

the **business**VIEW



**FREE
Business
Expo, Aug. 27**

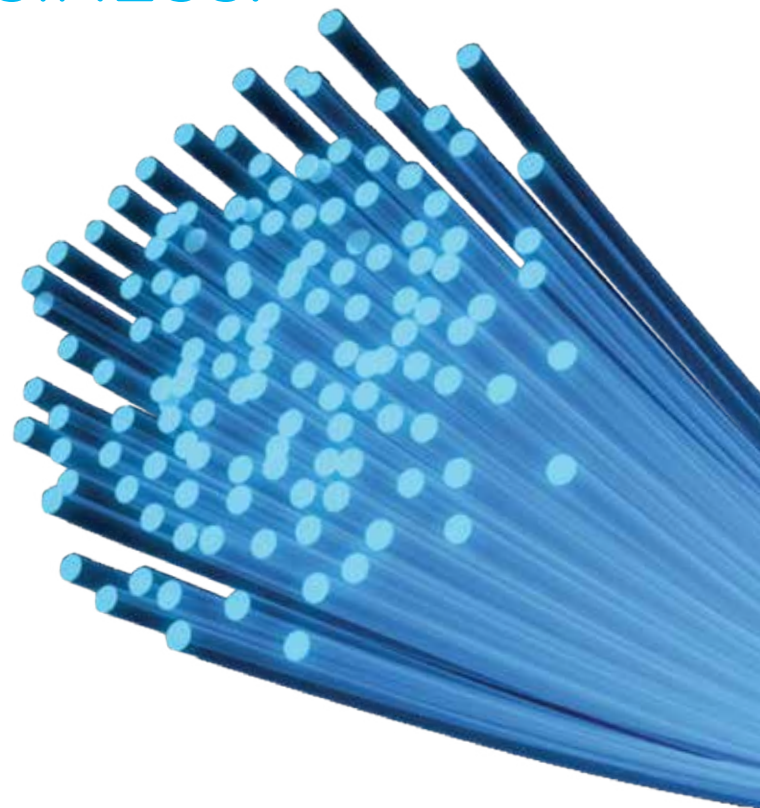
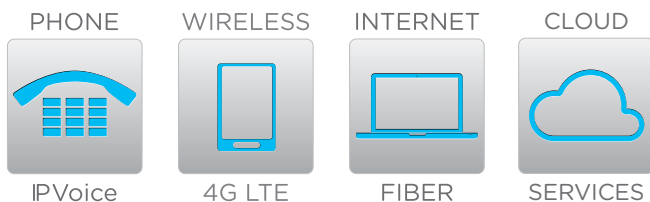
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Board of Advisors

5th Generation of
Greens Invest
In Local Grocery Chain

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From the Publisher - Bill Sisson

Business Expo is Your Chance to Network

Networking means something different to just about everyone. Doing it is an exercise that gets easier over time, with lots of practice.

This month, challenge yourself to attend the Mobile Area Chamber's Business Expo on Wednesday, Aug. 27, and make some great business contacts.

More than 220 exhibitors will be showcasing their products and services to the 2,100-plus expo attendees at the Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center from 1 to 6 p.m. I cannot tell you how much I enjoy walking the expo floor talking to Chamber members about what's working well, and how to overcome barriers to growth. That's why I'll be there with a stack of business cards in my pocket in hopes of meeting as many of you as possible.



This year's exhibitors represent an even more varied cross-section of businesses from throughout our region. We're particularly proud of this event, billed as Mobile's largest one-day networking event. Spanning five hours, you should pencil in at least a couple of hours and map out in advance which of our local exhibitors you need to meet. Often one quick conversation can turn into a new lead.

See pages 8-9 to learn more about the day's events and, as Expo draws closer, turn to the Chamber's website, www.mobilechamber.com, for the latest updates on sponsors and a complete list of exhibitors.

ON THE COVER

The G-5s – the fifth generation to help run Autry Greer & Sons, Mobile's only locally owned grocery store chain, are pictured here at a store on Cottage Hill Road. They are, from left to right, Stephen Thomas, Jackson Thomas, Gray Fobes, Les Buerger and Lucy Greer Cheriogotis. See pages 12-13 to learn more about the company. *Photo by Jeff Tesney.*

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the business view is published monthly, except for the combined issue of December/January, by the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce
 451 Government St., Mobile, AL 36602 251-433-6951
www.mobilechamber.com ©2014

Publisher William B. Sisson
Executive Editor Leigh Perry-Herndon
Managing Editor Jennifer Jenkins
Copy Editor Michelle Matthews

Additional Writers and Editors
 Casandra Andrews, Ashley Horn, Susan Rak-Blanchard, Danette Richards, Carolyn Wilson

Printing Services
 Interstate Printing/Direct Mail

Graphic Design
 Wise Design Inc.

Advertising Account Executive
 René Eiland 251-431-8635
reiland@mobilechamber.com

Southwest Alabama Earns Exclusive Manufacturing Community Designation

Southwest Alabama was awarded the designation of Manufacturing Community

by the U.S. Department of Commerce, and the University of South Alabama (USA) will coordinate a consortium of partners competing for federal money to enhance workforce development in the region.

Lynne Chronister, USA vice president for research and economic development, submitted the application on behalf of the Mobile Area Chamber's Partners for Growth investors.


"This puts focus on our region, recognizing an alignment of efforts that has created a manufacturing hub in coastal Alabama and laying the groundwork for future growth,"


Chronister said. "The Manufacturing Community designation allows us to receive coordinated support from nearly a dozen federal agencies with \$1.3 billion available in economic development assistance."

"To be designated one of 12 manufacturing communities is a huge win for Mobile as we continue to work on recruiting in several industry clusters, including advanced manufacturing and shipbuilding," said Bill Sisson, president and chief executive officer of the Chamber. "We have a significant number of manufacturing industries creating jobs in this region. Our ability to develop and train our workforce will be key to ensure continued growth here."

The area's application emphasized the growth



workforce training. Seventy communities applied. Along with USA and the Chamber, local agencies participating include: Mobile County, the city of Mobile, Southwest Alabama Workforce Development Council, Mobile Works, AIDT Maritime Training Center, Gulf State Shipbuilding Consortium, Bishop State Community College, Alabama Technology Network and the Alabama State Port Authority. 

You'll see this symbol  with stories featuring Chamber initiatives.

Business Briefs

To keep you in the know, here are several business announcements and encouraging nuggets of news.

Silver Shovel & 2013 Business Growth

Area Development bestowed a Silver Shovel award on Alabama for its high-value investment recruitment in 2013. Marine Well Containment's \$1.4 billion shore base operation investment in Mobile earned the first spot on a list of 10 companies recognized.

The Alabama Department of Commerce reported 17,000 jobs and more than \$4.4 billion in capital investments were announced last year. The results came from 445 projects in sectors such as automotive, aerospace, chemicals, metals and technology.

Of the total projects, 62 were new company announcements, and 383 came from existing companies planning to expand in Alabama.

Mobile County led the state in capital investment with Marine Well Containment.

Jefferson County landed the top spot for new job creation with 1,755 positions.



District 1 Has New Education Board Representative

Gov. Robert Bentley named long-time public servant and businessman Al Thompson as District 1's representative to the Alabama State Board of Education. District 1 is comprised of Mobile, Baldwin and Escambia counties. The Bay Minette resident replaces Tracy Roberts, who resigned, citing personal reasons in an article published by the *Press-Register*.



Thompson is owner of Thompson Properties in Bay Minette. He currently serves as a member of the Baldwin County Judicial Commission and the Bay Minette Planning Commission, and previously served four terms on the Baldwin County Board of Equalization.

In his newest role, Thompson will help the education board implement Plan 20/20 to prepare all students to be successful in college and/or a career when they graduate from high school. In addition, the board oversees the programs and initiatives for 135 school systems.

Mergers and Acquisitions

Chicago-based Hub International Limited (Hub), a global insurance brokerage, risk advisory and employee benefits firm, announced its Gulf South division acquired the assets of Fox/Everett Inc., one of the largest independently owned insurance agencies in Mississippi.

The move adds four Fox/Everett Mississippi and Louisiana locations to Hub Gulf South's nine locations throughout Mississippi, Louisiana and Alabama that specialize in many of the same industries, as well as marine and energy.

The Fox/Everett transaction represents Hub's 12th completed acquisition in 2014, and makes Hub one of the largest brokerage firms in the three-state region.

Sweet Home Mobile

Mobile was named the 10th most affordable medium-sized metro for buying a home, according to a study of 173 U.S. metro areas conducted by *NerdWallet*, a financial website. Research included recent home prices and household income to formulate a home-price-to-income ratio for 30 most affordable places nationwide. Mobile was the only city in the Southeast to make the list.

Toledo, Ohio, took No. 1 spot in the category, with a median price of \$81,700. Mobile's median price was \$108,400.

Continued on page 6



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Business Briefs *Continued from page 4.*

Two Chamber Initiatives You Want to Know About

The Mobile Area Chamber was one of 50 metropolitan regional chambers of commerce and economic development organizations urging Congress to address the impending insolvency of the federal Highway Trust Fund.

“We need your support to ensure the viability of this critical component of the nation’s economy, including its ability to accelerate the all-too-slow recovery of the jobs lost since the onset of the deep recession that started in 2008,” the letter said.

“The truth is that American families and businesses are already paying for our inadequate infrastructure,” said Ginny Russell, the Mobile Area Chamber’s vice president of community and governmental affairs.

“The longer it takes a package to get across the country, the higher the price,” she said.

“The problem is not on the horizon; the problem is here. The

American Society of Civil Engineers estimates that deficient, unreliable surface transportation infrastructure will cost the average American family more than \$1,000 a year through 2020 as they earn less and pay more for transportation and repairs.”



The Mobile Area Chamber and Google are joining forces to promote local businesses with Google “Street View” photography that also goes inside local businesses, attractions, venues, parks, trails and colleges. The imagery is published into Google Maps, a new Mobile Google Virtual Business & Area Guide, and websites or Facebook pages of participating businesses. The program starts at \$99 per year.

To make an appointment with a Google photographer and learn about the program details, go to bit.ly/1z6YBo2. If you would like to see an example of this program at work by another Chamber, visit the Rochester Business Alliance’s Google Virtual Business & Area Guide at www.seeinsiderochester.com.

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Precision Tool & Grinding Inc.



Specializing in custom design and tooling modification, this team of industrial workers is ready to help customers with tooling needs. Precision Tool and Grinding founders are (from left to right) Richard T. Davis, Robbie Hubbard and Christine Hubbard.

Like a lot of small businesses, Precision Tool and Grinding was struggling during the recession. Founded in 1999 by **Robbie and Christine Hubbard and Richard Davis**, the company needed a “shot in the arm” to weather the rough times but was having a difficult time finding help.

Banks weren’t lending, company President Christine Hubbard said, despite a strong record of repayment. It wasn’t until she learned about Small Business Administration (SBA) microloans through the Women’s Business Center did the company get the help it needed.

After getting that loan in July 2010, Hubbard said sales increased 96 percent in 2011. The next year, 2012, was the company’s second-best ever, with a 25.8 percent increase in sales over 2011.

“We found that by diversifying our many talents, it helped us to survive

and flourish,” Hubbard said. “I promised myself we would keep some of the funds to help prevent being in that position again. We have managed to do just that and have added to it.”

The true measure of the company’s comeback was crystalized last year, when the WBC named Precision the South Alabama Successful Small Business of the Year for Mobile and Baldwin counties in 2013. Now, Precision Tool and Grinding is the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce’s Small Business of the Month.

Hubbard credited a “total effort” from employees and owners for the company’s surging success. “In retrospect, hard work, perseverance and a little luck has enabled us to achieve a level of success which makes us proud,” she said. “I always try to encourage people to follow their heart. You can get there. You just have to want it bad enough.”

A service-oriented firm that provides custom-made tooling and modifications for a variety of industries, Precision Tool and Grinding has focused on service availability, a keen knowledge of tooling applications and attention to the growing local aerospace industry to fend off the competition of large out-of-state catalog houses.

“To maintain our business, we concentrated on providing customer service and special tooling modifications to the ever-growing aerospace community in our local area and across the country,” Hubbard said, adding that the company hopes to expand to become more involved with the local growth of that industry.

“We have the knowledge and feel we could be a better support team for the expanding aerospace industry in our area,” she said. “We will also continue to support other businesses along the Gulf Coast as well.”

Ever wondered if your business qualified to be featured here?

Check out the guidelines below and apply today.

Contact Danette Richards at 251-431-8652 or email drichards@mobilechamber.com.

- Must be a Mobile Area Chamber member for one year
- Have 100 or fewer employees
- In business at least two years
- Apparent solid financial base
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- Sales growth/ profit growth/ expanding number of employees
- Outstanding public service contribution
- Must be a “for profit” company
- Locally-owned franchises are eligible
- Headquartered in Mobile, Baldwin or Washington counties.

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Getting the Most from Your Time at the Mobile Area Chamber's Business Expo

Expos and trade shows can be a tremendously powerful marketing tool – if you know the tips, techniques and strategies for success. Participating in an expo is not about selling or closing a deal – it's about networking and building relationships. After the expo, when you follow up with the people you met, is when you start your conversation about specifically how your product or service can benefit your prospects or solve their problem.

Q: How do I make the most of my time at the Business Expo?

A: As an exhibitor (or an attendee), the Mobile Area Chamber's Business Expo is an excellent opportunity to meet a lot of people (prospects) at one place in a short period of time. But without a plan, much of this time could be wasted. In order to have a networking plan, you must know your goals. Spend time before the expo evaluating your customer base. Who are your best customers? What characteristics or qualities make them "best"? You want to identify these qualities in other prospects and focus on meeting them.

2 Tips to Make Your Expo Trip Productive *If You Are an Exhibitor:*

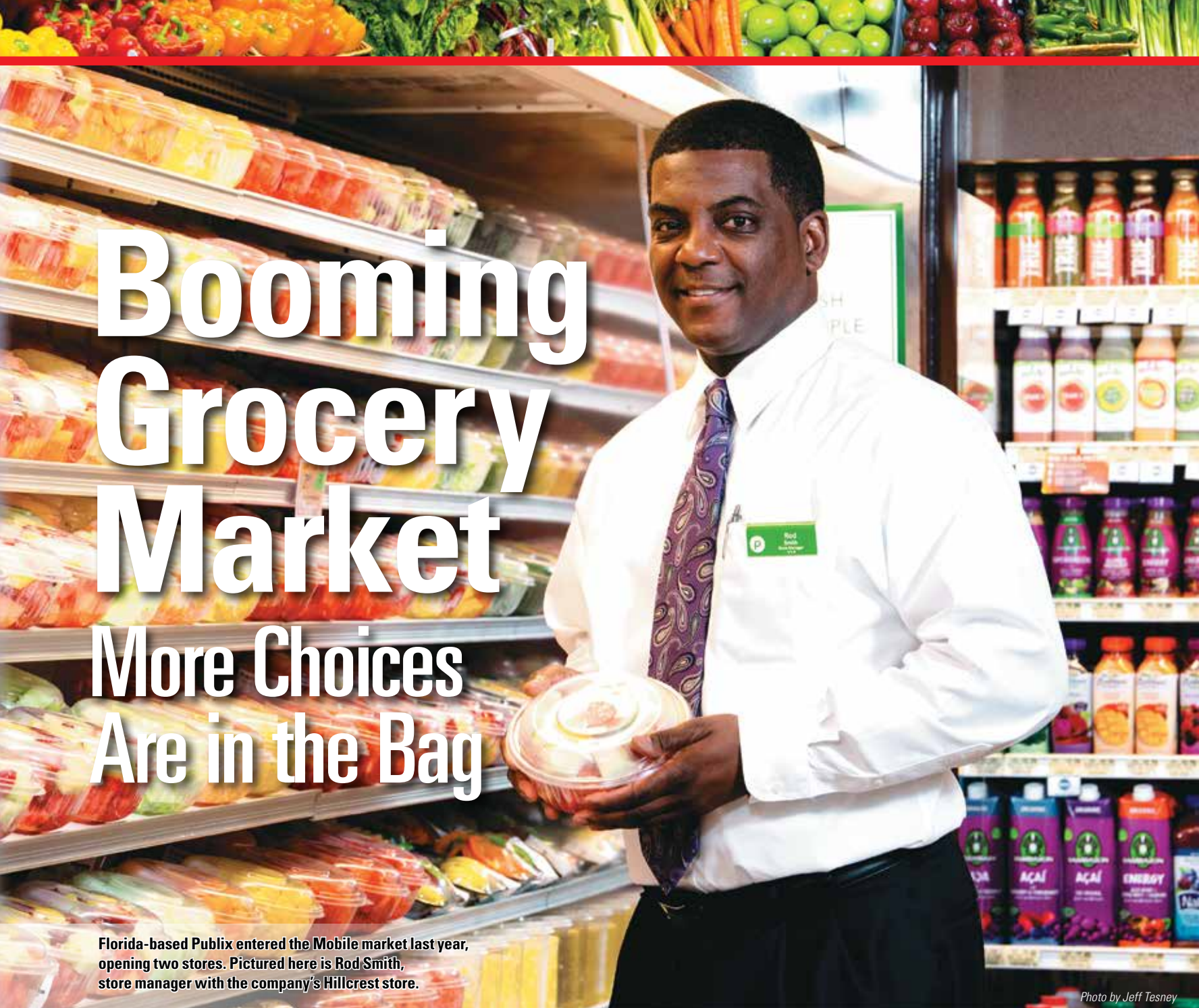
- 1** Make yourself and your booth accessible. Don't put yourself behind a table; it puts a barrier between you and a prospect. Move the table to the side or back of the area to make it more inviting and accessible. And above all, don't sit – so that means wear comfortable shoes.
- 2** Have a few well-chosen promotional materials. What exactly do you want prospects to know about your company, products or services? Don't try to sell everything you have to everyone who walks by – remember, your goal is to meet your target (best) customer. If you choose to provide specialty items you don't have to spend a lot of money. Figure out what type of item best represents your company and will leave a lasting impression of your company.

2 Tips to Make Your Expo Trip Productive *If You Are an Attendee:*

- 1** Know why you are there and what vendors you want to meet. You don't have time to go into a lot of detail, but explain what you need. When they understand your needs, they can be better prepared to discuss how they might provide a solution in the follow-up conversation.
- 2** Don't try to meet everyone. Refer to your plan (see above) and select the key people that can help you achieve your goal. It's tempting to walk around the expo looking for your friends and spending time at their booths. But that's not going to move your business forward. It's not fair to your friends, and it's not fair to others who may want to meet that company.

And for Exhibitors and Attendees:

Follow-up is critical. Organize the business cards and materials you collected and act on any tasks that you committed to. A short "glad to meet you" note or e-mail makes a big impression when asking for business in the future.



Booming Grocery Market

More Choices Are in the Bag

Florida-based Publix entered the Mobile market last year, opening two stores. Pictured here is Rod Smith, store manager with the company's Hillcrest store.

Photo by Jeff Tesney

As popular chain grocery stores continue expanding into the Mobile area, shoppers have more options than ever when it comes to buying milk, bread and everything in between. And with more distinctive grocers opening new stores in the coming months, the food-buying public will have even more national choices than ever along the Alabama Gulf Coast.

Since the beginning of the year, three Rouses Markets opened in former Belle Foods and Bruno's stores. Those openings came on the heels of two Publix supermarkets expanding into the Mobile area beginning in late 2012 and a new Walmart Neighborhood Market. And on the horizon, popular grocer Whole Foods announced a new location is under construction in

Pinebrook Shopping Center.

The Business View talked to area store managers about how a larger selection of grocers can benefit customers and the spots where they love to shop.

Ronald Garrett, manager of the new Walmart Neighborhood Market on Airport Boulevard, said business is growing every week at the store, which opened Jan. 29. A manager with the Arkansas-based chain for 15 years, he said competition is good for business. "It gives customers a choice in what they are looking for," he said. In his experience, Walmart customers may try other stores, but eventually will come back when they notice "the prices are a little better, a little cheaper."

Those who frequent the Walmart near Providence Hospital may notice some new features unique to the location. "Shoppers are getting more health conscious, so we've added more organic items and gluten-free items," Garrett said. "We added new organic foods in every category and an eight-foot gluten-free section." The deli also features a smoker, so shoppers can take home pork ribs and pork loins smoked fresh daily. "And they are delicious," Garrett said.

Airport Boulevard also is home to Mobile's only The Fresh Market, a North Carolina-based specialty grocer that has been in Mobile for more than a decade. Sarah Covin, an assistant manager there, said competition from new chains

entering the market ultimately make all the stores better. "It's definitely a booming grocery market, especially with Airbus coming into town," Covin said. "I think competition brings out the best in everyone and makes everyone bring up their game. It makes us think outside the box."

Covin said Mobile's The Fresh Market fills a niche in the area, providing special-occasion items such as signature cakes and pastries that have become top sellers. "We do a lot of party trays with bakery and deli items for get-togethers and office parties," Covin said. "We also make a lot of fruit baskets and create a lot of custom wrapping for flowers for recitals. We pride ourselves on having the freshest possible selection."



Photo by Jeff Tesney

Louisiana-based Rouses opened three stores in the Mobile area this year. Assistant District Manager Chris Acosta is pictured at the Spanish Fort store.

Publix promotes its natural and organic products under the signature Green Wise.

Louisiana-based Rouses Markets most recently moved into the area in early 2014, buying up a total of six former Belle Foods locations as the company made its first expansion into Alabama. Three of the stores are in the Mobile area, with locations in Theodore, Spring Hill and Saraland.

Rouses' customers can pick up freshly boiled crawfish, a wide variety of specialty sausages such as boudin, as well as foods grown in Alabama, including sweet potatoes and Bibb lettuce from Baldwin County. The third-generation family-run business prides itself on bringing the best of Louisiana to the rest of the country.

The Rouses locations in Mobile, which were completely renovated, have boiling rooms in the stores to cook up thousands of pounds of Louisiana crawfish. And the seafood cases, which stretch across the back of most stores, are stocked with fish, oysters and crabs harvested from Gulf

waters. Louisiana shrimp and Florida Royal Red shrimp also are top sellers.

The first Publix store opened to much fanfare in Mobile in late 2012, with a line of hundreds of customers forming hours before a scheduled grand opening. "It continues to be an incredible experience to serve the great people of Mobile," said Chad Blanton, a Publix store manager at the Hillcrest Road location. "After 19 years with the company, and working in several different markets, I have never felt more welcome and appreciated by a community."

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Greer's Got It – Next Generation Guarantees It

Photo by Jeff Tesney

The Greer family is proud of their steaks and meats. The family members involved in running Mobile's only locally owned grocery store chain are (from left to right/behind the counter): Jackson Thomas, Stephen Thomas, Lucy Greer Cheriogotis, Gray Fobes and Les Buerger; (left to right in front of the counter): Robert Greer, Jan Endfinger and Jackie Greer.

It was a bit of a reunion when *The Business View* gathered to talk about Greer family members involved in running Mobile's only locally owned grocery store chain. There was lots of good natured ribbing among the newest family members to join the business, while the parents (also known as aunt, uncle and even in-law) watched.

But the mood quickly turned serious when the photographer started setting up the camera. The G5s (an affectionate nickname bestowed by the fourth generation that owns Autry Greer and Sons to identify the up and coming fifth generation) quickly rearranged a produce bin to show off the store's robust selections.

In 2013, the company bought three former Belle Foods stores – Cottage Hill Road and Government Street in Mobile, and another in Pensacola. "We're growing," says Robert Greer, company vice president. "It's slow growth, because the key here is sustainability."

"And the way we do it," says Jackie Greer company vice president, "is offering the highest quality meats, produce and groceries at the best price. People want a good price but they don't want to sacrifice quality to get it."

Robert and Jackie are cousins and co-owners of the company their great grandfather Autry

Greer started at the corner of Water and St. Michael Streets 98 years ago. At the time, Autry was considered a pioneer, initiating Mobile's first cash-and-carry food store when others sold on credit and made customer deliveries. Today, the company employs more than 600 people and owns 31 stores – 17 in Alabama, 11 in Mississippi and three in Florida – marketed as Greer's Food Tiger, Greer's Market and Greer's Cash Saver.

Over the last decade the company has renovated stores, with more planned for the future, making

them cleaner and brighter, "while still offering the finest meat and freshest produce," says Jan Endfinger, director of human resources and marketing, and Jackie's sister who joined the business eight years ago after returning to Mobile. "Everything we do is to better serve our customer."

Stephen Thomas, Jan's son and operations manager, says for years big box super stores and "dollar" retailers have been their toughest competitors.

In a bold move to get an edge on the competition, the company acquired the Cash Saver franchise name and converted 15 stores to a new cost-plus-10 percent pricing strategy, including its gourmet-rich Greer's Fairhope Market.

Jackie says it takes their business approximately 20 years to transition between generations. The next group comes in offering fresh ideas and has the wisdom of those who have experience, not just family but from store and department managers as well. "A lot of businesses fail, because family doesn't stay involved."

**People want a good price
but they don't want to
sacrifice quality to get it.**

Jackie Greer
company vice president, Autry Greer & Sons

What the G5s are contributing, says Robert, is improving the company's technology and keeping their stores current. They are aggressive and energetic. "The grocery business is ever-changing. They won't let us get stuck."

All of the family members involved grew up working in the stores, stocking the shelves, checking out customers and more. "We let them gravitate toward their interests and encourage them to develop it in their own innovative way, finding their entrepreneurial spirit," says Jackie.

His daughter, Lucy Greer Cheriogotis is an example. She first attended culinary school and is corporate chef and director of deli and catering operations.

Fifteen of the stores have full-service deli and bakeries, with three more scheduled to come online soon. With a customer list that includes 90 percent women shopping for their families, grab-and-go meals and catering are growing segments of the business.

As Mobilians, the family contributes to a number of causes through the company, including its Apples for the Students, a customer receipts program that turns into cash for needed supplies in local schools, and Save-A-Label, raising money for nonprofit organizations and schools.

"In the end, it's nice to have a legacy but you can't rest on your laurels. What's important is what you are doing now," says Jackie.



The Cash Saver on Cottage Hill is one of three former Belle Foods stores Greer's bought to expand its presence. In addition to a full-service deli and bakery, and other staples, this location has a variety of specialty products, including the ones pictured here.

Fast Facts:

50,000 – the number of items you'll find at the average Greer's supermarket

31 stores in Mississippi, Alabama and Florida

600-plus employees

Best sellers: bananas, bread, milk, eggs, ground beef, sugar, flour and soft drinks

Busiest time of day: After school through dinner time, weekends and rainy days

Customers say: They always go to Greer's when they want the "best fried chicken on the planet."

\$300,000 – the average amount Greer's estimates a customer spends on groceries in a lifetime



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For information on joining the board of advisors, contact Katrina Dewrell at 251-431-8611 or kdewrell@mobilechamber.com.

The ★ symbol indicates those whose companies are also investors in Partners for Growth, the Chamber's long-term economic and community development program.



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- IV BACK TO BACH**
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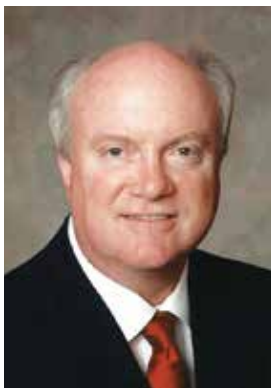
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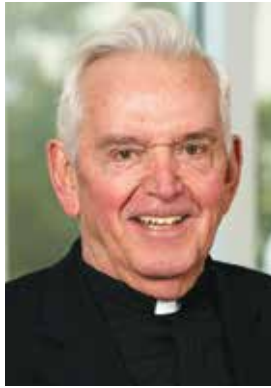
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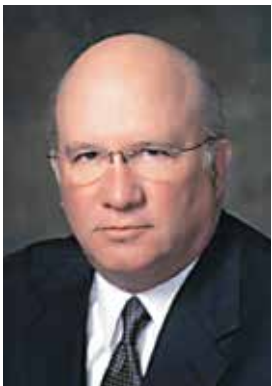
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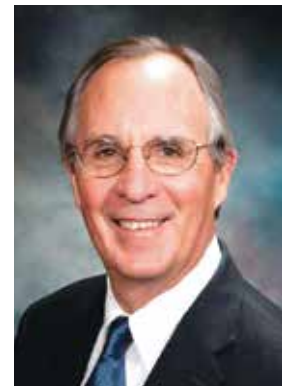
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As of 6/27/2014



This year, Zieman Speegle LLC is celebrating its 20th anniversary. Pictured in the front row, from left to right, are Jennifer Holifield, attorney; Tony Hoffman, attorney; Gayle Cawthon, legal assistant; Ashley Odom, paralegal; Christine Bailey, paralegal; Sandra Cummins, bookkeeper; and Jordan Odom, receptionist. Back row, from left to right, are Brian Trammell, attorney; Andrea Lindig, legal assistant; Steele Holman, attorney; Jerry Speegle, attorney; and Tommy Zieman, attorney.

Zieman Speegle LLC

Company officials: The attorneys in the firm are: **Tommy Zieman, Jerry Speegle, Tony Hoffman, Steele Holman, Jennifer Holifield** and **Brian Trammell**.

Years in business: 20

Brief company description:

The firm practices civil law in diverse areas. Its attorneys are licensed in Alabama, Florida, Mississippi and Georgia.

Why are you located in Mobile?

“Mobile is a unique city that seamlessly combines history and tradition with a modern approach to

business,” said Holifield. “These city values closely align with our firm’s personality.”

Why do you support the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce’s Partners for Growth initiative?

“Our firm strongly believes in Mobile’s future and is committed to the Chamber of Commerce’s vision to realize Mobile’s full potential,” said Holifield.

What do you see as Mobile’s greatest potential?

“Mobile’s greatest potential lies with its citizens,” said Holifield. “Mobile is uniquely equipped with

individuals of great talent, innovation, enthusiasm and intellect. These Mobilians will lift Mobile to the next level of growth and prosperity. Zieman Speegle has assisted and continues to assist Mobile business and community leaders with achieving Mobile’s nationwide prominence and long term success.”

Length of continuous Chamber membership: Since 2008



Partners for Growth (PFG) is the Mobile Area Chamber’s long-term economic and community development program. For more information, contact **Katrina Dewrell**, the Chamber’s investor relations coordinator, at **251-431-8611** or **kdeurell@mobilechamber.com**.

All Things Mobile

In June, the Mobile Area Chamber launched *MobileConnect*, a program designed to acquaint new-to-Mobile senior-level executives and their spouses with our community's history, demographics, economy and government, healthcare and education, and arts and culture.

Partners for Growth investors are serving as hosts for new executives, acquainting them with the community and its offerings, along with a seminar series addressing the above topics. A speakers' bureau has been established, and the Chamber is now registering the program's first participants. To learn more about *MobileConnect*, contact Katrina Dewrell at 251-431-8611 or kdewrell@mobilechamber.com.

Byrne Talks Energy

In May, the Chamber's oil and gas task force met with Rep. **Bradley Byrne** to discuss the federal energy policy. Committee members expressed their concerns about the policy, especially regarding Environmental Protection Agency regulations and the refusal to open up more areas in the eastern Gulf of Mexico to energy exploration.

OffshoreAlabama.com Goes to Houston

Mobile was well represented at the Offshore Technology Conference, the largest annual oil and gas conference, attended by more than 108,000 people in Houston in May. Thirty representatives/members of OffshoreAlabama.com, the Chamber's oil and gas task force, sponsored a large booth to promote Mobile's burgeoning oil and gas industry. Participants attended one-on-one appointments and meetings with clients, potential customers and suppliers, and promoted Offshore Alabama.com and its co-exhibitors.

New Ambassadors

Ambassadors are a group of Chamber member volunteers who assist in a variety of capacities, including working event registration, visiting Chamber members and attending ribbon cuttings. New ambassadors are: **Adriana Bright**, Hilton Garden Inn; and **John Wilson**, L.A.W. Enterprise. To learn more about the ambassador program, contact **Dawn Rencher** at 251-431-8649 or drencher@mobilechamber.com.

Recent Grand Openings and Ribbon Cuttings

Chamber staff and ambassadors helped cut ribbons and celebrate grand openings at Rouses Market – Old Shell Road, Rouses Market – Saraland, Rouses Market – Spanish Fort, Auntie Anne's Pretzels, Party Central, First Community Bank, Cypress Cove Apartments, Reeds Jewelers, Easy Money – Airport Boulevard and Easy Money – Springhill Avenue. The Chamber can assist any member in planning and/or attending a ceremony. To learn more, contact **Dawn Rencher** at 251-431-8649 or drencher@mobilechamber.com.

Chamber Receives Social Media Recognition

The Chamber received an award from the United Way of Southwest Alabama for its social media posting during Day of Caring. United Way President and Chief Executive Officer **Allan Turner** presented the award to the Chamber during a staff meeting.

Mobile's Small Business Council Meets

The Chamber's small business development department facilitated the quarterly meeting of the Small Business Council – a group of small business service providers in the Mobile Area. The council heard a presentation from the University of South Alabama's library system staff on reference and electronic research assistance for businesses. In addition, the group learned about the Alabama Department of Commerce's statewide inventory initiative of small business resource assets, funding for research and a new crowd-funding bill.

Mobile SCORE Office Merges

In late April, the national SCORE office elected to merge the Mobile SCORE chapter and the Baldwin County chapter to form the South Alabama SCORE chapter. SCORE clients may get information at www.southalabama.score.org or contact other local resource partners such as USA's Small Business Development Center at 251-460-6004, or the Women's Business Center at 251-660-2725.

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New Leaders in Mobile

The Mobile Area Chamber held a reception in June for new leaders in the Mobile area sponsored by Alabama Power, City of Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson and Mobile County Commission President Connie Hudson, who provided a briefing about Mobile prior to the event, which was attended by members of the Chamber Board of Directors, Board of Advisors and Partners for Growth investors.

Pictured are: (Row 1) Monty Hamilton, Rural Sourcing Inc. (RSI); John Waldron, Country Club of Mobile; Robert Adams; Julee Waldrop; Bill Sisson, Mobile Area Chamber; George Vann, BASF Corp.; Hudson; and Michael Chambers, Swift Biotechnology and Mobile Area Chamber Chairman.

Row 2: Tony Waldrop, University of South Alabama; Lucy Greer Cheriogotis, Autry Greer & Sons; Lynn Chronister, University of South Alabama; and Paul Weber, Berg Spiral Pipe.



Row 3: Parks Moore, S & S Sprinkler; Bill Mote, Wind Creek Hospitality; and Bobby Wein, Millard Maritime.

Row 4: Katherine Pitman, Mobile United/Leadership Mobile; Andrew Grinstead, Leavell Investment Management; Ty Bullard, Joe Bullard Automotive; and Mike Brown, American Red Cross Gulf Coast Chapter.

Row 5: Peter Martin, S.S. Nesbitt & Co.; Van vanLingen, Century Bank; Stimpson; Matt Thocker, Signature Flight Support; Joe Gottfried, Mobile Sports Hall of Fame; David Smitherman, Better Business Bureau of Central & South Alabama; Robert Fertitta, Navigator Credit Union; and Thomas Bender, Advanced Dermatology & Skin Care Centre.



Leader Exchange in St. Louis June 22-24

The Mobile Area Chamber took more than 70 business and community leaders to St. Louis for its annual Leaders Exchange in June. The trip was co-chaired by Mobile County Commission President Connie Hudson, City of Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson and Chamber Chairman Michael Chambers. In St. Louis, participants spent nearly three days immersed in successful and replicable programs in the areas of workforce development, infrastructure, quality of life and waterfront development. At the end of the trip, the group held an intensive session to discuss all that they'd seen and learned, and what programs could be successful in Mobile.

Pictured here is the group standing underneath St. Louis' iconic arch.

AMBASSADOR of the month



Photo by Jeff Tesney

Thao Nguyen grew up in Coshocton, Ohio, and earned a bachelor's degree in marketing and sales at the University of Houston in Texas. She works as a commercial account manager at Climate Control Service Experts Heating and Air Conditioning, where she secures and develops new commercial heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) service and maintenance accounts. Nguyen, the Mobile Area Chamber's Ambassador of the Month, joined the ambassadors program in January. "I enjoy being an ambassador because it opens opportunities for me to meet new people," she said.

Ambassadors are volunteers working for Mobile Area Chamber member businesses. They support the Chamber by visiting members, assisting with event registrations and attending ribbon-cuttings. To learn more about this program, contact Dawn Rencher at 251-431-8649 or drencher@mobilechamber.com.



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Jos. A. Bank offers a full selection of men's tailored and casual clothing, footwear and accessories. With more than 600 stores nationwide, the company has a 108-year heritage of quality, value and service. Pictured is store manager Albert Even at the Legacy

Village at Spring Hill store. For more information, visit www.josbank.com or call 251-340-0779.

The Business Spotlight of the Month is selected from a random business card drawing at the Chamber's monthly Business After Hours.

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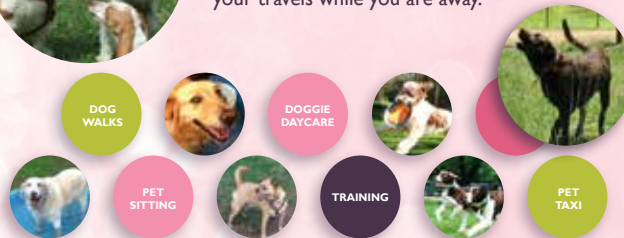


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How to Get in *The Business View*

The Business View is the Mobile Area Chamber's monthly publication featuring activities and accomplishments of the Chamber and its member businesses. If your business is a member, keep reading – this feature is designed to outline how member companies can be highlighted.

For those who are not members but want to join, contact **Carolyn Golson**, the Chamber's vice president of membership, at 251-431-8622 or cgolson@mobilechamber.com.

News You Can Use

The business briefs featured in this section of the magazine are centered around positive economic development headlines such as company expansions, business-changing contracts, significant hiring initiatives, new investments and more.

Occasionally there is room to accommodate major community news and initiatives.

Member News

One of the publication's most popular columns, Member News reports management level new hires and promotions; business endeavors, such as new products, new locations, major projects, etc.; management level awards, certifications, board officers, national and regional industry awards and annual company awards.

Weekly headlines and events sponsored by member organizations are usually promoted through the Chamber's weekly e-newsletter sent to approximately 9,000 recipients and available to anyone free of charge. To subscribe to *The Business View Weekly*, e-mail info@mobilechamber.com.

News releases should be one or two brief paragraphs. Photos must be professional headshots and must be 300 dpi at full size in an eps, tif or jpg format.

Information can be sent to news@mobilechamber.com. Events must be submitted to the weekly, through the automated online form on www.mobilechamber.com/in-the-news/chamber-publications.

Calendar

The calendar printed in *The Business View* outlines activities of the Mobile Area Chamber. Events sponsored by Chamber members must be submitted using the online form found on *The Business View Weekly*, www.mobilechamber.com/in-the-news/chamber-publications.

Small Business of the Month

A volunteer committee reviews submitted applications and selects a business to be featured in each issue as the Small Business of the Month. Criteria for this designation includes employing less than 100 people, a member in good standing of the Mobile Area Chamber and sales or profit growth.

For more information on how to nominate a company contact **Danette Richards**, the Chamber's director of small business development, at 251-431-8652 or drichards@mobilechamber.com.

Business Spotlight

One business attending the Chamber's monthly networking event, Business After Hours, is selected for a photo and brief description in each issue of the magazine.

CEO Profile

This article introduces people filling the highest staff position in member companies. Some are chief executive officers while others hold the title of president or manager.

Made in Mobile

An ongoing series of articles, Made in Mobile highlights interesting products made in the Mobile area with broad distribution to regional, national and/or international markets.

Guest Columns

Chamber staff invite or select management level employees to write articles addressing a specific topic primarily aimed at small businesses. Members have expressed an interest in a number of topics including marketing, international trade, employee management and legislative issues.

Advisors

The Business View recognizes board members annually. The governing board of directors is presented annually in the combined December/January issue.

The Chamber also has a board of advisors consisting of leaders whose companies make significant dues investments. Profiles of new advisors are featured monthly, and photos of the entire group run annually in the summer.

For more information on how to join the Chamber's board of advisors, contact **Katrina Dewrell** at 251-431-8611 or kdewrell@mobilechamber.com.

Ambassadors

Also featured monthly, ambassadors are Chamber volunteers from member organizations who assist with Chamber activities such as ribbon cuttings, Business After Hours, the Chamber's primary networking event, new member visits and other events.

Ambassadors earn points based on their participation. The volunteer with the highest score is highlighted in *The Business View*.

For more information on how to join the Chamber's ambassadors, contact **Dawn Rencher**, the Chamber's director of customer service, at 251-431-8649 or drencher@mobilechamber.com.



Advertising

Part of *The Business View's* mission is to serve as an affordable advertising outlet. It is not a profit-driven publication. Advertising offsets the cost of printing and mailing. *The Business View* is mailed to members and business in Mobile County listed on the Dun & Bradstreet list, and has a circulation of close to 22,000 business owners and managers. In addition, the online link is e-mailed to approximately 9,000 recipients and posted on the Chamber's website and social media sites, including Facebook and LinkedIn.

Frequently, issues sell out months in advance. The advertising contract and guidelines can be found on the

Chamber's website, www.mobilechamber.com. To check availability, contact the publication's advertising executive **Rene Eiland** at 251-431-8635 or reiland@mobilechamber.com.

Editorial Staff

Each month the Chamber's communications team holds an editorial meeting to discuss ideas, information, stories and photographs for the next issue. Stories are written and edited by the communications team and a few freelance writers.

How to Pitch a Story

There are several ways to pitch a story for *The Business View*: e-mail the who, what, where, when, why and how to any member of the Chamber's communications and marketing team:

Leigh Perry Herndon, 251-431-8645 or lherndon@mobilechamber.com;

Susan Rak-Blanchard, 251-431-8641 or susan@mobilechamber.com;

Ashley Horn, 251-431-8623 or ahorn@mobilechamber.com; or

Carolyn Wilson, 251-431-8606 or cwilson@mobilechamber.com.

AUGUST

For information on Chamber events, visit events.mobilechamber.com.

13 COFFEE WITH THE CHAMBER

Start your day with the Chamber and network with other business professionals.

When & Where: 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. – Panera Bread, 3691 Airport Blvd.

Contact: Kelly Navarro at 251-431-8638 or knavarro@mobilechamber.com

No charge, but seating is limited. Free parking.

Sponsors:



Location sponsor:



19 EXECUTIVE ROUNDTABLE **Members Only*

A monthly forum exclusively for Chamber member small business owners and managers.

When & Where: 8 to 9 a.m. – Mobile Area Chamber, 451 Government St.

Speaker: Scott Smith, executive vice president, director of employee benefits, S.S. Nesbitt & Co.

Topic: "Healthcare – Control Costs and Stay in Compliance"

Contact: Brenda Rembert at 251-431-8607 or brembert@mobilechamber.com

No charge, but seating is limited. RSVP requested. Free parking.

Sponsor:



20 WOMEN'S ROUNDTABLE **Members Only*

A bi-monthly forum exclusively for Chamber member nonprofit executives and managers.

When & Where: 8 to 9 a.m. – Mobile Area Chamber, 451 Government St.

Speaker: Cindy Ross, Bodies by Cindy

Topic: "One Fit Mobile"

Contact: Kelly Navarro at 251-431-8638 or knavarro@mobilechamber.com

No charge, but seating is limited. RSVP requested. Free parking.

Sponsor:



20 GCTC LUNCH

A bi-monthly lunch hosted by the Gulf Coast Technology Council.

When & Where: 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. – USA Tech Mentor Graphics

Speaker: Dr. Mark Weaver, USA Mitchell College of Business

Cost: \$20 for members and \$25 for potential members, includes lunch

Contact: Emily McGrath at 251-431-8651 or emcgrath@mobilechamber.com

Reservations required. Cancellations after Aug. 15 not reimbursed to cover lunch cost.

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27 BUSINESS EXPO & LUNCHEON

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Who's New

Kara Wilbourn joined Blue Fish Design Studio as a content strategist and search engine optimization specialist.



Wilbourn

Mobile Bay Convention & Visitors Bureau named Al Hutchinson president and CEO. He is a graduate of The University of Alabama, where he earned a bachelor's degree in marketing. Hutchinson has nearly 25 years of experience in the hospitality and destination marketing arena. He previously served as vice president of convention sales and services at the Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau.



Hutchinson



Bolton



Smith

Norton Lilly International (NLI) promoted Margie Bolton, Rachael B. Smith and Trish Averett. Bolton, a 10-year NLI veteran, is now vice president of human resources. She earned a bachelor's degree in organizational management from Spring Hill College. Smith is vice president of accounting and earned a bachelor's degree in accounting and a master's degree in business from the University of South Alabama. Averett, who has worked at NLI for 13 years, is now corporate controller. Averett graduated from the University of South Alabama with a bachelor's degree in accounting.



Averett

Hargrove Engineers + Constructors welcomed Gina Gregory as community affairs leader. Gregory is a graduate of the University of Florida with a bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism. She is also president of Mobile's City Council, representing District 7.



Freeman



Harvey

Dr. Bob Wood was named dean of the Mitchell College of Business at the University of South Alabama. Wood earned a bachelor's degree in biology and a master's in business administration from Arkansas State University, and a doctorate in business administration from Louisiana State University.

Prudential Cooper & Co. Inc., named two new associates to its Cottage Hill office. They are Mareen Freeman and Rhonda Harvey.



Freeman

Elizabeth Damson Freeman was named president of Long's Human Resource Services.



O'Keefe

Kristen O'Keefe joined Coastal Alabama Partnership as a regional initiatives coordinator.

O'Keefe earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Florida State University. She previously served as project coordinator for the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program and a coastal community development specialist with the Auburn University Marine Extension and Research Center.

Freeman represents the third generation of leadership at the company. Her father, Tom Damson, served as president for 30 years until recently retiring. Freeman graduated from Vanderbilt University with a bachelor's degree in human and organizational development.

Edra Finley joined AM/NS Calvert as a communications specialist. She earned a bachelor's degree in communication studies from the University of Tennessee. Previously, she was an athletic media relations assistant at the University of South Alabama.



Boehm



Yates

UMS-Wright School hired Patricia Boehm and Sonya Yates.

Boehm is as the new lower school principal. She earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Miami University of Ohio and a master's in elementary education from High Point University in North Carolina.

Yates is the director of academic support. She holds a bachelor's degree in learning disabilities and a master's in mild learning disabilities. A Certified Academic Learning Therapist (CALT), she also earned certification at the therapy level in Multi-Sensory Structured Language Education from the Shelton School in Dallas.

John Hamilton MD joined Infirmity Occupational Health. His office is located at 305 N. Water St.



Hamilton

Business Endeavors

Maynard Cooper & Gale PC announced the formation of its senior living and long-term care practice. The firm's new team includes a cross-disciplinary group of attorneys with experience in healthcare, project development and finance, corporate matters and operational support, regulatory compliance, litigation, labor and employment, employee benefits and governmental affairs.

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Ozanam Pharmacy started a "Pay It Forward" program to encourage its patients to donate to Ozanam and help others receive free medication. The endeavor came as a result of a class project at the University of South Alabama Mitchell College of Business.

*

The League of Women Voters of Mobile released its newest edition of the nonpartisan election resource www.VOTE411.org. The site is a "one-stop-shop" providing tools to help local voters navigate the voting process.

Well Done

Providence Hospital was awarded its second consecutive "A" grade for hospital safety. The hospital safety score is compiled under the guidance of the nation's leading experts on patient safety and administered by The Leapfrog Group, an independent watchdog. The scores uses 28 measures of publicly available hospital safety data to produce a single score.

*

PNC Bank recently recognized 26 local employees for excellence in service as part of the company's annual "Market All Stars" recognition, based on performance against criteria developed for their individual line of business. Winners for the Mobile market are: Dottie McKean, Tiffany Parker, Michele Payne, Angela Banker, Melonie Breakfield, Mike Cadden, Carmen Collins, Heather Cuccias, Laurie Fallon, Kendal Foster, Vanessa Gilley, Jason Gross, Michele Hand, Jessica Kimball, Kate Kramer, Willson McClelland, Patrick McKenna, Stella Miller, Amelia Pope, Lisa Radford, Daron Ray, Rhonda Schlautman, Stephen Searcy, Lauren Vickrey and Amanda Zirlott.

*

The Alabama Chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council recently elected new officers and directors. Neil C. Johnston of Hand Arendall LLC was named president.

*

Charles R. Hanes II MD of Urogynecology of Southern Alabama is the first physician in Mobile to be board-certified in female pelvic medicine and reconstructive surgery, according to Infirmity Health. Hanes earned a medical degree from Tulane University School of Medicine in New Orleans and has practiced in Mobile since 1979.



Slaby

Haynes

Wilkins Miller Hieronymus LLC announced the firm was admitted to the Financial Consulting Group, the largest association of independently owned accounting, business valuation and financial service firms in North America, which admits experienced, credentialed members who are financial experts and leaders in providing litigation and valuation services.

In addition, Bob Slaby CPA, CVA, a manager at Wilkins Miller Hieronymus, was appointed the 2014-15 president of the Mobile Chapter of the Alabama Society of CPAs. Slaby has worked in public accounting for more than 13 years. He graduated from Kent State University with a bachelor's degree in business administration with a major in accounting.

In other news, Eric Haynes CPA earned a chartered global management accountant designation.

*

Throughout its offices in Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi and Tennessee, 39 attorneys with Burr & Forman LLC were recognized as "Leaders in their Field" by *Chambers USA*, including John Kavanagh Jr. from the firm's office in Mobile.

*



Cannon

Siebert

Gardberg, Clausen & Kemmerly announced that associate attorneys Robyn Cannon and Derek Siebert passed the Florida and Mississippi bar exams. Both attorneys practice social security disability law and veterans' disability law.

*

Bronstein's Fine Furniture of Mobile was named one of *Home Accents Today's* 50 Retail Stars for 2014.

Twenty-one attorneys at Maynard Cooper & Gale PC were recognized as leading lawyers in Alabama in the 2014 edition of *Chambers USA*, America's Leading Lawyers for Business. Additionally, Maynard Cooper was ranked as a leading firm in all six practice areas covered in the state: banking and finance; bankruptcy/restructuring; corporate/commercial; labor and employment; litigation; general commercial; and real estate.

*

The Mobile Marriott received a TripAdvisor® Certificate of Excellence award for hospitality excellence.

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Mobile Area Chamber

Community News

Community Foundation of South Alabama named Bethany Teryl Todd and Carrie Elizabeth Beverly recipients of the 2014 Matthews Scholarship. The scholarship is given to students and residents in Clarke County with the desire to become educators, and is given in honor of the Matthews family and friends for their contributions to education in Clarke County.



The Mobile Area Chamber was awarded a five-star rating by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the highest designation given. Of the 6,936 chambers in the U.S., only 301 are accredited, and of those only 43 have achieved five-star distinction. The Mobile Area Chamber has been accredited by the U.S. Chamber since the designation's inception more than 40 years ago.

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If you know a company interested in benefiting from Chamber membership, contact Jackie Livingston at 251-431-8642.

View the complete membership directory at www.mobilechamber.com.

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