washington Fly-In. Crawford has also participated in the Leadership Trip. McGowin participated in the 2004 Canadian trade mission. Jones serves on the business retention and expansion committee and the international advisory committee of the Chamber. Edwards chaired the board in 1986.

*Partners for Growth is the Mobile Area Chamber's long-term economic development and community development program. For more information on Partners for Growth, contact Shelly Mattingly, the Chamber's investor relations coordinator, 431-8655 or shelly@mobilechamber.com.*



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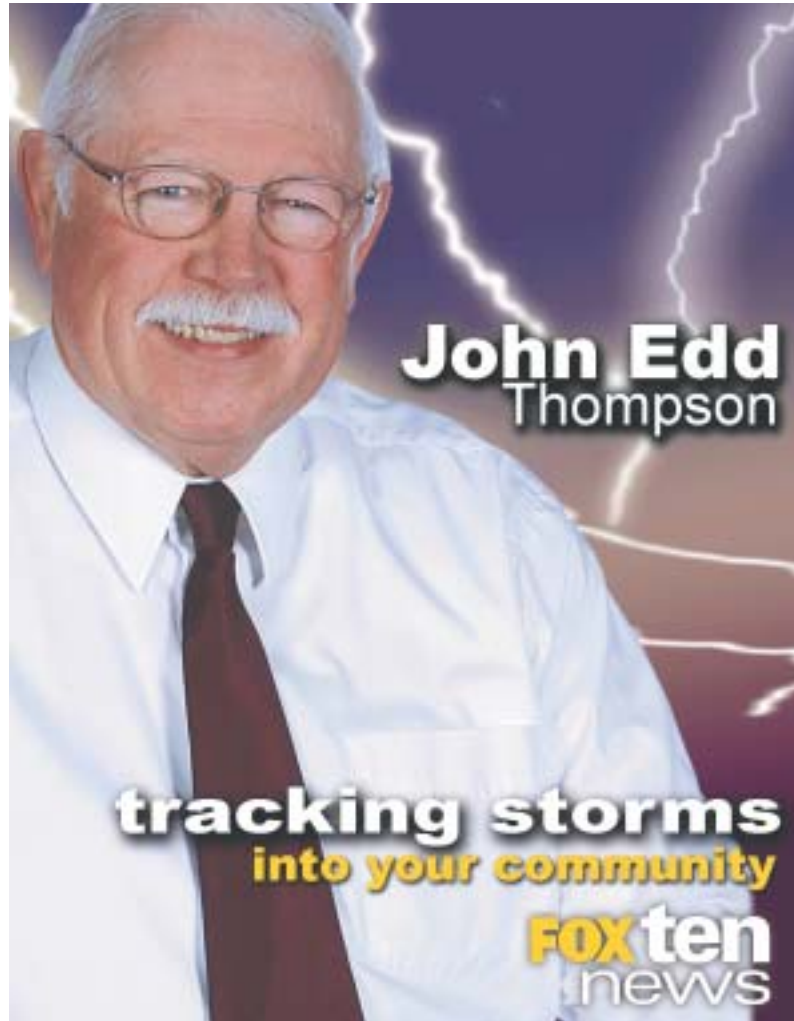
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## States Ranked for Entrepreneur Friendly Policies

Alabama and its neighbors, Mississippi and Florida, were among the Top 10 states recognized for positive public policy climates for small business and entrepreneurship by the Washington D.C.-based nonprofit small business advocacy group, Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council (SBEC) (formerly the Small Business Survival Committee).

"Most elected officials talk about how much they love small business. Some follow through in their actions, but others impose policies that are harmful to small business and entrepreneurship," said Karen Kerrigan, SBEC CEO and president.

The 2004 Small Business Survival Index was revised and expanded, including the addition of S-Corporation tax treatment, a new workers' compensation cost measure, and each state's status regarding regulatory flexibility statutes. The index now analyzes 23 major government-imposed or government-related costs affecting small businesses and entrepreneurs, including an assortment of taxes and measures reflecting

various regulatory costs, and computes an overall rating.

"In essence, it is a comparative measure of economic incentives relating to government policies," said Raymond Keating, SBEC chief economist and author of the study.

How states rank on the index has an effect on the economy. Cited statistics show population and job growth have been faster in states ranking in the top 25 states, compared to those in the bottom half. According to Keating from 1995 to 2002, more than 2.5 million people (net) moved from the 25 states and District of Columbia that rank in the bottom half to those 25 in the top half.

The entire report is available at [www.sbecouncil.org](http://www.sbecouncil.org).

**In terms of policy environments, the most entrepreneur-friendly states under the "Small Business Survival Index 2004" are:**

1. South Dakota
2. Nevada
3. Wyoming
4. Washington
5. Florida
6. Michigan
7. Mississippi
8. Alabama
9. Colorado
10. Indiana

## Faxes Get New Reprieve

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) voted for a new six-month stay of the proposed fax regulations requiring businesses and organizations to obtain prior written consent before faxing.

The new date the rule is set to go into effect is July 1, 2005. Time that Chris Merida, manager of public policy for the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), said will be used to obtain a legislative solution restoring the "established business relationship" provision so that legitimate, business-to-business and association-to-member fax communications can continue unimpeded.

**July 1, 2005, is the new deadline for business faxes.**

"This process has worked well, and only when the FCC was working on the "Do Not Call" process did it decide to look at rules for faxing. We're also proposing a way for people to opt out by including fax numbers and e-mails."

"Without it, the new rule would cause substantial administrative burden on all groups and, especially, small businesses," said Merida.

To sign up for updates from ASAE visit <http://capwiz.com/asae/home/>. ASAE is an advocate for the nonprofit sector, and has 25,000 individual members who manage leading trade, professional and philanthropic associations and represents approximately 10,000 associations.

## Women in Business

*Business Alabama's* annual profile of six women in business included three area professionals.

Included in this year's feature are Elizabeth Sanders, executive director of Main Street Mobile, Mobile; Patti Hill, recently named president and CEO of retail banking for Colonial Bank's Alabama operations, Foley; and Celia Wallace, CEO of Springhill Medical Center, Mobile.

## More than \$400,000 to Fund 105 Disaster Relief Jobs

Mobile Works Inc. received \$407,418 in grant monies from the Department of Labor – a portion of the \$7.5 million awarded to the state of Alabama for Hurricane Ivan disaster relief. The organization directed the monies to infrastructure cleanup in the city of Mobile and Mobile County and hired 105 local displaced workers for the tasks.

National Emergency Grants are discretionary funds awarded to provide supplemental funding for workforce development, employment services and other assistance for workers affected by major economic issues, such as plant closures and major disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes or floods.

Mobile Works, a local partnership of business, education, labor and community leaders, provides businesses with training, leadership, labor market information and employment programs designed to increase the available labor pool of skilled jobseekers in the Mobile area.

## Super Site Featured

The Tensaw Tract in Mount Vernon, 30 minutes from Mobile, was named "one of the best values in the South" by *Southern Business & Development* magazine in its latest issue. The article, "Top Super Sites in the South" featured 96 sites, including seven in Alabama.

Once used for growing trees to support the state's pulp and paper industry, the Tensaw Tract consists of 3,467 contiguous acres.

The article also highlights "a skilled labor pool" and refers interested developers and site selectors to the Mobile Area Chamber.

The magazine classified the definition of a "Super Site" as one that has a minimum of 500 acres, near a four-lane road, with one owner or a group of owners that have agreed to sell together, and is suitable for a large scale project such as automotive, semiconductor, electronics, etc.

To read the entire article visit [www.sb-d.com](http://www.sb-d.com).



## Small Business Administration Express Available

The SBA Community Express program is now available in Alabama. Targeted for small businesses that are 51 percent owned by veterans, minorities or women or are located in low to moderate-income areas, owners can apply for loans ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000.

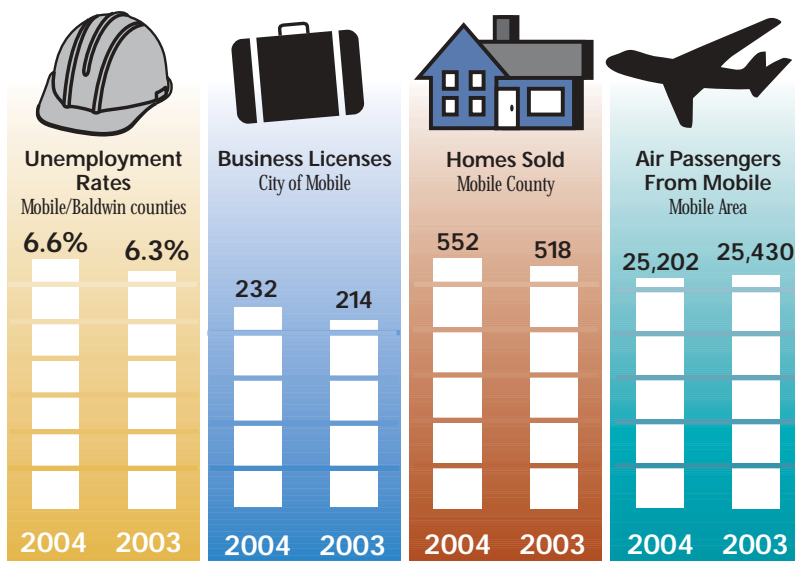
SBA technical assistance providers assess the capabilities of the small business, determine what technical assistance is needed, if any, and help create an action plan to implement the goals. Once the providers determine the potential borrower is prepared, an application can be submitted.

The loan characteristics are: amounts of \$5,000 to \$25,000; unsecured; typically seven year term; prime + 4.75 percent, adjusted quarterly; no prepayment penalty; no tax returns required; \$350 application fee (will be deducted from loan proceeds); loan payments are auto drafted from business accounts; start up businesses allowed; all industries considered; and utilizes Fair Isaac Credit Score System which evaluates the credit score of applicant and industry data.

Locally, more information is available through the University of South Alabama Small Business Development Center, [www.southalabama.edu/sbdc](http://www.southalabama.edu/sbdc) or 460-6004.

## Comparative Economic Indicators

### August '04 vs August '03



## Mobile Named Logistics-Friendly

Each year *Logistics Today* ranks the Top 50 Logistics-Friendly Cities in America. Mobile was listed as 28<sup>th</sup> in the nation and 11<sup>th</sup> in the Southeast.

### 2004's Top 5

1. Cleveland-Lorain-Elyria, Ohio
2. St. Louis, Mo.
3. Oakland, Calif.
4. Chicago
5. Minneapolis-St. Paul

The study includes the 331 statistical areas identified by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, and compares them in 10 categories, including work force/labor costs/availability/skills; railroad access; water ports; air service; and interstate access.

"This is national recognition of our existing transportation infrastructure that Choctaw Point, a proposed container port and intermodal rail yard, is trying to lever to make Mobile an even more attractive site for growth," said **Green Suttles**, a project director at the Mobile Area Chamber.

## Congressional Scorecard

**Rep. Jo Bonner** was recognized recently by the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council (SBEC). The organization highlighted members of U.S. Senate and House Members who voted 100 percent of the time in favor of critical small business legislation.

**Sen. Jeff Sessions** was given a 93 percent record and **Sen. Richard Shelby**, 87 percent.

"This shows that our delegation is sensitive to not only the needs of Alabama small businesses, but their value to the state's economy," said **Ginny Russell**, the Chamber's vice president of community and governmental affairs.

SBEC scored 15 key pieces of legislation during the second session of the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress. The nonpartisan group works to influence legislation and policies that help to create a favorable and productive environment for small businesses and entrepreneurship.

## School System's TV Studio Changes Names

The Mobile County Public School System's TV studio formerly known as Public Television Services is now The Mobile County Public School System Television Network.

This division of the school system is making the name change to further link its television production capabilities, future plans and identity with the continuing focus of the district to better communicate with the community.

The school system produces *Inside Education*, a program featuring the achievements of teachers, students and employees of the school system. The show recently expanded to a full 30 minutes and can be seen on Port City 6 on the Comcast Network, Channel 27 The Gulf Coast Network on Mediacom, and also on the school system's Web site [www.mcpss.com](http://www.mcpss.com).

## Making Decisions

Author and instructor Peter Drucker wrote there are eight practices that are consistent among leaders. According to his research, they are:

- They asked, "What needs to be done?"
- They asked, "What is right for the enterprise?"
- They developed action plans.
- They took responsibility for decisions.
- They took responsibility for communicating.
- They were focused on opportunities rather than problems.
- They ran productive meetings.
- They thought and said "we" rather than "I."

"The first two practices gave them the knowledge they needed. The next four helped them convert this knowledge into effective action. The last two ensured that the whole organization felt responsible and accountable (...)" wrote Drucker.

*Peter F. Drucker is the Marie Rankin Clarke professor of social science and management at the Peter F. Drucker and Masatoshi Ito Graduate School of Management at Claremont Graduate University in Claremont, Calif.*

## Featured Profiles Advisors

The Mobile Area 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 or [kat@mobilechamber.com](mailto:kat@mobilechamber.com).



**McDonald**

**James H. McDonald Jr.** is managing member of the firm Alford, Clausen & McDonald LLC. He received a business degree from Spring Hill College

in 1975 and his law degree from Cumberland School of Law of Samford University in 1978. He has practiced law in Mobile since 1978, and is a founding member of Alford, Clausen & McDonald LLC.

McDonald is also a graduate of Leadership Mobile, a former president of Volunteer Mobile Inc., and currently serves on Spring Hill College's President's Advisory Council. He is married to Beth Wilson McDonald and they have three children.



**Roberts**

**Robin Roberts** is founder, president and chief executive officer of Offshore-Inland Services of Alabama.

Roberts attended the University of Southern Mississippi before moving to Mobile in 1980.

The company's hydraulic services division has served the pulp and paper, marine, offshore and steel industries since its establishment in 1983, and the marine and oilfield services division serves the ocean-going marine and offshore drilling industries.

He is married to Valerie Roberts and they have three daughters. Offshore-Inland is a Partners for Growth Investor.

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# Who's In Town?

Have you even been downtown for a lunch meeting, and suddenly find it impossible to get in any restaurant, and don't know why? It may be because there's a large convention in town that day.

Conventions are the backbone of Mobile's burgeoning tourism industry. From statewide associations to national sports events, on any given day, hundreds of tourists descend upon on the Port City. In an effort to keep you informed about "Who's In Town," the Mobile Bay Convention and Visitors Bureau will provide *The Business View* a list of the current month's conventions coming to the Bay area. If you have any questions about the groups listed to the right, contact the CVB at 251-208-2000.

## DECEMBER 2004

Dec. 3 - 7, 2004

Alabama Farmers Federation Annual

David Smart - Director  
Alabama Farmers Federation  
2108 East South Blvd.  
Montgomery, AL 36116  
Phone: 334-613-4211  
Fax: 334-613-4746  
Rooms: 1,355  
Delegates: 2,000  
Hotel Headquarters: Malaga Inn

Dec. 7-11, 2004

Deep South Fruit and Vegetable  
Growers Association Conference  
Joe Kemble - Extension Specialist-Vegetable Crops  
170 B. Funchess Hall  
Auburn, AL 36849  
Phone: 334-884-3050  
Fax: 334-844-3131  
Rooms: 505  
Delegates: 500  
Hotel Headquarters: Riverview Plaza Hotel

## JANUARY 2005

Jan. 19-24, 2005

Gulf States Horticultural Expo Inc.  
Annual Meeting (Beyond 2005)  
Linda Van Dyke - Executive Director  
Gulf States Horticultural Expo Inc.  
P.O. Box 9  
Auburn, AL 36831-0009  
Phone: 334-502-7777  
Fax: 334-821-9111  
Rooms: 962  
Delegates: 1,350  
Hotel Headquarters: Riverview Plaza Hotel

Jan. 28-30, 2005

Southern Radiological Conference  
Vanessa Brown - Meeting Planner  
Southern Radiological Conference  
2451 Fillingim St, Mobile, AL 36617  
Phone: 251-471-7862  
Fax: 251-471-7882  
Rooms: 190  
Delegates: 200  
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Source: Mobile Bay Convention and Visitors Bureau.

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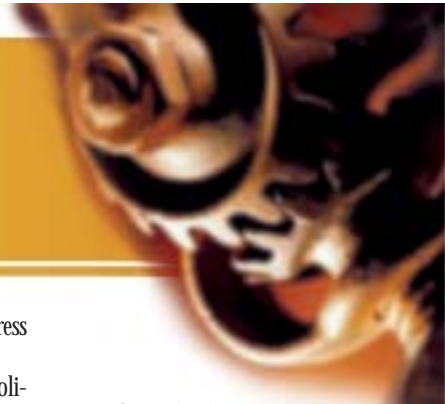


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# The Chamber at Work for You



## Economic Development Campaign Wins International Award

In September, **Bill Sisson**, vice president of economic development for the Mobile Area Chamber, traveled to St. Louis to attend the International Economic Development Council's (IEDC) annual conference in St. Louis.

At this meeting, attended by economic development professionals worldwide, the Chamber was honored with the IEDC's top award, Overall Marketing Award for Population Over 200,000. The award was given for the national economic development campaign – Mobile Bay. On the Water. On the Move. Lewis Communications was the Chamber's partner in this effort.

## Coalition Seeks Solution to Hwy. 98 Issue

The Chamber's Transportation Funding Coalition has been working toward a resolution to the current U.S. Hwy. 98 issue. During a recent gathering of key parties, lobbyist Beth Lyons, Lyons & Crane, was asked to draft legislation for a special overlay district that will allow limited land use controls in the area around the Big Creek Lake watershed, Mobile's water supply.

With input from Mobile County Commission, the Mobile Area Water and Sewer Board, the Alabama Department of Transportation and the Mobile County Health Dept., the legislation could be introduced in November's special legislative session. The overlay district should alleviate fears about uncontrolled growth.

## National Conference Attendance Promotes Professional Development

The Executive Women International leadership conference was held in New Orleans this fall, and was attended by **Shelly Mattingly** in the Mobile Area Chamber's economic development department. The conference included sessions on generational work habits and strategies for administrators. In addition, **Carolyn Wilson**, communication assistant at the Chamber, attended the International Association of Administrative Professionals (AAP) conference in Washington D.C. Wilson currently serves as the local AAP's chapter president.

Participation in national conferences is an outgrowth of the Chamber's commitment to professional development.

## Chamber Presents at National Conference

The Chamber's Center for Workforce Development and Health Care Workforce Coalition members presented an informative session on the Health Occupations Career Fair before 150 peers at the National Tech-Prep Network Annual Conference in Minneapolis, Minn. "Mobile's Interactive Health Career Fair: An Industry/Education Partnership Event" was a panel presentation discussing the health care industry's motivation for supporting the event and the coalition, planning and funding as well as the event's impact on students.

Presenters included Chamber staff **Beverly Livers** and **Michele Rumpf**; **Randy Stembridge** with Infirmity Health System; **David Powell** with Providence Hospital; **Mary Ellen Leffard** with University of South Alabama Children's & Women's Hospital; and **Dorinda Franklin** with Mobile County Public School System.

## Chamber Joins U.S. Council for International Business

The U.S. Council for International Business is a global network promoting advances in international trade and policy advocacy. The organization provides business services and dispute resolution for companies involved in the international trade arena. Fifteen state and regional chambers have joined the council, including the Mobile Area Chamber. Each month the council facilitates conference calls for its members. Recent conference calls have featured Canada and its border restrictions and India.

## Businesses Meet With Mobile City Council Members

Mobile Area Chamber member businesses began meeting with the city council member who represents their businesses' district. These meetings are an outgrowth of the Chamber's commitment to develop a positive business climate for all local companies. From the first series of meetings, council members pledged to work with the city's traffic engineering department to look at traffic complaints and strive to make traffic flow improvements.

## Staff Attends Small Business Summit In D.C.

Recently, **Ginny Russell**, vice president of community and governmental affairs for the Chamber, traveled to Washington D.C. to attend ACCESS 2004: U.S. Chamber of Commerce Small Business Summit. While there, conference attendees were briefed by

the U.S. Chamber on key issues for Congress this year including affordable access to quality health care, international trade policy, small business advocacy and lawsuit abuse, and its impact on small businesses. Russell and Chamber board of advisor **Cathy Anderson Giles**, owner of Equity Technologies Inc., also heard presentations by U.S. Secretary of Commerce **Donald Evans** and **Hector Barretto**, administrator for the Small Business Administration

## Expo USA – Meeting in Dominican Republic

The Chamber recently participated in Expo USA, a matchmaking exhibition in the Dominican Republic. Six companies and organizations of the 45 present at the expo represented Alabama exports including products from the telecommunication, chocolate fountains, painting and coating, agriculture and valve industries. A representative from the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Alabama State Port Authority also attended the expo. Participants expect to appoint distributors and increase sales as a result of the expo.

## Federal Disaster Organizations Receive Assistance

In the wake of Hurricane Ivan, the Chamber became information central for federal and state organizations seeking information. From The Salvation Army, American Red Cross, Alabama State Troopers to the Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA), the Chamber was a resource of information. In the weeks following the hurricane, the Chamber's reception desk provided these organizations with everything from telephone books, maps, dining and lodging guides, apartment complex guides to the names of general contractors, construction companies and even dry cleaners. The front desk received more than 1,000 calls and served 300 walk-in customers on Ivan-related issues a month after the hurricane.

## The Business View Named Top Publication in the State

The Public Relations Council of Alabama (PRCA) – a group of more than 500 public relations professionals across the state – recently held its annual conference in Birmingham. During this meeting, the Chamber's monthly news magazine, *The Business View*, earned a Medallion Award, the top award in its category. The local chapter of PRCA, whose president is **Ashley Collins**, director of communications for the Chamber, was named Chapter of the Year.

## Trade Mission Held in Brazil and Chile

The Chamber's trade division co-sponsored a mission trip to Sao Paulo, Brazil, and Santiago, Chile, with the Alabama Development Office and U.S. Chamber of Commerce to promote Alabama exports. Alabama legislators and exporters participated in the mission, whereby exporters took part in industry-specific appointments arranged by the U.S. Commercial Service in both countries. Alabama industry sectors represented included street sweepers, erosion control systems, flat bed trailers, defense, aerospace, information technology, pharmaceuticals and medical. While final results of the mission are still pending, several of the companies were able to appoint agents and distributors, and one company received a purchase order.

## Chamber Funding Secured

The city of Mobile and Mobile County recently approved renewed funding for the Chamber's economic development efforts. The Chamber represents the city and county's official economic development activities annually through an annual performance contract.

## Chamber Partners Work on Grant to Build Diversity

The Chamber's Center for Workforce Development (CWD) and Health Care Workforce Coalition are partnering with the University of South Alabama's (USA) Center for Healthy Communities to submit a "Healthy Careers Opportunity Program" (HCOP) grant proposal.

The goal of the HCOP program is to build diversity in health fields by providing students from disadvantaged backgrounds an opportunity to prepare for, enter and graduate from health professions programs.

Mobile's program will include programs for grades K-20 that will increase students' awareness of health careers, what they must do to prepare for those careers as well as pre-matriculation and post-graduate programs.

In addition to the CWD and Center for Healthy Communities, the joint submission team includes Mobile County Public Schools, Mobile Infirmity, USA Hospitals and USA's Colleges of Allied Health Professions and Medicine. For more information about this effort, contact **Michele Rumpf** at 431-8631.

# CALENDAR VIEW

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

## DECEMBER

There are no events scheduled for Dec. 2004.

## JANUARY 2005

### 11 ANNUAL MEETING

**Time:** Reception - 5:30 p.m.  
Program - 6 p.m.  
Networking Reception - 7 p.m.  
**Place:** Mobile Civic Center  
401 Civic Center Dr.  
**Cost:** \$45 per person, \$425 for table of 10  
**Contact:** Carolyn Wilson at 431-8606 or [carolynw@mobilechamber.com](mailto:carolynw@mobilechamber.com)

### 12 NETWORKING @ NOON\*

**Time:** Noon - 1:30 p.m.  
**Place:** TBD  
**Cost:** \$8, includes lunch  
\$5, without lunch  
**Contact:** Heather Bell at 431-8638 or [heather@mobilechamber.com](mailto:heather@mobilechamber.com)  
\*Members only event

### 18 HOW TO COLD CALL AND BUILD NEW CUSTOMERS

**Time:** 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
**Place:** Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce McGowin Room  
451 Government St.  
**Cost:** \$199  
**Contact:** Brenda Rembert at 431-8607 or [brenda@mobilechamber.com](mailto:brenda@mobilechamber.com)

### 27 BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

**Time:** 5:30 - 7 p.m.  
**Place:** Martinis on Dauphin  
270 Dauphin St.  
**Cost:** \$2 for members/\$5 for potential members  
**Contact:** Heather Bell at 431-8638 or [heather@mobilechamber.com](mailto:heather@mobilechamber.com)

## Annual Meeting Set for January 11

The Mobile Area Chamber's 168th Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 11 at the Mobile Civic Center. Beginning at 5:30 p.m. with a program introducing the Chamber's 2005 Chairman of the Board **Harris Morrisette**, president of Marshall Biscuit Co. Inc. The event will take a look back at the area's accomplishments and acknowledge local business contributions.

The evening concludes with the area's largest networking reception featuring 11 restaurants and caterers showcasing their culinary masterpieces.

Tickets are \$45 per person or \$425 for a table of 10. For reservations, or more information, call **Carolyn Wilson** at 431-8606 or [carolynw@mobilechamber.com](mailto:carolynw@mobilechamber.com).

**Sponsors:** Alabama Power Co., ALTEL, BR Creative, Compass Bank, Degussa Corp., Harbor Communications, Integrity Media, ITC^DeltaCom, Mobile Airport Authority, Mobile Gas Service Corp., OSI, Paper Products Inc., SouthTrust Bank, The Forum, Thompson Engineering, University of South Alabama, Whitney National Bank

**Restaurants and Caterers:** Alec Naman Catering, ARAMARK, Atlanta Bread Co., Carrabba's Italian Grill, Creative Catering, Everything and More, Lassere's Catering, Michelle's Family Restaurant, Ruth's Chris Steak House, The Bienville Club, Tyner's Catering, Wintzell's Oyster House

## Networking 101

*Editor's note: While reviewing the Chamber's monthly offerings, notice that there is a new column to help readers maximize their networking skills. The Business View is planning to publish one tip in each issue on the calendar page. Let us know if you have a networking tip to share or a networking success story. Contact Susan Rak-Blanchard at [susan@mobilechamber.com](mailto:susan@mobilechamber.com).*



### How to Hand Out Business Cards at Networking Events

Carry a large supply of well-designed business cards that project a professional image of your business in a nice card case and always ask a contact, if it is okay for you to give them one of your business cards.

For example, if you're engaged in a conversation with John at a networking event, you might say something like this, "John I really enjoyed our discussion on your company, would it be okay if I gave you one of my business cards?" If John says yes, then by all means give him one of your business cards.

Then ask, "Would it also be okay if I gave you two more business cards to hand out to others in your network who might need my services or products?" Chances are that if John accepted your first business card, he will also accept a few more business cards from you. Contacts keep your business card about six times longer than usual when they give you permission to accept them.

*Source: Janice Malone with Business Networking International - Southern Alabama/Northwest Florida region*

### Business After Hours

Join business professionals at Business After Hours at Martinis on Dauphin, located at 270 Dauphin St., on Thursday, Jan. 27 from 5:30 until 7 p.m. Come network at this popular Chamber event and enjoy a showcase of the cosmopolitan nightlife at Martinis Fine Food & Spirits with a buffet highlighting their signature menu. The cost to attend is \$2 for members and \$5 for potential members. Reservations are not required.



### Networking@Noon

Sponsored by Clark Personnel Services, Networking@Noon will be held Wednesday, Jan. 12 at a location to be determined. N@N is a bi-monthly event offering members the opportunity to introduce themselves and their business with 45 uninterrupted seconds. Following a brief presentation by the sponsor, introductions and lunch, attendees are invited to continue to network. The cost is \$8 with lunch or \$5 without lunch. Reservations are required. Reserve your space by Jan. 10 for this popular event. Reservations after this date must be honored in order to cover the cost of lunch.  
\*Members Only Event



### How to Cold Call

This new one-day seminar from Dale Carnegie Training will show participants how to make strong calls that generate appointments and lead to new business.

Lead by Terry Crews, attendees will learn a number of tips and strategies including seven ways to charge yourself up to make a cold call; 10 proven ways to get past the gatekeeper; how to write and deliver a 45 second cold-call presentation; and how to anticipate objections and turn around.

Cost is \$199 per person. Contact **Brenda Rembert**, 431-8607 or [brenda@mobilechamber.com](mailto:brenda@mobilechamber.com), for more information.

# MEMBER NEWS

## Share the Good News

Member News features a variety of announcements from Chamber members. Submission deadline is two months prior to publication. News releases should be one or two brief paragraphs. Photos must be professional headshots in either color or black and white, labeled with the person's last name, and must be 300 dpi at full size and saved in an eps, tif or jpg format. Photos will not be returned.

Send your information to [news@mobilechamber.com](mailto:news@mobilechamber.com) or Member News, Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, P. O. Box 2187, Mobile, AL 36652.

## WHO'S NEW?

Erica L. Parsons and Ricardo Woods joined Bowron, Latta & Wasden PC in the law firm's general litigation section. Parsons is a graduate of Auburn University and attended the University of Georgia School of Law. Woods is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi and attended the Cumberland School of Law.

Infinity Homes announced Elizabeth Arnett joined the company as sales manager. Arnett has eight years experience in the homebuilding industry including all aspects of planning, customer service, new home consulting, sales and finance.



Arnett

Sonya LaShea Crawford and Faith Ann Pate joined the firm of Johnstone, Adams, Bailey, Gordon & Harris LLC. Crawford earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and psychology from Florida A&M University. Pate earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Mobile. Both graduated from The University of Alabama School of Law.

CentraLite Systems Inc. announced Philip R. (Phil) Cahoon and Ronald K. (Ron) Mosley joined the company. Cahoon is chief financial officer (CFO), and prior to joining CentraLite, was CFO for Mobile Energy Systems Holdings Inc. Mosley is supervisor of operations. Mosley previously co-owned a construction company and worked for Minolta-QMS Inc., for more than 19 years.

Regions Bank announced the promotion of Donna K. Houston to vice president mortgage loan officer. Houston joined the bank in 1997.



Chason

Smith

Wells

The law firm of McDowell Knight Roedder & Sledge LLC announced William G. Chason, Anne Laurie Smith and Jason O. Wells joined the firm practicing in general civil litigation. Chason and Smith graduated from The University of Alabama School of Law, and Wells is a graduate of Tulane School of Law.

Praytor Realty Co. Inc. announced the association of Lori Coombs as a full-time sales associate. A Mobile native, Coombs earned a bachelor's degree in secondary education from The University of Alabama.



Coombs

Jennifer Delcambre joined Spring Hill College as the foundation and government relations development officer. She earned a bachelor of science degree in mathematics from Spring Hill and completed a master in public service from DePaul University.

Dru Walsh joined the investment firm of Sterne, Agee and Leach at its Mobile branch. Walsh is a graduate of Birmingham-Southern College and is a member of the 2005 Leadership Mobile class.



Walsh

Steven P. McMahon and John B. Flynn III joined the real estate firm of Yance, Inge & Associates Inc. as commercial sales associates. Both are graduates of The University of Alabama.



McMahon

Flynn

McMahon has a finance degree with a concentration in real estate. Flynn has a business degree and a major in marketing.



Noll

Wilkins Miller PC announced Ashley Noll joined the firm as a professional accountant. Noll holds a bachelor's degree from the University of South Alabama in business administration with a concentration in accounting.

Jeffrey Mayers was appointed general manager for Riverview Plaza Hotel. Mayers is a graduate of the University of Maryland, College Park, and holds a bachelor's degree in governmental affairs and political science.

Eddie Reid is the new plant operations manager at SpillTech's Mobile facility. Reid has been with the company for five years, previously serving as production planner. He has a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Mobile and a master's degree from the University of South Alabama.



Reid

## BUSINESS ENDEAVORS

Austal USA launched its 102-foot Sea Coaster surface-effect catamaran that will be used to demonstrate advanced hull form technology to the United States Office of Naval Research (ONR). The technology allows the eighth vessel to be built at Austal's purpose-built aluminum ship-building facility.

Long's Computer Learning Center now offers medical office training. Modules include terminology, billing, coding, insurance and office procedures. Classes are offered on days, nights and Saturdays. For more information call 470-5089.

In the United States, Atofina Chemicals Inc., located in Axis, Ala., is now Arkema Inc. The company, a new global chemical company, was launched as part of a reorganization of Total's Chemicals Branch.

Xanté recently launched a new printing process, Impressia Metal PlateSetter, using Z-7 technology. This new process-free workflow doesn't require additional steps or processes and is completely chemical free.

TelCove, a provider of business telecommunications, launched Remote Access Virtual Private Network (VPN). The secure, managed remote access solution enables end-users to remotely access their network through the Internet.

In addition, TelCove was chosen as the provider of the majority of Mississippi College's telecommunications services for the main campus and law school facility.

Gulf Coast Records Management changed its name to Safe Archives. The new name will better reflect the company's mission.

Accelerated Technology, a Mentor Graphics division, announced its Nucleus(r) OSEK real-time kernel was used by the Solar Car Team at the University of Michigan to power their latest generation solar car called "Momentum." The car will undergo rigorous road and track testing, and in May 2005 will race to qualify for the North American Solar Challenge (NASC).

Chapura Inc. released PocketCopy™ 2.0, an update to the company's program for copying Palm(tm) Desktop Software records to the personal information manager, Microsoft Outlook. PocketCopy offers a one-way transfer of data for customers wanting to move their vital information out of the Palm Desktop so that it is accessible in Outlook and available to synchronize with other handhelds, such as Pocket PCs. For more information call 470-1979.

The SSI Group announced its choice of LetterLogic Inc. of Nashville, Tenn., as a health care claims attachment and printing partner. This selection will allow SSI to improve health care claims cycle by providing a seamless process for printing and mailing claims with attachments.

Spring Hill College plans to expand its higher education presence in Atlanta by providing accelerated degree completion and graduate courses for adult students in the Gwinnett County, Ga., area. The college's new adult education program will feature classes in teacher education, professional nursing or general business.

## WELL DONE!

Garrison Thompson PhD, assistant professor of sociology at the University of Mobile, recently completed his doctorate work at The University of Alabama in Birmingham (UAB). He holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Samford University; a bachelor's degree in psychology, a master's degree in sociology and a master's degree in social gerontology from UAB.

The University of South Alabama's (USA) National Alumni Association elected its 2004-2005 officers. Mobile attorney **Mike Windom** was elected president. He graduated with a degree in finance from USA and received a law degree from The University of Alabama.



**Windom**

**Danny Sirmon**, president of House of Specialties, was named chairman of the board for the Promotional Products Association International (PPAI). He will be installed Jan. 2005 and will serve one year. PPAI is a member-driven international trade association with more than 6,700 member firms offering education, exhibitions and forums for networking; an industry certification program; and research and communications.

**Mobile Works Inc.** elected new board officers for the 2004-2005 fiscal year. **Charlie Story** will serve as chairman; **Ralph Buffkin**, Alabama Commission on Higher Education, vice chairman; **Steve Perry**, Harris, DeVille & Associates Inc., secretary; and **D. Mark Nix**, Infirmiry Health System and Mobile Infirmiry, treasurer.

**Hon. Herman Thomas and Vaughan Morissette**, both of Mobile, were honored with Trustee Emeriti status on **Spring Hill College's** board of trustees.

**James L. Busby**, CEO of **CentraLite Systems Inc.**, received the "Technology Entrepreneur of the Year" award from the Alabama Information Technology Association (AITA). Busby co-founded **CentraLite Systems** and was the founder of **QMS Inc.**, a Mobile-based laser printer manufacturer publicly traded on the New York Stock Exchange.

**Wilkins Miller PC** announced **Sharon C. McMahan** passed the certified public accounting exam. McMahan is a graduate of the University of South Alabama with a bachelor's degree in finance and a master's degree in accounting. She is involved in the areas of tax and litigation support.



**McMahan**

## FOR YOUR CALENDAR

The **Mobile Opera** announced the **Denyce Graves** concert is rescheduled for Friday, Dec. 3 at the **Mobile Civic Center Theater** beginning at 8 p.m. All events scheduled around the original date will still take place including special events preceding and following the concert. Pre-sold tickets will be honored and accepted for the new date. Concert tickets are still available. For more information call 432-6772.

## 2004 Statement of Ownership, Management & Circulation

(1) Publication Title: The Business View (2) Publication Number: 952-7000 (3) Filing Date: 9/25/2003 (4) Issue Frequency: Monthly Except December (5) Number of Issues Published Annually: 11 (6) Annual Subscription Price: \$24 (7) Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: P.O. Box 2187, Mobile, AL, 36652-2187, Mobile County (8) Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters of General Business Office of Publisher: 451 Government Street, Mobile, AL, 36602 (9) Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher; Editor and Managing Editor: (Publisher) Winthrop M. Hallett III; (Editor) Leigh Perry Herndon; (Managing Editor) Susan Rak Blanchard; P.O. Box 2187, Mobile, AL, 36652-2187 (10) Owner: Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 2187, Mobile, AL 36652-2187 (11) Known Bondholder, Mortgagees or Other Securities: None (12) For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail special rates. The purpose, function and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes: Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months (13) Publication Name: The Business View (14) Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: October 2004

(15) Extent and Nature of the Circulation	Average No. Copies	Actual No. Copies of	
	Each Issue During	Single Issue Published Preceding 12 Month	Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total No. Of Copies		4,200	4,200
(1) Paid/requested outside-county mail subscriptions		377	377
(2) Paid in county subscriptions		3,823	3,823
(3) Sales through dealers, carriers, street vendors, counter sales		none	none
(4) Other classes mailed		none	none
Total Paid and/or requested circulation		3,985	3,985
Free Distribution by mail		none	none
Free distribution outside mail		215	215
Total free distribution		215	215
Total distribution		3,985	3,985
Copies not distributed		215	215
Total		4,200	4,200

(16) This Statement of Ownership will be printed in the November 2003 issue of this publication.  
 (17) Signature and title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager or Owner & Date:

*Susan Rak Blanchard Oct. 20, 2004*

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including multiple damages and civil penalties).

# NEW MEMBERS

CLIP AND ADD THESE TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY.

### ATTENTION MEMBERS!

If you know of a company interested in benefitting from Chamber membership, please contact: **Erika Eslava** at 431-8647.

### Back Yard Burgers

Mike Lee  
 930 Schillinger Rd. S.  
 Mobile, AL 36695  
 251-631-3967  
 www.backyardburgers.com  
*Restaurants-Fast Food*

### Capital Partners Leasing

Larry Byrd  
 1800 International Park Drive, Ste. 75  
 Birmingham, AL 35243  
 205-803-2300  
 www.capitalpartnersleasing.com  
*Leasing Service*

### CLA Architecture Inc.

Ben Coate AIA  
 504 Brookwood Blvd.  
 Birmingham, AL 35243  
 205-970-2288  
 www.claarchitecture.com  
*Architects*

### Creative Data Solutions LLC

Terry D. Green  
 P.O. Box 805  
 Mobile, AL 36601-0805  
 251-504-8179  
 www.creativedatasolutions.net  
*Software Development*

### Steve Perry The Forum, Industrial Partners in Environmental Progress

P.O. Box 816931  
 Mobile, AL 36689  
 251-473-3931  
*Associations*

### J. Havard Photographer

John Havard  
 7228 Three Notch Rd.  
 Mobile, AL 36619-1382  
 251-666-7214  
 www.havard.com  
*Photographer*

### Insituform Technologies Inc.

Jack Boatman  
 10375 Kearns Rd.  
 Theodore, AL 36582-7471  
 251-973-0213  
 www.insituform.com  
*Contractors-Commercial*

### Mobile Plastic Recovery

Lance R. Lefleur  
 1804 Eighth St.  
 Mobile, AL 36615-4218  
 251-649-6000  
*Physician/Surgeon-MD-Plastic & Reconstruction*

### Rooftop Solar Shield

Tony Geci  
 1255 Baylor Dr.  
 Mobile, AL 36618-2104  
 251-605-6057  
*Roof Contractors*

### State Farm Insurance - Stan Chavis

Stan Chavis  
 600 Bel Air Blvd., Ste. 130  
 Mobile, AL 36606-3501  
 251-473-7150  
*Insurance*

### Van Hulzen Events LLC

Amy Van Hulzen  
 31255 Live Oak Ct.  
 Spanish Fort, AL 36527-3161  
 251-625-0980  
 www.vanhulzenevents.com  
*Event Planning/Management*

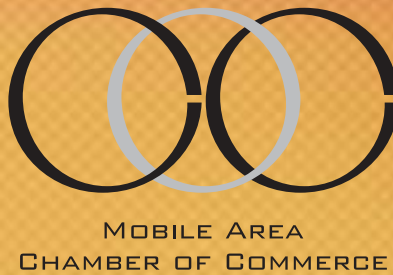
### Vanguard Modular Building Systems

Jerry Sellers  
 1301 Shiloh Rd., Ste. 1411  
 Kennesaw, GA 30144-7165  
 251-533-6396  
 www.vanguardmodular.com  
*Modular Building*

*New Members as of Oct. 1, 2004*

**WE BUILD A BETTER COMMUNITY BY...**

- recruiting jobs
- developing a competitive workforce
- creating a positive business climate
- increasing community development expectations
- adding member value



451 Government St.  
Mobile, Alabama 36602  
P.O. Box 2187  
Mobile, Alabama 36652-2187  
Phone: (251) 433-6951  
Fax: (251) 432-1143  
E-mail: [join@mobilechamber.com](mailto:join@mobilechamber.com)  
Web: [www.mobilechamber.com](http://www.mobilechamber.com)

## MEMBERSHIP INVITATION

Name of Business *(as it will appear in directory)* \_\_\_\_\_

Business Category as Listed in the Yellow Pages \_\_\_\_\_

Other Categories of Service your Organization Offers \_\_\_\_\_

Year Established \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Officer    Mr.    Mrs.    Ms.    PhD or MD \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Key Contact Person *(name to be listed in directory)*  Mr.    Mrs.    Ms.    PhD or MD \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_ Web Site Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

Preference for Communication:    E-mail    Fax    Letter   City Council District \_\_\_\_\_

Demographics of Owner(s): *OPTIONAL (The Chamber uses this information to track diversity among membership.)*

Female-Owned     Minority-Owned *(Using Federal definition of a minority: persons who are 25% African-American, American Indian, Asian-American, Hispanic/Latino.)*

Member Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsor Signature \_\_\_\_\_

***Thank You For Your Support!***

**THE MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MISSION STATEMENT:**

To serve as a progressive advocate for business needs to promote the Mobile area's economic well-being.

## INVESTMENT SCHEDULE

**BASE DUES\*** *(Includes primary officer)* **\$300**

<b>+ Fair Share Formula*</b>	
(# of full-time employees ____ x \$5)	+ \$ _____
(# of part-time employees ____ x \$2.50)	+ \$ _____
+ Other	+ \$ _____
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>= \$ _____</b>

*\*Include agents and associates who contribute to profit.*

Visa    MasterCard    American Express    Discover   Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Account Number \_\_\_\_\_ Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*Membership dues may be tax deductible as an ordinary and necessary business expense, but are not a charitable tax deduction for federal income tax purposes. The Chamber is not a charity, but serves as an advocate organization for area businesses. Additionally, 8% of your dues are for lobbying activities, and as such, this portion is not deductible for federal income tax purposes.*

For Official Use Only: Check No. \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \_\_\_\_\_ Dues \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received \_\_\_\_\_ A HB IM 2

CUT ALONG LINE AND MAIL

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# THE BUSINESS OF MOBILE IS OUR BUSINESS.

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MOBILE AREA  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**WE BUILD A BETTER COMMUNITY BY**

recruiting jobs

developing a competitive workforce

creating a positive business climate

increasing community development expectations

adding member value

For information about becoming a member of the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce,  
contact Carolyn Golson, 251.431.8622 or [carolyn@mobilechamber.com](mailto:carolyn@mobilechamber.com) or visit [www.mobilechamber.com](http://www.mobilechamber.com).