IPSCO Steel pipes money into local economy

Barry Silverman’s voice echoes through Mobile

Local CEO sings success in business and Christian music

Logical Communication Services takes 2004 MOBI Award
YOUR TARGET: 17,000 Business Managers in Mobile

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On the Cover

Logical Communication Services Inc. (LCSI) was named the 2004 MOBI Award winner. The small business is located in Daphne and its employees serve as communications specialists and designers for data systems. Pictured on the cover are LCSI employees Klein Bridges, President and CEO Bayne Bridges, Darren Jenkins, Xavier Wasdin and Chris Mathews. See the complete list of finalists on page 8. Cover photo by Susan Rak Blanchard.

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IPSCO Steel (Alabama) Inc.: Making a Difference in Mobile County

Take a look out the window at the many ships, barges and offshore platforms in Mobile Bay, and evidence of IPSCO Steel (Alabama) Inc.’s end uses are clear.

Since local operations began in 2001, the 785-acre steel mill site in Axis has made a big difference in the Mobile area, from the number of jobs created to working with local companies to supporting community education and the arts.

IPSCO, one of the world’s leading producers of steel plate and pipe, was founded in 1956 as Prairie Pipe Manufacturing Co. Ltd. in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada. Making only pipe at the time, the company has grown over the years to include steel plate production and has expanded facilities to five Canadian provinces and seven U.S. states.

The company became IPSO Inc. in 1984, and its 47.9 million shares are traded publicly (NYSE: IPS). The Alabama steelworks is one of IPSCO’s three steel-making facilities in the U.S. The others are located in Houston, Texas, and Montpelier, Iowa.

IPSCO buys scrap iron and steel on the open market, with most of its raw product coming from the Southeast, Gulf Coast and central United States along the Mississippi River. Recycling more than 1.4 million tons of scrap steel each year, the facility’s twin shell electric arc furnace has the capacity to produce 1.25 million tons annually of both coil and plate steel.

The Axis facility was running at full capacity within a year, producing approximately 175 tons of liquid steel per hour. Its coil and plate products come in a variety of sizes to fit different customer needs, and the quality, or chemistry, of the steel can be adjusted by adding different alloys during the manufacturing process. “We sell our coil and cut-to-length lines to pipe manufacturers, some of them IPSCO facilities, and to other pipe processing facilities,” said Paul Wilson, a 30-year veteran of the steel industry and president and general manager of the Alabama steelworks. For cut-to-length lines, coiled steel is flattened, leveled and cut to the customer’s specified length. “The plate goes to service centers – companies building barges, ships, offshore platforms and even towers for wind generators. Locally, we sell steel to Metals USA, Bender Marine, Northrop Grumman Ship Systems, Avondale Containers Inc., O’Neal Steel and more,” added Wilson.

The steel industry has seen a major shift in the last 24 months, hopefully reaching the end of a 20-year weakened market. Until recently, the past two decades saw a saturated steel market in the United States with extremely depressed prices. According to Wilson, the United States was basically a dumping ground for steel from other countries. Many companies went out of business, and the industry experienced major consolidation. Now as China aggressively builds its infrastructure and the country’s demand for steel is at a record high, overall global demand for traded steel increases and the U.S. dollar is weaker, resulting in better steel pricing and a less saturated market in the U.S.

“All of this has translated into record performance and shipments for us,” said Wilson. “Last quarter, IPSCO’s corporate net income was $32.7 million. The strong performance by our Alabama steelworks contributed greatly to this best-ever quarter for the company.”

“We have the right type of workers in place – those who can maintain technology as it evolves in the industry and help ensure quality in our processes and products. Our very low employee turnover rate tells me we are doing something right.”

Paul Wilson,
General Manager of
IPSCO Steel (Alabama)
This is a tremendous accomplishment and one Wilson said would not be possible without the strong team they have in place.

The Alabama facility is one of IPSCO’s top producers. Locally the company has 330 employees and 280 full-time contractors. Approximately 40 of them hold degrees, mostly in engineering, and 30 have two-year degrees. Because steel production is a much more technical process than the historic labor-intensive process, the need for savvy technicians is high. Surprisingly, it only takes 0.5 – 0.6 man-hours to produce one ton of steel.

“We are extremely proud of our workforce. We have the right type of workers in place – those who can maintain technology as it evolves in the industry and help ensure quality in our processes and products,” Wilson said. “Our very low employee turnover rate tells me we are doing something right.”

The company is committed to being a good neighbor and aggressively supports community activities, as well as responds to environmental issues as they arise. In Axis, an employee committee recommended specific nonprofit projects and grants the facility could embrace. The result: a more robust community.

One such initiative is a partnership with Robert E. Lee Elementary School in Satsuma. The Alabama steelworks has helped the school’s more than 1,000 students by providing books, supplies and financial gifts. IPSCO also donates to the University of South Alabama, Mobile Symphony and the Mobile Arts Council. And the facility is a supporter of the United Way, matching employee contributions by 100 percent, and is a Partners for Growth investor, the Mobile Area Chamber’s five-year economic and community development initiative.
## The Mobile Area’s Largest Employers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MANUFACTURING**</th>
<th>NON-MANUFACTURING*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ST Mobile Aerospace Engineering</td>
<td>1. Mobile County School System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aircraft Refurbishing</td>
<td>504 Government St., Mobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2100 9th St., Brookley Complex, Mobile</td>
<td>221-4000 Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>438-8888</td>
<td>Employs: 8,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Degussa Corp. Chemicals</td>
<td>2. University of South Alabama, including medical facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4201 Degussa Rd., Theodore</td>
<td>Education/Medical 307 University Blvd. AD 122, Mobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>443-4000</td>
<td>460-6111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employs: 830</td>
<td>Employs: 5,425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Kimberly-Clark Corp. Paper Products</td>
<td>3. Mobile Infirmary Medical Center Medical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 Bay Bridge Rd., Mobile</td>
<td>5 Mobile Infirmary Circle, Mobile 435-2400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>330-3000</td>
<td>Employs: 4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employs: 751</td>
<td>4. Wal-Mart* Retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ciba Specialty Chemicals Chemicals</td>
<td>Employs: 3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Ciba Rd., McIntosh</td>
<td>436-2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employs: 739</td>
<td>5. City of Mobile Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Bender Shipbuilding &amp; Repair Shipbuilding &amp; Repair</td>
<td>205 Government St., Mobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>265 S. Water St., Mobile</td>
<td>208-7395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>431-8000</td>
<td>Employs: 2,429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employs: 650</td>
<td>6. Providence Hospital Medical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Masland Carpets Carpets</td>
<td>6801 Airport Blvd., Mobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>716 Bill Myles Dr., Saraland</td>
<td>633-1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>675-9080</td>
<td>Employs: 2,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employs: 739</td>
<td>7. Mobile County Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Atlantic Marine Inc. Ship Repair</td>
<td>205 Government St., Mobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunlap Dr., Pinto Island, Mobile</td>
<td>208-7395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>405-1407</td>
<td>Employs: 650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employs: 620</td>
<td>8. Springhill Medical Center Medical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Mobile Register Newspaper Publishing</td>
<td>3719 Dauphin St., Mobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401 N. Water St., Mobile</td>
<td>344-9630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>219-5600</td>
<td>Employs: 1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employs: 510</td>
<td>9. Bruno’s (Food World)* Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Teledyne Continental Motors Aircraft Engines</td>
<td>Employs: 1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2039 Broad St., Mobile</td>
<td>438-3411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>438-3411</td>
<td>10. Winn-Dixie Food Stores* Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employs: 450</td>
<td>Employs: 1,052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. IPSCO Steel (Alabama) Inc. Steel</td>
<td>* Several locations in the Mobile area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12400 Hwy. 43 N., Axis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>662-4479</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employs: 330</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Represents full-time employees but does not include full-time contractors.

## Two Mobile Headquartered Companies Expand Operations

The SSI Group Inc., a developer of medical claims software headquartered in Mobile, has purchased National EDI Systems Corp. of Dallas. National EDI specializes in electronic transactions between payors and medical providers and billing services, a service SSI chief executive Bobby Smith says is in high demand among the company’s clients. SSI employs more than 350 people and processes more than $68.5 million transactions annually totaling more than $108 billion.

Additionally, Software Technology Inc., a developer of student information and data management systems, has bought TestU of New York, a provider of online standardized test preparation materials.

“We separate entities, STI and TestU focused on different segments of the K-12 market – student information and assessment – in distinct regions of the country,” says STI chief executive Rob Fiance. “By combining student data with testing and assessment, we can help the customers of both companies improve student performance one student at a time.”

The company will bring all TestU operations to Mobile except for customer service and sales, which will remain in New York. STI was founded in 1982 and has more than 50 employees. Its products are used by more than 7,000 schools in 28 states.

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The story of Providence Hospital began on Aug. 15, 1854, as three prominent Mobilians formed the board of trustees of Providence Infirmary. Within eight months, a 60-bed hospital was built on a lot at the corner of St. Anthony and Broad streets.

The yellow fever epidemics of the 19th century ravaged the City of Mobile, tearing apart families and filling hospital wards. A desperate city called upon the Daughters of Charity to care for orphans and the sick. The call was answered by five sisters whose work would comfort the suffering and eventually lead to the development of one of the region’s most reputable medical institutions, Providence Hospital.

Sister M. Augustine, assigned to Mobile’s city hospital on Oct. 5, 1897, writes of setting up tents to handle the most recent flood of yellow fever patients. “Those in the tents are the indigent poor, nearly all men, mostly out of danger, hence do not at present need a Sister out there at night. It is almost impossible to keep out contagion. We are praying constantly, heaven is besieged, but the weather still seems favorable to the fever; the hot days develop it and the cold nights are killing to the poor patients.”

According to an account in the Mobile Daily Register, “If anything can divert sickness of its sorrows the patient must find it in the cleanly comforts and indefatigable care lavished by these devoted nurses on all who are placed in their infirmary.”

By 1902, the second Providence Hospital opened its doors, responding to the growing city and its needs. The new location with its magnificent gardens became a Springhill Avenue landmark. Reports at the time noted that it was “an impressive institution, modern in every respect and the pride of South Alabamians.”

Fifty years later the community’s needs would require yet another building, larger and more modern than the second. The third Providence Hospital was built in front of the existing Springhill Avenue facility and eventually contained 472 beds. In 1987, Providence responded to the city’s continued westward expansion by building a fourth and current facility on a 277-acre campus in west Mobile.

Providence Hospital continues to stand as one of the most modern health care centers in the region, a 349-bed medical/surgical facility with a 550-member medical staff. One thing, however, has remained constant: the hospital’s commitment to caring for the whole patient.

“At Providence, the spiritual needs of the patient are addressed along with his or her physical and emotional needs,” according to Clark Christianson, president and CEO of Providence Hospital. “In these very complicated times, this particular part of our mission seems more important than ever,” he added.

One hundred fifty years after arriving in the Port City, the Daughters of Charity are still caring for the sick and needy. To celebrate this tradition of care and faith, Providence Hospital is hosting a community birthday party on Aug. 14 with family activities that include live music, food, bed races and a reunion of everyone born at any of Providence’s four hospitals.
The Mobile Area Chamber held the MOBI Award in conjunction with Small Business Month in May. Short for Mobile's Outstanding Business and Industry, MOBI honors 10 finalists and includes one overall winner. Pictured above are this year's finalists. They are, front row (left to right): Tim Wilkes, Magnolia Mortgage Co.; Bayne Bridges, Logical Communication Services Inc.; Robert Bryant, Leaf & Petal Florist & Gifts; Sam Noble, Infinity Homes; Bob Alston, Clark Personnel Service. Back row (left to right): Paul Jones, Oil Recovery Inc.; Clarissa Hamilton, Quality Technical Services Inc.; Michael Rogers, Rogers & Willard; Andy Newton, Southern Light LLC; and Bobby Gwin, Frank R. Wade Office Equipment.
United Way’s Project Blueprint Gets Minority Leaders Involved in Community

United Way of Southwest Alabama recently graduated its 11th Project Blueprint class after participants completed more than 45 hours of intensive training in United Way programs.

Among the businesses investing in employees by encouraging participation in the 2004 Project Blueprint class were Regions Financial Corp., Alabama Power Co., Vickers & Riis law firm, Mobile Gas Service Corp., DuPont Agricultural Products and Mobile County Department of Human Resources.

This year’s class was led by Lindell Dillard, retired educator from the Mobile County Public School System, a community volunteer and nonprofit board member.

Developed in 1988, Project Blueprint was an initiative established to work toward more inclusive United Way systems and communities across the country. That year Mobile was one of 23 communities selected from nearly 100 applicants to conduct demonstration projects now used as models by other United Ways nationwide.

The founders of Mobile’s program were Walter Bell, now Alabama’s commissioner of insurance and former local insurance agent, and Sydney Raine, president of Mobile Works, a local partnership of business, education, labor and community leaders.

Project Blueprint identifies, recruits and informs minorities about the United Way system and makes them available for placement on boards of United Way agencies. The comprehensive curriculum covers the detailed workings of United Way, including the responsibilities and functions of volunteer boards, time management, leadership training and team building. Graduates come away from the program better equipped as strong and active voices for the agencies they choose to represent.

While helping develop strong and more engaged community volunteers is the program’s main goal, a major push to place them on boards followed the 2002 class. At that time, the decision was made to focus every other year on assisting graduates in finding their niche with agencies of their choice, while also helping agencies develop more diverse boards to better reflect the community. The result: 92 percent of 2002 Project Blueprint graduates were placed on nonprofit boards.

Project Blueprint graduates currently serve at all levels of United Way including board of trustees, the community investment committee, admissions and special projects like Day of Caring. Mobile Opera and Envision Coastal Alabama also benefit from these volunteers.

Recognizing the value and benefit of the Project Blueprint program and its graduates, the board of trustees of United Way votes each year to underwrite the class. Due largely to the caliber and resourcefulness of the program’s directors secured over the years, additional funds have not been needed to underwrite the program.

To date more than 190 community leaders have completed the program. For more information on how to participate in the next Project Blueprint class or for a list of the graduates, contact United Way of Southwest Alabama at 433-3624.
Mobile’s New Wetlands Mitigation Bank – Balancing Development and Environment

Wetlands are critical to the Mobile area’s quality of life because they provide wildlife habitat, water quality enhancement and flood control. By federal statute, when a commercial or residential developer removes existing wetlands, they must be replaced. Until recently, however, much of the wetlands removed in Mobile County were being replaced with acreage in Baldwin County. With the recent certification of the Alabama Port Wetlands Mitigation Bank, there is an 872-acre tract of land set aside in south Mobile County for wetlands. With its strategic location near Porterville Bay, the Alabama Port Wetlands Mitigation Bank provides expanded habitat for such animals as osprey, bald eagles and black bears.

Historically in Mobile County, developers had few choices with regards to suitable land available to set aside for wetland mitigation. Their choices were either on-site mitigation, making the developer responsible for developing and maintaining a wetland site, or the purchase of credits in an existing wetlands mitigation bank in south Baldwin County. In many instances, setting aside acreage adjacent to the new development is not viable.

A tremendous asset to developers, the bank offers efficiency in the permitting process, and takes on responsibility and liability for the successful completion of the mitigation project, as well as regulatory preference, because its site and mitigation plan have been pre-approved.

For the environmental community, a large wetland mitigation bank offers the best opportunity for successful restoration and the highest caliber of wildlife habitat.

Milton Brown of Mobile operates the privately sponsored mitigation bank. He believes the bank provides “a balanced approach to protecting our natural resources while assisting economic growth and offers an immediate, user friendly and cost effective solution to wetland compensatory mitigation requirements to both private and public entities.”

Barry Vittor PhD, owner of Barry A Vittor and Associates, a local environmental engineer assisting companies with environmental impacts of commercial sites, sees this bank as having a positive impact in continuing to balance development with maintaining wetlands so precious to this area. He said, “In many cases the costs and liability of wetlands mitigation can be a significant burden on the developer.” In addition, having a mitigation bank in Mobile County has been needed for quite some time, Vittor said.

Buying mitigated wetlands credit in another county does nothing to improve the environment or wildlife habitat in Mobile County, said George Crozier PhD, with the Dauphin Island Sea Lab. He added, “It is vitally important that mitigation occur as close as possible to the development project.”

Access to a pre-approved Mobile County wetlands mitigation bank relieves many of the liabilities of mitigation from the developer and improves Mobile County’s quality of life.

Using financial terms, the mitigation bank allots debits and credits to developers in regards to the wetland areas. When a developer fills an acre of wetlands, a debit is incurred. Therefore, the developer must replace the debit with a credit to maintain a balance - no net loss of wetlands. In wetlands mitigation banking, developers buy credits in an established bank until all of the approved credits are sold.

To learn more about Mobile’s mitigation bank, contact Brown at 343-3124 or visit www.alabamaportmitigationbank.com.
Getting it right in the commercial real estate market means getting the right people with the right knowledge, according to John Vallas Jr., one of the principals of Saad & Vallas Realty Group.

The company’s history goes back to 1981, when Greg Saad CCIM (Certified Commercial Investment Member) founded Gregory B. Saad Real Estate Co., eventually Saad Development Corp. In 1998, Saad Realty Group LLC was formed, and in 2001 the company changed its name to Saad & Vallas Realty Group LLC, charting their course in multi-faceted commercial real estate.

The company specializes in all areas of the business, including commercial brokerage, leasing, property management and development. With 17 employees, Saad & Vallas covers Mobile and Baldwin counties and has projects all over the southeast. The company’s projects range from a restaurant park in Pensacola to a redevelopment project in Spanish Fort to a shopping center in Shreveport. According to Vallas, the ingredients for success come from the people and their knowledge. Company officials look to expand its brokerage and development clients while keeping a strong presence along the Gulf Coast.

“We credit our success to having individuals who specialize in different facets of commercial real estate. There is no way one person can specialize in all types,” Vallas explained. “Having the right people with the right specialties who all share common goals and a common work ethic is what makes us stand out. On any one project, we usually have three to four people involved.

It’s the team approach.”

And since the company deals with many different municipalities and ordinances, and all projects have a different recipe for success, having specialists who understand these differences is a definite plus.

“We’re customer oriented. Our customers appreciate the way we do business. We have a great deal of repeat business with national tenants in multiple locations,” Vallas said. “People really want to expand and grow their business, so they enjoy talking about real estate plans. The challenge is to come up with workable solutions when a client has a problem. We develop a plan that meets the client’s needs and then make it happen. It’s fun to provide people with real estate solutions.”

Saad & Vallas Realty Group is a member of the International Council of Shopping Centers and the International Development Research Council. The company is an investor in Partners for Growth, the Mobile Area Chamber’s five-year economic and community development program. For more information about Saad & Vallas Realty Group LLC, call 478-7223, or visit www.saad.com.
Masland Carpet Weaves Dollars into Mobile’s Economy

Ken Dempsey, president of Masland Carpets & Rugs, reviews a custom design for an area rug with an employee.

From classic to contemporary, Masland’s designers have created rugs and carpets in a variety of textures and patterns in almost every color imaginable, from soft neutrals to brilliant jewel tones to luminous brights.

Clients interested in area rugs can revise a standard design or create one all their own. The company even offers custom-dyed carpets.

“I think they distinguish themselves with their custom design,” added Friedlander. “Masland makes the finest custom design area rugs in the business.”

Masland’s products also appeal to an international market, with strong customer bases in the Middle East, China, Europe and Australia. About 40 percent of the company’s business is residential-based and 60 percent commercial. The majority of orders are for carpet, and 10 percent is attributed to area rugs.

The company’s commercial clients fall in one of four areas – corporations, hotels, restaurants and casinos, department stores, and health care. Among its most recognizable clients are Target, The Olive Garden, Wendy’s and Applebee’s. An architectural firm in Boston contracted Masland to carpet Spring Hill College’s new library. The company was also selected for the Saenger Theatre and is under consideration for portions of the Battle House Hotel renovation project.

The company’s handwork is on display at Cong. Jo Bonner’s office in Washington D.C. where Masland designed a rug with the seal of the U.S. House of Representatives.

The floor coverings are designed, inventoried and distributed from the Saraland facility. The company also has operations in Atmore, where the company manufactures 7.2 million linear feet of carpet annually. Masland creates 31,000 custom and standard area rugs in the company’s newly leased warehouse, also in Saraland.

Between the two locations and a national sales force, the company employs 780 people. About 200 employees are local; 480 are in Atmore and approximately 100 sales associates are located around the country.

Carpet is crafted on 12- to 15-foot-wide tufting looms with 1,200 to 1,600 individual needles each holding a single strand of yarn.

Area rugs are generally created from large pieces of carpet with inlaid designs. Sketches are finalized on a computer using a pressurized, water-powered cutter that heats and pushes 220 pounds of water through a needle the size of a basketball air pump, creating even the most intricate designs into the carpet.

Carpeting is cut by machine, and complete additional features, such as a beveled edge, by hand.

The floor coverings are made primarily from nylon fiber. Masland buys from Invista, formerly DuPont’s textiles and fibers division. Other products sometimes used are premium yarns and wool. Whatever the contents, the company guarantees its customers Masland products will “stand the test of time.”

The company’s roots date back to 1866 when two brothers, Charles Henry and James Masland, and a friend purchased a yarn dye house in Germantown, Penn. Later Charles Henry sold the company to buy a carpet mill and moved into automotive and floor covering markets.

Masland manufactured carpet for the 1922 Ford, and during World Wars I and II, the company made heavy white canvas duck material that was dyed and flame proofed for the military.

In the early 1950s, Masland invested in tufting machines, a new technology making carpet more affordable. In 1981, the company reinvented itself to pursue residential design and quickly became known as a leader in style and fashion. One year later, it introduced its area rugs and promptly expanded to accommodate custom demands from professional designers.

According to the company’s oral history, said Dempsey, the company ended up in Alabama because “one of Masland’s board members owned Sara Lee and Vanity Fair. Those places employed primarily women, and he influenced having a Masland plant down South for the husbands.”

For the first few years, Atmore was a male-only plant. “Tax advantages may have played a role. Some people think it was lower pay rates that drew them here; however pay rates were not lower than those in Pennsylvania,” Dempsey said.

The company opened the Atmore operations in 1968 and has been in the Mobile area since the mid-1970s. Burlington Industries took over the company in 1986 and soon became the target of a hostile takeover, forcing the company to spin off...
Masland in 1987. A group of investors consisting of Masland’s management, Dixie Yarns and Prudential Insurance purchased the floor covering division in April 1988. In 1994, the company became a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Dixie Group based in Chattanooga, Tenn., publicly traded on the New York Stock Exchange as DXYN.

According to Dempsey, the Dixie Group restructured recently, selling every physical facility in north Georgia and moving its Dixie Home brand to Masland. A dozen customer service and administrative professionals were hired to help run Masland’s new division.

“Carpet is a mature industry, and the carpet industry isn’t really growing,” said Dempsey. Typically its growth is measured with that of the overall economy, approximately 2 percent, he added.

The good news is this local company is grabbing market share and this year had the best first four months in its history.

“We’re ahead of any prior year,” he said. Even in the company’s worst year, 2001, the company showed a profit.

Today’s consumers are more design savvy and more affluent.

“They may not carpet as much, but when they’re looking at the expense of wood or ceramic tile, it makes our carpet look like a bargain.”

Masland’s commercial grade carpet runs between $20 and $40 per square yard, installed. Residential carpets start at $30 per square yard and climb to about $70 a square yard. Area rugs cost approximately $50 per square foot.

The company has hired 40 people in the last six months, and Dempsey expects to add more.

“We have a fantastic position in the marketplace with two premium, high-end brands on the residential side along with our contract brand. Business is looking up.”

Masland Company History
1866: Two brothers, Charles Henry and James Masland, and a friend purchased a yarn dye house in Germantown, Penn.
1875: The friend withdrew from the partnership, Charles bought out his brother’s interest, and the company was renamed C.H. Masland.
1886: Charles sold the dye operations to manufacture carpet and bought Anchor Carpet Mills.
1888: With his sons, he formed C. H. Masland and Sons.
1898: The mill burned, destroying new tapestry and velvet looms.
1917: To support the World War I effort, carpet-weaving production was halted and several looms were converted to produce heavy white canvas duck that was dyed khaki and flame proofed. Older looms made blankets for soldiers.
1920s: Masland started manufacturing carpet for the automobile industry; the first recipient was the 1922 Ford automobile.
1939: The company experimented with cotton duck, similar to WWI, and again provided the military with needed supplies for WWII.
1950s: The tufting machine was introduced, making carpet more affordable. Masland invested in the technology and continued to grow its automotive and floor covering divisions.
1981: The company reinvented itself, committing to become the primary resource for the residential design trade.
1982: Masland introduced its area rugs and expanded quickly to accommodate custom demands from professional designers.
1986: Burlington began an unsolicited takeover of Masland, and the company became a subsidiary of Burlington.
1987: Burlington had to spin off Masland because it became the target of a hostile takeover.
1988: Masland’s management, Dixie Yarns and Prudential Insurance purchased the floor covering division.
1993: Masland created a separate division, Masland Contract, to compete in the commercial carpet industry.
1994: Masland became a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Chattanooga, Tenn.-based Dixie Group.
As president of Welcome Friends, a company welcoming newcomers to the Gulf Coast and promoting local hometown businesses, Millie Sue Hawk enjoys meeting new people. And through her volunteer work with the Mobile Area Chamber as a diplomat, she's expanding her reach.

Hawk started Welcome Friends in Tennessee in 1995, having lived there for about 18 years. After delivering more than 1,000 packets of materials, including gifts and coupons from sponsoring merchants, to new residents and homeowners in Tennessee, Hawk brought the concept to Mobile when she and her husband moved here just over a year ago.

In the short time she's been in Mobile, her business is already expanding. Welcome Friends reaches north Mobile and the zip codes in 36608 and 36609, and will soon grow into west Mobile and Tillman's Corner. Her goal is to serve all communities in Mobile and Baldwin counties.

One of the first things Hawk did when she moved to Mobile was contact the Chamber. She had been a member of her Chamber in Tennessee, but wanted to get even more involved. A desire to give back to her community led her into the diplomats program.

"The Chamber has supported me through the start-up of my business," said Hawk. She enjoys working as a diplomat and having the support from the Chamber with her volunteer endeavors. "This Chamber is active in the community, helpful to its members and is user-friendly."

Her involvement doesn't stop there. Hawk belongs to the Lion’s Club, Satsuma Community Development Organization, Saraland Chamber, Citronelle Chamber and Saraland Animal Friends, just to name a few of her affiliations. She started the North Mobile Newcomer’s Club and an organization called "Minding Your Own Business," a networking group for home-based business owners.

"We really benefit from Millie Sue’s active involvement," said Maria Bladorn, director of customer service for the Chamber. "You can always count on her to help us with anything, whether it’s working registration at special events or member visits."

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The Revolution and Evolution of the Wireless Industry

In January of 1985 there were fewer than 92,000 wireless users in the U.S. By January of 2004, 62 million people spent more than $87 billion on wireless connection. For all the changes in our society over the last 20 years, few match the impact of wireless technology. It is one of those rare breakthrough technologies that profoundly reshaped society by influencing how we manage every aspect of life. Here are a few reasons why.

Valuable services fill business and consumer needs

Currently, 25 cents of every dollar U.S. businesses spend on telecommunications is being spent on wireless. Wireless technology can handle just about any form of information, with voice calls dominating, and data falling just behind. Wireless is increasingly about the use of pictures, and even video and business applications are being tailored for real estate, insurance adjusting, security and other functions where visual confirmation from a remote site adds value. Consumers are finding wireless Internet access, integrated cameras and personalized ringtones are now part of their wireless value equation.

Competition facilitates innovation and drives down cost

A key reason for wireless ubiquity is that it’s one of the most competitive businesses around. In larger U.S. markets, customers have a choice of up to eight carriers. In Mobile, customers have nine different choices for wireless service providers. Competition has pushed pricing downward by as much as 32 percent over the last five years. Customers want and expect more from their wireless service, so to be successful, companies must be focused on giving the customer more by evolving technology to meet the growing needs of the customer.

Demand necessitates further development

What makes wireless an exciting industry to work in is the rapid pace of technological advances. The speed and bandwidth of today’s networks give users the ability to communicate wirelessly using virtually any media they choose – voice, text, pictures, animation and full-motion video. Everyday, more than 1 billion text messages are carried via wireless networks.

Financial investments spur growth

It takes a big investment in a wireless network to cover a market and maintain it in a state-of-the-art manner. Twenty years ago, experts predicted that by 2000, there would only be about 1 million wireless customers in the U.S. They were wrong by a factor of 100. In 2000, there were more than 100 million wireless customers in this country. The reason: carriers invested in networks, coverage expanded, more people signed on and costs dropped.

Public safety and government policy maximize wireless technology

Government policy also influences wireless growth and changes in technology. The federal approach has been to encourage competition while minimizing wireless as a public resource. Wireless continues to be an important piece in disaster planning, and after Sept. 11, a number of mandates have been imposed on the industry that will fuel change and growth. One example is E-911. Wireless carriers are mandated to provide 911 location technology pinpointing a caller to a radius of 150-300 meters. While a challenging mandate requiring a significant investment from each wireless carrier, it also allows the industry to enhance the value it provides to all wireless users.

So, what can we expect from the wireless world in the future?

• Innovation. Look for more powerful, capable devices and expanding applications.
• Choice. The competitive nature of the industry will assure carrier choice.
• Proprietary devices and applications will be one way that carriers set themselves apart from the pack.
• Seamless communication.
• Acquisitions will improve coverage and global networks will assure communications capability.
• Affordability and quality.

Economics of wireless voice already challenge wireline service in many cases, such as long distance. Increasingly, data capability will make wireless a common alternative for e-mail, short messaging and Internet browsing.

Expect wireless to continue reshaping how we live and work well into the future.

Bill Withers has been in the radio-telephony industry since 1962. He currently serves as Cingular’s area manager for Mobile to Destin and Dothan to Thomasville, Ga., areas. He can be reached at 450-3025 or bill.withers@cingular.com.

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Contact Tom Ondrejcak
tondrejcak@officedepot.com
When people see Barry Silverman on the street or meet him at a local restaurant, they may not recognize his face. But when he speaks, everyone knows his voice.

His voice is the one heard frequently by Mobilians on radio and television, in commercials, announcements and video productions.

The gift of a tape recorder from his mother at the age of seven led Silverman to realize the power of voice. Playing and recording sounds as a child guided Silverman to where he is today - owner of Soundworks and, possibly, the most recognized voice in Mobile.

Originally from Longview, Texas, Silverman attended the University of Texas in Austin and began his well-known and lengthy radio career. After graduating with a degree in communications, he worked across the country at radio stations in Cincinnati, Detroit and Philadelphia.

Silverman moved to Mobile in 1970 to work as program director with locally owned and operated radio station WABB-FM. Known by his “radio” name, Gary Mitchell, Silverman worked with the station until 1982. So why the name change?

“Gary Mitchell sounded all-American and easier to say on the radio than Silverman,” he said. “It was just something radio personalities did in the early years. Now, most radio personalities use their real names, unless it is really hard to pronounce.”

Although he had not intended to stay in Mobile permanently, demand for Silverman’s unique voice and the spirit of Mobile’s community kept him in the Port City. “I thought this was just another stop in my radio career,” he said. “I got involved in the community and volunteered in everything I could. Mobilians are very welcoming to outsiders and new ideas to help.”

At WABB, Silverman worked as the voice for local radio and television commercials, even starting as “Carpet Man” for Mobile Rug and Shade commercials. This work led him to start his own business, and in 1979, Soundworks was born. What began as part-time for extra voice-over work became much more as demand increased for the services Soundworks was offering.

“I had a part-time secretary, but the demand grew for voice-overs so that I had...
to make a decision to stay with the radio station or venture out on my own,” Silverman explained.

Thirty-four years later, Soundworks now employs four full-time employees and has been housed at its Conti Street location for the past 15 years. The business produces audio tracks for television, radio, voice-overs for commercials, events and announcements and “anything to do with the voice.”

The company also offers voice coaching to help other people communicate more effectively. With digital editing and engineering, the company produces original products and creative services.

Part of his success he attributes to long-time employees Dennis Gould and Wilma Haupt, both of whom have backgrounds in the music and communications industry.

“We really are a family here,” Silverman said. “Wilma’s son was starting kindergarten when she began working here, and now he’s in college.”

In addition to their employees, Soundworks also hires local actors and actresses for radio spots when needed. “We can’t use only one voice for everything,” said Silverman.

Soundworks’ clientele is regional in Alabama, Mississippi, Florida and Louisiana. Silverman also works as the voice of a Meridian, Miss., television station and the Mobile Area Chamber’s Annual Report video.

Recently, Soundworks was honored with the Best of Show broadcast award at the Addys, an annual competition sponsored by the Advertising Federation of Greater Mobile. Soundworks was honored for a radio commercial produced in conjunction with Lewis Communications for Garden Park Hospital in Gulfport, Miss. The commercial featured Silverman and an actress as well as unique sound effects telling a whimsical story of a hospital always available when accidents occur.

While sitting in front of a microphone and reading lines may sound like an easy job to some, those in the communication field realize the talent needed to act out lines, annunciate each word and read in strict time constraints. In addition to supplying voices, Soundworks also provides unique background music and creative sound effects created to fit within specific time spots.

“Performing old radio shows live for events is such a blast,” said Silverman. “It makes people use their imagination, and good radio will do that. It will open up the imagination for people to be able to see what is being said.”

Silverman said he loves what he does, and it shows. “Radio has been called the theater of the mind. Good radio creates emotion and I get paid to do that. It’s wonderful.”

Dennis Gould, Wilma Haupt and Barry Silverman comprise the team at Soundworks.

Relax…and leave the stress to us.

Regardless of what a recent survey says, Mobile is not one of America’s most stressful cities. On the other hand, running a business in any city is stressful. Meeting deadlines, communicating with customers, looking professional — it’s a lot to juggle. Interstate Printing/Direct Mail reduces this stress by offering exceptional printing, pre-press and mailing services all in one location. Simplify your life and leave the deadline worries to us. Relax, we understand what full service really means.

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MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE The Business View JULY 2004 17
With the advent of technology, the past 15 years have been an evolution in virtually every aspect of life. The boom of technology has made people demand instant gratification when it comes to food, services and utilities, correspondence, television and much more.

In keeping with the times, the workplace has also undergone drastic changes. Gone are typewriters and large, leather-bound journals that once dominated the workplace. The computer has overtaken the office, revolutionizing the way people work and live.

**How have companies kept up with the evolution?**

Many companies have reinvented and revived the role of temporary employees in the workplace, utilizing staffing agencies to aid in activities that are not producing revenue such as employee screening and testing as well as to recruit manpower with specialized skills or certifications.

"(The use of staffing) agencies allows client companies to spend more time on revenue-producing activities instead of non-revenue-producing activities," said Bob Alston, president of Clark Personnel Service, a full-service agency specializing in clerical, light industrial, engineering and information technology assignments.

"Business owners did not go into business to hire employees, but to sell or manufacture something." The hiring process has also changed due to stricter employment laws, sometimes bogging down companies with legalities and paperwork. The threat of legal action for joint liability and co-employer problems with a staffing agency and company has led to stricter screening of employees.

According to Tom Damson, president of Long’s Human Resource Services, a professional, technical, clerical and industrial staffing agency, “We must be totally customer focused. We have two – the business client and the employee – that we are sending to work. We act rapidly with service, yet must still carry out due diligence with drug testing, background investigations, skill testing and interviews, all this while still complying with federal and state laws.”

In the 1970s and 1980s, most agencies placed only clerical or general labor workers, as many remember the days of the “Kelly Girl.”

"We used to place clerical and administrative positions," said June Townsend, with J. Townsend Personnel Inc., an executive personnel service company. "The most significant change is the requirement of having a college degree."

Now agencies place employees at all levels of an organization, from presidents down to entry-level positions, and in all types of facilities, including medical, legal, professional and more. Many agencies have actually become exclusive in the types of employees they place.

“Staffing has become more professional, where professional certifications and continuing education have produced a much more knowledgeable and informed option for companies,” explained Clarissa L. Hamilton, president of Quality Technical Services Inc., a full-service contract personnel firm specializing in all levels of technical, engineering, information systems/information technology and professional project-by-project.

Taking a cue from specialized workers, most agencies have seen a high demand for advanced and specialized computer skills for various software programs, saving a company valuable training time.

"Technology has certainly affected the number of people needed to perform a job," added Hamilton. “Those who are most knowledgeable with the newest software programs such as 3D design systems are in the greatest demand.”

In addition to computer skills, an employee with a certified skill is ever increasing in demand. “Few (of our placed) jobs do not require computer software skills,” Damson said. “Legal liability and other pressures require many types of certifications. Commercial drivers license, forklift and all types of permits are now common and enforced by OSHA and others.”

Being specialized and working with many types of industries can help. Job assistance and training have become an important facet of many agencies’ offerings.

"Ten years ago, our staff recognized the restructuring of job skill requirements by applicants and the looming loss of jobs in our area," Damson said. "We established an ‘outplacement’ division that has assisted employers with their downsizing planning and execution and then assisted the affected employees with very focused training and job search assistance."

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"Some of the people that we represent are looking for temporary work assignments because they are not in a situation that they require benefits and only want to supplement their income with part-time work."

While some temps do have a goal of attaining a permanent position, many agencies said they have seen a surge in placing temporary help, and permanent placement of employees is on the decline. Companies have regarded the service for temporaries for years as a value to their business, and the temporary employees realize the benefits an agency can offer in matching their skills and background to a specific work assignment.

**What are the “temps” looking for?**

Not only have agencies seen a change in the industry, but also a change in potential employees. While the reason companies use temporary employees and staffing agencies vary, so do the reasons vary for employees who find temporary or temporary-to-permanent work through staffing companies.

"Gen X and ‘Gen Y’ workers come with a different set of social values and skills that were present and valued in the past," noted Damson, whose company has been in the staffing industry for 55 years.

“The majority of the people we represent are looking for full-time employment, knowing that they will have to come through an agency such as ACO to obtain a potential full-time job,” stated Will Layfield, president of ACO Employment Services, a full-service employment firm specializing in placing professional and administrative personnel.

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So what does the future hold for staffing?

Staffing agencies have a difficult position since their success depends on the success of their community's business climate. Due to many company demands and changing social values, agencies have been able to survive and become an essential part of a company's workforce.

According to Staffing Insight newsletter, more than 212,000 new temporary jobs have been created since April 2003, and the publication predicts office support will take an upturn in demand over light industrial. In addition, health care demand is expected to grow exponentially by 2005.

Creativity and adaptation are essential in order for some agencies to supplement their workforce during economic downturns.

“A creative approach adds value by augmenting a company’s core employees with professional temporary staff to supplement an up and down project load and will be both beneficial to companies with this need and employees who choose staffing as a career,” said Hamilton.

Employees, while changing in their social values, are looking for ways to increase their value and supplement their income. Companies are demanding more qualified workers with specific skills training.

“In the future, I see a continued increase in stringent demands from the employers that require agencies to better prepare their employees for positions through training and education,” predicted Layfield.

“There will also be a shift to more vendors on premises at the larger facilities so that employment agencies can better manage their employees at that site. You will continue to see more and more temporary employees at all levels of organizations so that the corporations can control their expenses in good or bad economic times.”

Chamber Member Staffing/ Employment Agencies in the Mobile Area:

ACCUStaff: 479-5366
ACO Employment Services: 433-7788
Adecco Employment Services: 342-9092
Alabama State Employment: 461-4498
Clark Personnel Services: 471-6777
Employee Liability Management Inc.: 470-0700
Employment Screening Services: 205-879-0143
J. Townsend Personnel Inc.: 340-6641
Kelly Temporary Services: 342-6991
Labor Finders: 438-5908
Long’s Human Resource Services: 476-4080
Manpower International: 344-8900
Mobile Staffing Service: 433-8686
Mobile Works: 432-0909
Multi-Staffing Services: 343-3259
Personnel Staffing Inc.: 340-0504
Professional Employment Resource Management Inc.: 473-8844
Quality Technical Services Inc.: 341-0006
Reliable Staffing Inc.: 473-7474
Ross Innovative Employment Solutions Inc.: 433-4464
Simple HR: 850-650-9035
Snelling Personnel Services: 473-1001
Staff USA Inc.: 478-7444
Temploy Inc.: 433-8800
Will Staff Worldwide Staffing: 661-0623
Workers Temporary Staffing Inc.: 433-4577

* As designated by Mobile Area Chamber 2004 Membership Directory
IT’S ONLY NATURAL TO EXPAND YOUR AVIATION BUSINESS TO A CITY WHERE LIFE IS ALREADY SO HEAVENLY.

Ripe with Southern charm and hospitality, Mobile Bay gives rise to countless opportunities. Already home to the Mobile Regional Airport and the Brookley Airport and Industrial Complex, Mobile Bay is a hub of aerospace traffic, engineering, maintenance and technical training. Creating even more appeal is Alabama’s status as a right-to-work state with a ready workforce, employee training programs, and tax and property incentives. But, just as impressive as our business climate is our quality of life. With a rich, welcoming history, strong transportation infrastructure and coastal location, Mobile Bay is a destination that frequently turns visitors into residents. We invite you to learn more about Mobile Bay and how we can propel your business to the next level.

MOBILE BAY
ON THE WATER. ON THE MOVE.

www.mobilechamber.com - 451 Government Street - Mobile, Alabama 36602 - 800.422.6951
Volunteers are at the mid-point in the annual total resource development campaign, Chamber Chase, sailing towards the Victory Celebration on July 22. Several new teams have signed on for the campaign since the kickoff in early May. BankTrust, Cellular South, Ciba Specialty Chemicals and Corporate Design Systems have all joined the crew of professionals and veterans in the Chamber's annual campaign helping to recruit new members, attain sponsorships for Chamber events and activities, and sell advertising for Chamber publications such as The Business View and the Membership Directory and Buyers Guide.

“It’s always exciting to meet the new volunteers because we get so many ideas from them” said Carolyn Golson, vice president of membership for the Mobile Area Chamber.

Chamber Chase volunteers have a goal of recruiting 200 new members during the 16-week campaign. Some of the volunteers who have brought in new members are, from left to right, Monica Wiggins, Whitney National Bank; Greg Roberts, Mobile Gas Service Corp.; Katherine Schipp, AIG Insurance; Ryan Emmons, Colonial Bank; Trish Banker, Regions Bank; and Gary Adams, Principal Financial Group.

Noel Coward, area manager for Cellular South and Chamber Chase volunteer said, “We feel it’s very important to be involved in the communities we serve and this is a way for us to help.”

“I was thrilled with the enthusiastic response we got from our board of directors,” said Jody Dunn of Whitney National Bank, board member and former Chamber Chase chairman. Dunn is heading up the veteran team consisting of board members. “We simply invited those board members who do not already have teams to participate individually, and many of them jumped at the chance.”

“We’re participating in the campaign again this year to give back to the Chamber for supporting our company and to help get our name out,” said veteran team captain Travis Trujillo, senior account executive for DailyAccess Corp.

The campaign is an excellent way for companies to strengthen their relationships with existing customers as well as identify potential customers,” Golson added.

For information on Chamber Chase, or to contribute a door prize for one of the weekly reward sessions recognizing volunteers, contact Golson at 431-8622.
Economic Confidence Up

Alabama business leaders expect the state's and the country's economic growth to continue at the same upward pace seen in first quarter 2004, according to the latest published results of the Business Leaders Confidence Index.

The quarterly report is released by the Center for Business and Economic Research at The University of Alabama in partnership with Compass Bank, and is based on predictions from 400 Alabama business leaders representing small, mid-sized, and large companies from the state's 11 metropolitan areas.

More than 80 percent of those surveyed anticipate increased second quarter sales, 60 percent are looking for increased profits and nearly 60 percent expect to increase capital spending, while 49.2 percent foresee significant investments in the state, and a capital spending, while 49.2 percent foresee significant investments in the state, and a

quieting the devil's advocate

In most organizations, one person – the self-declared devil's advocate – points out the flaws in every idea, plan or proposal. And if you're exploring an option that may be difficult or risky, you may be particularly susceptible to the naysayer. Neutralize the damage this behavior can have by immediately countering with statements such as:

• "I agree this may not work, but I'm intrigued by the possibility that it may. At the moment, I want to hear why it just might work."
• "Wait a minute. You may think these issues aren't important, but I'd like to give Larry a chance to show us they are. Go ahead, Larry."
• I think we know where you stand. Here's what I think, and I hope others will join in."

Catch a Ride

Metro Transit developed a new route structure and added two new routes to serve Tillman's Corner and the Schillinger Road/Providence Hospital areas. The organization's additional improvement goals include having:

• All routes join with traditional Mobile bus routes;
• Service to the University of South Alabama campus from Colonial Mall Bel Air in addition to bus routes already operating between the campus and downtown;
• Additional services operate to the local hospitals – Springhill Medical Center, Mobile Infirmary and University of South Alabama Hospital.

Metro Transit carries 1.1 million passengers annually and has 38 fixed route and trolley buses.

Work Out to Keep Young

James Fries MD, professor of medicine at Stanford University School of Medicine, revealed in a recent interview with Wellness Councils of America that physical activity delays the onset of disability more than 12 years. "Generally speaking, moderation is a key factor in everything with the exception of exercise," said Fries.

Fries cites a study started in 1984 of a group of runners who are in their 70s who, when compared to the general population, avoided disability by 12.6 years.

"If you're an employer coming to the realization that you can have a workforce which acts and functions 10 or 12 years younger than they actually are... the savings and increased productivity are virtually impossible," he said.

To read the entire interview, visit Wellness Councils of America (WELCOA) at http://www.welcoa.org/freeresources/pdf/fries_interview.pdf.

Offer Solutions

When you run across a problem in the workplace, don't complain about it - solve it. If you always point out negatives, people begin to view you as a pessimist.

Here's how to put a positive spin on problem solving from Communications Briefings, a monthly newsletter that offers tips and ideas:

Negative: "Why doesn't somebody do something?"
Positive: "Let's find somebody to do it."

Negative: "What are we ever going to do?"
Positive: "Let's come up with a plan to do something."

Negative: "How do you expect me to do that?"
Positive: "Let me know what you want me to do."

Alabama Ranks in Top Three

In the annual survey ranking favorite locations for business, Alabama grabbed the number three spot. Published in Parks Sites and Parks, an industry trade magazine, results were based on where companies have located from third quarter 2002 to third quarter 2003 and the top three choices by corporate executives for their next expansion. Projects had registered 20 created jobs and $1 million in capital investment or new office space measuring at least 20,000 square feet. Editors also took into consideration the number of projects per capita.

This was the first time the state was ranked in the site's chosen survey.

Previously Alabama ranked ninth in a reader's survey by the publication.

The magazine attributed Alabama's position to the number of automobile-related projects. "These announcements, coupled with the national economic down-turns that crippled the state's competition, are helping lift Alabama up and away from its dirt-poor reputation," the report said.

Since 1993, when Mercedes announced it would locate a $300 million production facility and bring 1,900 jobs to Vance, Ala., Honda, Toyota and Hyundai have made significant investments in the state, and a large number of automobile suppliers have followed suit.

Virginia was first in the annual survey; South Carolina placed second; North Carolina followed fourth behind Alabama; Texas, Kentucky and Georgia tied for fifth, sixth and seventh with the exact score, according to the magazine; Mississippi ranked ninth; and Indiana landed the number 10 spot.
CEO Profile
Marcus H. Elliott IV

ALLTEL

Title: Regional sales manager
Hometown: Little Rock, Ark.
Education: Bachelor of science degree in business administration with an emphasis on marketing, University of Arkansas
Previous experience: Hired as a management trainee, Elliott worked his way up to regional sales and product manager with Navistar International, the parent company of International Truck and Engine Corp., a producer of diesel engines and trucks that also provides parts and service. Before joining ALLTEL in 1997, he worked with Bayer Pharmaceuticals.

Career-changing moment: His career-changing moment was leaving pharmaceuticals to join ALLTEL. “At the time I was looking to stay in Arkansas, and ALLTEL was headquartered in my hometown of Little Rock, and there was opportunity to advance my career.”

Accomplishments: Elliott has been recognized as a member of the ALLTEL President’s Club and Gold Circle Club award winner. He also was a two-time All-Conference and honorable mention All-American football player at the University of Arkansas. In addition, he has hosted and co-hosted several sports talk shows in radio and television for the University of Arkansas.

Family: He is married to Ramona Elliott. They have two children, Porchia and Tyler, and a grandson, Ross.

Brief company description: ALLTEL is a provider of wireless, wire line, Internet and other communication equipment and services. They are a Mobile Area Chamber Partners for Growth investor.

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Why is Ciba located in Mobile? The company located in the area more than 50 years ago because of raw material suppliers and abundant resources. Over this period, the facility grew from 32 employees to more than 900 people (including full-time contractors).

Why does Ciba support the Mobile Area Chamber’s Partners for Growth initiative? The company invests in many activities and projects to improve the quality of life where employees live and work. Ciba views projects that stimulate economic development as an investment in the future of the community and the region.

What do you see as Mobile’s greatest potential? “Mobile’s proximity to water, its developed infrastructure and location along the Gulf Coast position the area as a great place for future growth with sustainable businesses that will in turn support families that enjoy living here,” said Tew.

Length of Chamber membership: Since 2000

Other Chamber involvement: Heffernan serves on the Chamber’s board of directors; board of advisors, business leaders whose significant dues investment leads the way in funding the Chamber’s programs and initiatives; Economic Development Council; International Business Council; and participated in the 2004 Leadership Trip. Ciba is also sponsoring a volunteer team in Chamber Chase 2004, the Chamber’s annual total resource development campaign.

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From Oil to Music, Local CEO Tops the Charts

For more than 20 years Dan Cowart has worked hard to secure a niche for his Mobile-based business, Aaron Oil Co. Inc., and The Last Light Band, his Christian country music group. The last few years have proved enormously successful on all fronts, and Cowart, though not slowing down for a minute, is fully enjoying the fruits of his labor.

Professionally, Cowart’s future sort of fell into his lap when, at the age of 16, he began driving a used oil collection truck. He eventually moved into a position as a subcontractor with a used oil processing plant. When that plant closed, Cowart, then 19, decided to take his knowledge about the business and open his own plant.

In 1981, Aaron Oil Co. Inc., a used oil and petroleum recycling organization specializing in recycling petroleum and industrial fuel materials for beneficial reuse, was born. According to Cowart, the business got a slow start.

“At the time I started, the used oil industry was considered an environmental business,” he said. “There was potentially a lot of liability. Banks would not loan me any money, and investors were hard to find.”

During the company’s infancy, Cowart clocked a lot of hours. Working from 5 a.m. to midnight most every night at his office in Mobile and the processing plant in Saraland, Cowart’s energy was at low ebb. The tide turned, however, when Congress passed the Lenders Clarification Act, helping to protect lenders’ liability.

“This really turned the corner for us,” Cowart remembered. “Lenders and investors were willing to work with us, and after six years I was finally able to hire our first employee.”

Through Cowart’s challenging early days with Aaron Oil, he said his wife, Tonya, and their love of music kept his spirits high. The couple, along with friend Scott McLeod, formed a band in 1979. The Last Light Band, as they dubbed themselves, played gospel music, with Tonya on vocals and Cowart playing guitar and harmonica.

Cowart also wrote much of their music. “We pretty much lived the music,” Cowart said.

Their music led the group to churches, festivals and music events across the country. As the band honed their unique sound and found a place for themselves among the growing Christian country music circuit, Cowart divided his time between a growing business and a budding musical career.

At Aaron Oil, Cowart was experiencing increasing success and recognition. In 1995, he built a new state-of-the-art recycling plant and has since been leading the way in the used oil recycling business on a national level.

“We have the only ISO 14,000 recycling plant in the U.S., employing the highest environmental standards in the world,” Cowart explained. “Cowart’s commitment to excellence won the company a charter membership in the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) new EPA Track organization in 2001. “It’s basically a group of the EPA’s environmental performance stars,” he said. “Only 200 companies throughout the U.S. were selected, and of those, we were the smallest company.”

As a member of the International Used Oil Research Institute based in Washington D.C., Cowart is privy to new processes and technologies before many others in the mainstream business world. “We not only get to see new processes before anyone else, but we also get to test them in the real world,” Cowart said.

He recently tested and refined a one-of-a-kind processing unit at his Saraland plant and plans to keep the unique machine, which is producing some of the highest quality recycled oil in the world.

Over the last three years, Cowart has invested much into the business, now employing close to 100 people, in an effort to keep up with new regulations.

“We are still growing and expanding,” he said. “Once we got over the hump (of the first few years), things have gotten better and better.”

The same seems to be true in Cowart’s musical endeavors. The Last Light Band has had three top 10 hits in the past few years on the Christian country music charts. The group has also been nominated for a number of awards by the Christian Country Music Association including New Artist of the Year in 2000 and Trio of the Year in 2002.

Today, the band is working with others including Motor Racing Outreach to help bring Christian country music to NASCAR events around the country.

“We have been invited to perform at 13 NASCAR events this year,” Cowart said. “It is a pretty significant show including comedians and other bands as well.”

The success of Aaron Oil and The Last Light Band has in some ways been a long time coming for Cowart. While he worked hard at his business and his music with little results early on, he said he never doubted the success of either.

In the meantime, Cowart is busy testing the next state-of-the-art used oil recycling technology and writing new songs to prepare himself for the challenges ahead.
The board of advisors represents many of the Chamber’s most generous supporters and provides member company CEOs, owners and principals an avenue for valuable input on critical Chamber and community issues. This group meets three times a year at various locations. Meetings offer opportunities to receive advance information pertinent to Mobile’s progress from a business perspective and to hear from business and government leaders and other speakers. Past meetings have featured speakers such as former Gov. Don Siegelman; David Bronner PhD, Retirement Systems of Alabama; Scott Knutson, Carnival Cruise Lines; and Neal Wade, Alabama Development Office.

For more information contact, Katrina Dewrell at 431-8611.

The ★ symbol indicates those whose companies are investors in Partners for Growth, the Chamber’s long-term economic and community development program.
T. Keith King PE
Volkert & Associates Inc.

Ronnie B.T. Koh
ST Mobile Aerospace Engineering

Michael E. Leach
ExxonMobil

Goodman G. Ledyard
Pierce Ledyard PC

Bryan L. Lewis
Teledyne Continental Motors

John H. Lewis Jr.
Lewis Communications Inc.

R. Roy Lewis
Roy Lewis Construction Corp.

Robert Luiten
Ineos Phenol

Gaylord C. Lyon Jr.
Lyon Fry Cudden Insurance Agency

James K. Lyons
Alabama State Port Authority

James M. Lyons
The SSI Group Inc.

Elliot B. Maisel
Gulf Distributing Co.

Bill A. Mason
Springhill Memorial Hospital

Edwin W. McConnell
McConnell Automotive Corp

T. Vance McCown
Vance McCown Construction Co. Inc.

James H. McDonald Jr.
Alford Clausen & McDonald LLC

Lee E. Moncrief
SouthTrust Bank

Harris V. Morrissette
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University of South Alabama

D. Mark Nix
Mobile Area Water and Sewer Service
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Treadwell Ford

J. Claude Thompson
Warrantly Corp.

Ann Velazquez
Greater Mobile Chrysler Jeep

Paul B. Wilson
IPSCO Steel (Alabama) Inc.

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MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Business View  JULY 2004  29
Guatemala Pencils

More than 21,000 pencils were recently given to public school children in Guatemala from Mobile’s three Rotary Clubs and Office Depot. These necessary school supplies were collected following a plea from Karla Mata of Invest in Guatemala and vice president of CALDEC, an airfreight company.

Participants on a recent Chamber-led international trade mission to Guatemala met Mata, who served as the mission trip’s point person for several key meetings. Mata described the dire situation in her country, where 2.5 million children cannot even afford pencils for school, and where the public school system is so poor that it lacks resources to provide essential services.

After hearing her plea for pencils, the three Rotary Clubs – Downtown, West Mobile and Sunrise – led by their chapter presidents, John Duffy, Robert Greer and Tom Sawyer (pictured right), respectively, partnered with Office Depot to send a supply of them to Guatemala.

Chamber to Lead Trade Mission to South America in September

The Mobile Area Chamber, in conjunction with the Alabama Development Office and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, will sponsor a trade mission to Sao Paulo, Brazil, and Santiago, Chile, Sept. 11-18. The mission will be held in conjunction with EXPORT ALABAMA: Focus on Small Business, a statewide initiative promoting Alabama-made products and services in the international marketplace.

Brazil and Chile have dynamic markets with exceptional opportunities for Alabama companies. In 2003, Alabama exporters shipped $137.6 million of goods to Brazil, making the country Alabama’s 11th largest trading partner. Exports to Chile totaled more than $16 million. The U.S. recently signed a free-trade agreement with Chile, and exports to Chile are expected to increase over the next few years.

A briefing will be held in both Sao Paulo and Santiago, and companies will participate in pre-screened, industry-specific appointments. For more information about the mission contact Bridgette Clark, the Chamber’s international program manager, at 694-0702 or bridgette@mobilechamber.com.

Leading prospects for U.S. products include:

**Brazil:**
- Computer hardware, electronics and peripherals
- Computer software
- Internet and e-commerce services
- Oil and gas field machinery and services
- Airport equipment
- Franchising
- Safety and security equipment
- Telecommunications equipment
- Print and graphic arts equipment
- Iron and steel
- Pollution control equipment and services
- Mining equipment
- Automotive aftermarket
- Electrical power systems
- Medical equipment and devices
- Aircraft and parts
- Drugs and pharmaceuticals
- Transportation, railroads and highways

**Chile:**
- Mining equipment and supplies
- Environmental technologies and services
- Plastics production machinery and resins
- Electric power equipment
- Telecommunications equipment and services
- Construction equipment
- Computers and peripherals
- Franchising
- Food processing and packaging equipment
- Air conditioning and refrigeration
- Safety and security equipment
- Medical equipment
- Travel and tourism services
- Bulk food commodities
- Intermediate products
- Food ingredients for food processing sector
- Consumer-oriented products for retail

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- Computer hardware, electronics and peripherals
- Computer software
- Internet and e-commerce services
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- Safety and security equipment
- Medical equipment
- Travel and tourism services
- Bulk food commodities
- Intermediate products
- Food ingredients for food processing sector
- Consumer-oriented products for retail
Summer Scrubs Program Underway

Eighty high school students from Mobile and Baldwin counties will be spending a week in the hospital this summer observing and learning about careers in health care through the Health Care Workforce Coalition’s new “Summer Scrubs” program.

The students, selected for participation by their guidance counselors based on their interests and academic performance, will spend each day at a different facility exploring the health careers that interest them the most and learning about issues that affect all health professions.

This unique opportunity is sponsored by SAAD’s Health Care and coordinated by the Mobile Area Chamber’s Center for Workforce Development. The host facilities are Mobile Infirmary, Providence Hospital, SAAD’s, Thomas Hospital and University of South Alabama Medical Center. For more information, contact the Center for Workforce Development (CWD) at 431-8619.

Business Leaders Tour Area Tech School

The Center for Workforce Development (CWD) is continuing to work closely with Mobile County Public Schools on the development of the John Shaw Advanced Academy of Business & Industry Leaders, a comprehensive high school that will combine challenging academics with high-level career-technical education opportunities.

Recently, the CWD staff helped Mobile Works, a local job-skills training organization, plan a tour of West Florida High School of Advanced Technology in Pensacola for members of the Workforce Investment board and elected officials and business and industry leaders. Twenty-one individuals participated in the tour that included discussions with West Florida High’s principal, administrative staff and representatives from the Escambia County board of education and students.

Board Members Travel to Fort McClellan

Last month, two Mobile Area Chamber board members traveled with a group of local community leaders and the media to Fort McClellan via a Blackhawk helicopter to learn more about employers’ support of local guardsmen and reservists called to serve in Iraq.

Jody Dunn of Whitney National Bank and Tom Bates of Depussa Corp. agreed the trip was eye-opening and rewarding. They credited the U.S. Department of Defense for putting together a strong package of information for employers of deployed and active service men and women, and encouraged any business with questions to get informed.

To learn more about the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, visit www.esgr.com.

Chamber Presence Strong on Meeting Circuit

As part of the Chamber’s ongoing effort to share “Mobile’s business story,” staff members have been actively speaking to civic clubs and organizations in the Mobile area. Presentations remain focused on the Chamber’s efforts to recruit new industry and assist local companies with expansion projects, as well as a general overview of the Chamber’s role in the region and special upcoming events.

Examples of groups the Chamber has spoken to include West Mobile Rotary, Seminole Chamber, Kiwanis Club and Executive Women International.

If you would like someone from the Chamber to make a presentation for an upcoming meeting, contact Shelly Mattingly at 431-8655 or shelly@mobilechamber.com.

Chamber Staffer Graduates From Inaugural Class

Leigh Perry Herndon, vice president of communications for the Chamber, was one of 42 members of the inaugural class of Leadership Coastal Alabama to graduate this spring. The class was a combined group of Mobile and Baldwin County residents, who came together through the guidance of Mobile United’s Leadership Mobile program and the University of South Alabama – Baldwin County’s Leadership Baldwin County program.

Graduates spent a year studying similarities in both counties and how Envision Coastal Alabama is helping bridge the gap between Baldwin and Mobile. Herndon is also a 1998 graduate of Leadership Dothan.

Chamber Staff Attends Leadership Institute

The Chamber remains committed to the professional development of its staff members. Four staffers are attending the Walter F. George, president and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce.

Institute for Organization Management this summer, coordinated by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Institute is a four-year program designed to better enable Chamber professionals to address daily challenges on topics including ethics, legal issues, nonprofit management, special events, accounting practices and small business development trends.

Bob Chappelle, senior vice president, graduated from this year’s program. Other staff members in the program are Maria Bladon, director of customer service; Joe Mareno, vice president of finance and operations; and Darrell Randle, vice president of small business development.

Comparative Economic Indicators

March ’04 vs March ’03

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<th>Mobile/Baldwin Counties</th>
<th>City of Mobile</th>
<th>Mobile County</th>
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<td>Unemployment Rates</td>
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Business Licenses

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Homes Sold

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Air Passengers From Mobile

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<td></td>
<td>27,179</td>
<td>25,566</td>
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Is Your Business Safe?

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The Business View     JULY 2004     31
Sponsored by Alto Imaging Technologies, Networking@Noon (N@N) will be held Wednesday, July 14 in the Chamber’s McGowin Room.

N@N is a bi-monthly event offering members the opportunity to introduce themselves and their business. Following a brief presentation, introductions and lunch, attendees are invited to continue to network.

The cost is $8 and includes lunch or $5 without lunch.

Reservations are required. Reserve your space by July 12 for this popular event. No cancellations will be honored after this date.

Contact Heather Bell at 431-8638 or heather@mobilechamber.com.

Diversity Business Network and Business After Hours

On Thursday, July 29, the Chamber will host Diversity Business Network, from 5 to 5:30 p.m. at the Airport Plaza Hotel, 600 S. Beltline Hwy. This quarterly networking event is designed to give minority-owned businesses the opportunity to promote their companies and services and learn more about Chamber activities.

There is no charge to attend; however, reservations are requested.

At 5:30 p.m., attendees are welcome to stay and enjoy the

AIRPORT PLAZA HOTEL

Attend Mobile’s Only Business Expo

The Chamber’s Business Expo is a great opportunity to promote your business to more than 1,000 Chamber members and guests. This trade show-like atmosphere includes 200 booths from local companies and aims for 1,000 participants. In addition, several restaurants will serve specialty items from their culinary palette.

Join the celebration on Thursday, Aug. 26 from 3 until 8 p.m. at the Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center Exhibit Hall.

Admission is $2 per person.

Exhibit space is still available for $150. Chamber members can reserve a 10 x 10 exhibit booth for only $150 or an end-of-aisle exhibit space for $325 (prices will increase to $175 and $350 after Aug. 12).

Contact Heather Bell at 431-8638 or heather@mobilechamber.com for more information.

Forum Alabama

On Tuesday, August 3 from noon to 1:30 p.m. at the Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center, the Forum Alabama lunch topic will focus on Mobile’s waterfront including cruising, the Maritime Center and ferry service between Mobile and Baldwin Counties. Speakers will include Mike Lee, Page & Jones Inc.; E.B. Peebles, Armbricht Jackson LLP; and Bill Morgan, South Alabama Regional Planning Commission.

Cost to attend is $20 per person for Chamber members, $25 for potential members or $200 for a table of 10. Reservations must be made in advance by contacting Heather Bell at 431-8638 or heather@mobilechamber.com.

Forum Alabama is a Chamber program highlighting topics of local, regional and national interests.

WHITE-SPINNER

CONTRACTORS & CONSTRUCTION MANAGERS
ATTENTION MEMBERS!

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

- Erika Davon at 431-9647 or 402-1472
- Joan Bordunave at 431-8627 or 366-1390

Who’s New?

Jeff Ratchford has been named a senior instructor at SouthEast Technical Solutions. Ratchford was employed for 30 years with IBM and is a Microsoft certified trainer who holds advanced certifications as a Microsoft Systems Engineer Windows 2000/2003, Microsoft Certified Database Administrator and SQL Server.

Gia Dinges was named director of marketing for Mobile Works Inc. She has more than 10 years of marketing experience and most recently served as product manager for DI Foodservice Companies.

Regions Bank announced several recent promotions:

- Honor M. Hartzes was named assistant vice president branch manager of the Hillcrest office. Hartzes joined the bank in 1998 and has more than 25 years of banking experience. He is a facilitator for the Bank South Group EBS program.
- Al Hopkins was promoted to assistant vice president branch manager for the Bayou La Batre office. He joined the bank in 1988 and is a graduate of Jackson State University and the Alabama Banking School at the University of South Alabama.
- John M. McLean was named assistant vice president branch manager of the University Boulevard office. He joined the bank in 1974 and is a graduate of the Alabama Banking School at the University of South Alabama.
- Louise M. Myles was promoted to assistant vice president branch manager of the Semmes office. She joined the bank in 1980 and has worked in the Semmes office since 1985. She is in the process of completing the Alabama Banking School program at the University of South Alabama.
- Julie S. Ehmka was promoted to senior vice president, trust tax division manager. A certified public accountant, Ehmka is a graduate of the University of South Alabama with a bachelor's degree in accounting, and the Southern Trust School at Spring Hill College.

Sullivan-St. Clair Marketing/Public Relations has been tapped by Ono’s Trading Co., a manufacturer of sunglasses with polarized readers, to complete a corporate image campaign. The sunglasses are currently sold in hunting, fishing and sporting goods stores in the Mobile area, but will expand its reach to the Northeast, Southeast and Midwest by late summer.

- Superior Printing has relocated to 3001 Mill St. in Daphne. The company has also installed new presses and binding equipment. For more information, call 471-4059.
- Volunteer Mobile is seeking volunteers to assist in welcoming tourists to Mobile at several local attractions including the Fort Condé Welcome Center, Oakleigh, Historic Mobile Preservation Society, Mobile Museum of Art, Museum of Mobile, Gulf Coast Explorium and the National African-American Archives Museum. To volunteer for any of these attractions, call 433-4456 or www.volunteermobile.org.

The University of Mobile has changed the name of the School of Religion to the School of Christian Studies to better reflect the academic program which studies and promotes Christian evangelical church ministries from a Biblical and Southern Baptist perspective. Also, all undergraduate students will now take a course exploring the Christian perspective on issues such as citizenship, marriage and family, volunteerism and service and theological/philosophical life concepts.
**BUSINESS ENDEAVORS**

Forté Inc., a computer consulting and services firm, was selected by RAM Software Systems Inc., a software design company for the emergency medical services (EMS) industry, to provide database technology enhancements in RAM’s current commercial software products.

The SSI Group Inc. (SSI) and KPMG LLP, an audit, tax and advisory services firm, announced an alliance to use SSI’s ClickON® technology to help clients improve performance through enhanced technology support, better processes, operational risk mitigation and organizational redesign.

Mobile Technical Institute (MTI) was selected as a test site for the National Travel Agent Proficiency (TAP) Test. MTI is one of two test sites in the state of Alabama for the national test. The test provides a national standard of excellence for the travel industry by measuring basic competencies of travel professionals within all aspects of the travel industry.

Navigator Credit Union now has two locations in the Mobile area. The Saraland branch is located at 23 North Hwy. 43, and the Mobile Hillcrest Branch is located at 2370-L Hillcrest Rd. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information call 602-6294 or visit www.navigatorcu.org.

First Southern Mortgage is now open at its new location, 6352 Piccadilly Square Dr. For more information call 470-1881.

**WELCOME FRIENDS/ BUSINESS LINK**

WELCOME FRIENDS visits Newcomers who are developing new spending habits! Your business can be a part of their “new habit.”

BUSINESS LINK personally visits the decision-maker of over 500 businesses per year. We turn OUR cold calls into YOUR hot leads!

Call Millie Sue Hawk for more details: 251-122-7777

**FOR YOUR CALENDAR**

Mobile Technical Institute, 3103 Airport Blvd., Suite 400, will hold two seminars this month. On July 14 from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m., Leadership Basics, a Success Seminar Series workshop will be offered. On July 21 another Success Seminar Series, Grant Writing Basics, will be held from 8:30 to 11 a.m.

Registration is required for both seminars. Cost is $40 each. Contact Mary White at 478-6848 or mwhite@mtimail.com for more information or to register.

Bishop State Community College will offer training for business owners who sell alcoholic beverages. The Alcoholic Beverage Control Board-approved courses will be offered twice a month at Bishop State’s Southwest Campus, 925 Dauphin Island Pkwy., Bldg. 700. The goal is to help reduce underage drinking and driving under the influence of alcohol. Cost is $15 per participant. For more information, call 690-6836.

**WELL DONE!**

BoJoe Depot was featured in the New York Daily News. The Daily News searched the Internet for lower prices on items currently purchased by the New York Department of Education and named BoJoe Depot in Mobile as the low price leader for Swingline desktop staplers.

Forté Inc. Senior Consultant Aubrey Coté was recently named a Microsoft Certified Application Developer (MCAD). MCAD designation is industry recognition for professional developers who build powerful applications. Coté works in Forté’s Mobile office and specializes in custom software and database system development.

Seven University of South Alabama students received NASA Space Grant scholarships and two graduate students were presented fellowships from the Alabama Space Grant Consortium. Scholarships were awarded to Sejal Amin, Christie Bean, Melissa Caldwell, Aaron Byster, Heather Hoven, James Xc Morrison and Theodore Stirm. Michele Henesy and Rex Little Jr. were presented fellowships.

Thomas S. Rue, a member of Johnstone, Adams, Bailey, Gordon & Harris LLC, was elected president of the Maritime Law Association of the United States. Rue is the first Alabamian to lead the organization in its 105-year history. As president, Rue will guide the activities of the 3,100-member professional organization over the next year as it strives to make improvements in maritime law.

AmStaff Human Resources has attained tax and benefits payment certification, an independent professional verification that AmStaff is paying its tax and benefit obligations in a timely and appropriate manner. AmStaff recently was the first professional employer organization (PEO) in the nation to attain another certification, workers’ compensation and risk management certification.

Strand Associates Inc. – TAI Division has been named the 219th largest design firm in the United States according to the Engineering News-Record’s (ENR) 2004 listing of the top 500 design firms. ENR is a weekly publication highlighting news and developments in the construction industry in the U.S. and around the world.

**COMMUNITY NEWS**

DocuSys has been selected by the Southeast Alabama Medical Center in Dothan to provide its IV Medication Management System. The provision includes the DocuJet injectable drug monitor, a peripheral monitoring device for intravenous medication delivery and DocuSys’ pharmacy workstation (DocuRx). To learn more about Docusys, visit www.docusys.net.

Glen “Chip” Gardner, a recent graduate of Spring Hill College, was presented the Global Student Entrepreneur Award from the John Cook School of Business at Saint Louis University for his accomplishments in entrepreneurship in running his business, Innovative Media Works LLC, while attending school as a full-time honor student. His company developed software combining all the features of scrapbooking onto one CD Rom disk called the Virtual Scrapbook™.

The 2004 edition of The Real Yellow Pages from BellSouth will be delivered to homes and businesses through early July featuring the Saenger Theatre on its cover. BellSouth is again partnering with Keep Beautiful (KMB) in a telephone book recycling effort. Outdated directories may be dropped in the official recycling containers at any Regions Bank. Companies with a large number of books to recycle may deliver them directly to Recycled Fibers in the Brookley Industrial Complex, 432-1000, or to the Metro Recycling Drop-off Center, 1451 Government St. For more information on the recycling program, contact KMB at 208-6029.

Money generated from recycled old telephone books will be donated to Junior Achievement of Mobile. This money will enable JA to teach the Economics of Staying in School (ESIS) to approximately 4,000 8th grade students during the 2004-2005 school term. ESIS teaches students the importance of an education. Classes are taught by local business men and women and are designed to help students explore their personal skills and interests, various career opportunities, personal budgeting and the consequences of the decisions they make.

Mobile Works Inc. will award more than $1.9 million this year for several youth programs designed to help Mobile youth become job-ready. To date, they have announced over $900,000 in contracts for the following programs: Summer Jobs for Youth, Job Smart, Broadening Horizons Youth, Summer Jobs and Transition Weekend. To learn more about these programs, visit Mobile Works’ Web site at www.mobile-works.org.

Infirmary Health System has recently upgraded its magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machines to improve image quality and decrease the time it takes to complete an exam. The technology, GE Excite, provides doctors with superior 4-D images. To learn more about these upgrades, call 435-3939.

The Alabama Legislature passed a bill establishing a Business Improvement District (BID) in Mobile. BIDs are formed by property owners to improve the business and residential environment within a defined geographic area. This legislation will enable downtown Mobile property owners to discuss, debate and form a BID to address critical issues hindering the area’s redevelopment.

**FOR YOUR CALENDAR**

Mobile Technical Institute, 3103 Airport Blvd., Suite 400, will hold two seminars this month. On July 14 from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m., Leadership Basics, a Success Seminar Series workshop will be offered. On July 21 another Success Seminar Series, Grant Writing Basics, will be held from 8:30 to 11 a.m.

Registration is required for both seminars. Cost is $40 each. Contact Mary White at 478-6848 or mwhite@mtimail.com for more information or to register.

Bishop State Community College will offer training for business owners who sell alcoholic beverages. The Alcoholic Beverage Control Board-approved courses will be offered twice a month at Bishop State’s Southwest Campus, 925 Dauphin Island Pkwy, Bldg. 700. The goal is to help reduce underage drinking and driving under the influence of alcohol. Cost is $15 per participant. For more information, call 690-6836.

Share the Good News

Member News features a variety of announcements from Chamber members. Submission deadlines are 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 or Member News, Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 2187, Mobile, AL 36652.
NEW MEMBERS

CLIP AND ADD THESE TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY.

Affordable Fine Art by Ron Anthony
Ron Anthony
123 S. Ann St.
Mobile, AL 36604-2106
(251) 690-9020
Art Gallery-Dealer-Consultant

ALSOCO
Eric Oden
5288 Halls Mill Rd.
Mobile, AL 36619-9675
(251) 482-8899
www.alsoco.com
Linen Supply Service

American Dream Realty
Barbara Stiell
600 S. Broad St.
Mobile, AL 36609-8409
(251) 433-6116
Real Estate

Budget Blinds of Mobile
Karen Johnson
4017 Cottage Hill Rd., #52
Mobile, AL 36609-8409
(251) 666-8241
www.budgetblinds.com/westmobile
Window Treatments - Custom Made

Catalina Restaurant
Zephia Johnson
450 Azalea Rd.
Mobile, AL 36609
(251) 342-1501
Restaurants

Comfort Inn
Leo Desai
8080 N. Davis Hwy.
Mobile, AL 36693-5113
(850) 434-2858
www.comfortinn.com
Hotels

Faley Cassels
Alison Gonzales
2626 Whaley Ave.
Pensacola, FL 32503-4978
(850) 434-2858
www.faleycaesels.com
Marketing Consultants

Robert Hall & Associates
Robert Reed
2866 Dauphin St., Ste. Y
Mobile, AL 36606-2482
(251) 471-3267
Accountants-Certified Public

Jim Cannon's Brew Pub
Mike McGourirk
225 Dauphin St.
Mobile, AL 36602
(251) 432-7556
Restaurants & Bar

Nonprofit Resource Center of Alabama
George Elliott
2324 Independence Dr., Ste. 100
Birmingham, AL 35209
(205) 879-4712
www.cerca.info
Nonprofit Organization

Odyssey Healthcare of Mobile
Debbie Davis
2800 Dauphin St., Ste. 103
Mobile, AL 36606-2400
(251) 478-9900
www.odysseyhealth.com
Healthcare

Don Langham
Pace International Union
5737 Government St., Ste. 206
Mobile, AL 36633-4310
(251) 666-0477
Individuals

Pump It Up
Shan Terry
741-A Hillcrest Rd.
Mobile, AL 36685-3905
(251) 633-3933
www.pumpitupsupport.com
Party Planning Service

Quality Auto Glass & Trim Inc.
Tim Crabtree
5689 Hwy. 90 W.
Theodore, AL 36582-1671
(251) 653-5606
Glass-Automobile Plate-Window

Summer Classics of Mobile
Debbie Mills
751 Lakeside Dr.
Mobile, AL 36606-5113
(251) 643-1771
Furniture Stores

Tidbits of Mobile
Karen Spiess
4225 Emmett Dr.
Mobile, AL 36619-9711
(251) 461-0983
Newspapers

Tide Moving & Storage Co.
Robert Pritchard
5730 Mobile Rd.
Theodore, AL 36585-1756
(251) 653-7211
Movers

Vision Builders
Falecia Nettles
2122 Hand Ave.
Whistler, AL 36612-1720
(251) 434-0256
Contractors-General

Wrico Signs & Alabama Metalographics
Wade Wright
3345 Halls Mill Rd.
Mobile, AL 36606-2533
(251) 478-0142
Signs

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Reggie & Joanne Belote
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Art Gallery-Dealer-Consultant

25 YEARS
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recruiting jobs
developing a competitive workforce
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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 or visit www.mobilechamber.com.