

The Corner

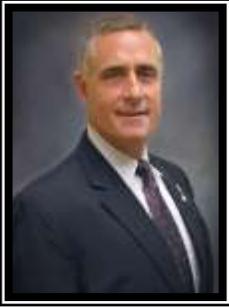
SouthWest Mobile County Chamber of Commerce
Serving All of South Mobile County

October 2019

Celebrating
ALABAMA CHAMBERS
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE WEEK 2019
CCA  *October 14-18*

"In Step With Progress"

Message from the President



Still waiting on cooler weather, but football season is well underway. Recession rumors seem to have abated and interest rates dropped again. Locally businesses are still reporting robust activity, so we are all too busy for any slowdown. Construction is well underway at several sites in our area and more are in the pipeline. We also still see a steady stream of NEW businesses opening. Folks, that is confidence in the economy and our future.

Our 2019 Business Expo was a resounding success! We had outgrown the community center, so this year we moved the Business Expo to Heron Lakes Country Club. That venue proved to be excellent and we enjoyed a 40+% increase in businesses participating with booths to showcase their products and services. We had some growing pains, but we have a comprehensive list of lessons learned to make another quantum leap next year. All proceeds will go to our scholarship fund.

The Mobile County MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) tabled the I-10 bridge project, but the Baldwin County MPO removed it. So technically, between the Baldwin County MPO action and Governor Ivey's kneejerk cancellation of an October meeting in Montgomery, the I-10 bridge project is dead for now. However, the need for the bridge is still very real, so we will watch as hopefully cooler more mature heads craft a viable solution that does not disproportionately burden south Alabama. By the way, the federal government does not consider this project dead. Our local officials need to convince Governor Ivey and ALDOT to consider more reasonable solutions and that the state must contribute to this project with the new gas tax. It's not over.

Good work on membership! We are over 180 members, so we are well on our way to our goal of 200 by year end. The fourth quarter kicks off our 2020 membership drive. Businesses that join in the fourth quarter will have their fee applied to 2020 and get the rest of 2019 free. Now is the best time to recruit your customers and vendors to join our growing success. And don't forget, the Chamber will award \$100 to anyone that brings in FIVE new members. I am hoping to award lots of \$100 bills the next few months. Get yours!

Market at the Corner is coming Saturday, October 12th. Lots of cool stuff and gifts. Call Tina to get a booth. Our next Coffee with the Chamber is 7:30 a.m. Tuesday, October 15th; come network with a couple dozen good folks before work.

The deepening and widening of the Mobile Bay Channel has been approved and funded, so the Alabama State Port Authority hopes to begin work in 2020. These improvements will greatly enhance our capacity to handle bigger ships and more traffic. That means more commerce through Mobile which means more business for all. Our guest speaker for our monthly lunch Wednesday, October 2nd is Brian Harold, Managing Director of APM Terminals Mobile. The container terminal has enjoyed tremendous annual growth and is rapidly expanding. Please join us to hear how the container terminal's rising tide will lift all boats. See you there!

Pete Riehm, SWMCC President

Chamber Mission

Our Chamber's mission is to foster, promote, advance, and improve the civic, commercial and general business interests of the surrounding areas and to cooperate with other communities promoting objectives for the improvement of our business and the welfare of our community.

2019 Officers

President
Pete Riehm
NAI Mobile

1st Vice President
Tiffany Ginn
Uniti Fiber

2nd Vice President
Chris Black
Integrity IT Services

Secretary
Cadie Gaut
Payroll Vault

Treasurer
Bryan Dewberry
Midtown Mortgage

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Jeff Brinson - Southwestern Consulting
Stephanie Chestnut - **Dick Russell's BBQ**
Laura Hittson - W. C. Griggs Elementary
Russanne Howell - Farmers Insurance
Cindy Imsand - **Mobile's Best Storage**
Tammy Lyons - Family Security Credit Union
Delores McLaney - McLaney Senior Dance
Wes Pipes - Individual
Curtis Polk - BLP Mobile Paints
Joe Summersgill - Mobile Co. Water, Sewer & FPA
Teresa Taylor - AIM Mail Center
Della Wade - Individual

Advisory Board

Theresa Orrell (Past President)
Polysurveying of Mobile
Kay Peace (Past President)
Individual
Ruth Robinson (Past President)
Mobile Memorial Gardens Cemetery

Community Center Staff

Executive Director
Tina Poiroux
tpoiroux@swmccchamber.com

Rental Specialist
Ashley Rester
arester@swmccchamber.com

Event Specialist
Susan Williams
Glennan Palframan

Maintenance
George Davis

Office number: 251.666.2488

OCTOBER CALENDAR

2 SWMCC Business Luncheon

When: Oct 2nd Networking begins at 11:30am.
Lunch Meeting 12:00-1:00pm
Guest Speaker: Wendy Robertson - Alabama Port Authority
Where: **Tillman's Corner Community Center**
Contact: Chamber Office 251-666-2488
Cost: \$12 for Members and \$15 for Potential Members
Sponsor:



12 Market at the Corner

When: Oct 12th 10:00am - 3:00pm
Where: **Tillman's Corner Community Center**
Contact: 251-666-2488
Cost: \$5.00 donation for T.A.L.L.

15 Coffee with the Chamber

When: Oct 15th 7:30am
Where: **Tillman's Corner Community Center**
Contact: 251-666-2488
Cost: Free to attend
Sponsor:



Flu and Shingles Shots provided by Walgreens

24 Chamber Networking Social - Alabama Credit Union

When: Oct 24th 4:30-6:30pm
Where: 7790 Cottage Hill Road | Mobile, AL
Free to attend - RSVP to info@swmccchamber.com



Mobile County Voting System Public Demonstration

October 7th & 8th

9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Tillman's Corner Community Center
5055 Carol Plantation Road
Mobile, AL 36619

For more information contact:
Mobile County Probate Court Elections Division
251-574-6080

Jeanine Wilson, SPHR, SHRM-SCP
Managing Director/Consultant



J.W. Enterprises HR, LLC
www.jwenterpriseshr.com
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jeanine.wilson@jwenterpriseshr.com
(251) 333-8120
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Your HR Dept on Demand

CHAMBER DIPLOMAT



Amy Rainwaters is a Board Certified Health and Wellness Coach. She studied Psychology in college then later earned her master's degree in organizational leadership. After 20 years of working in a fast-paced technology job, she decided to return to her first love of coaching. She believes in an integrative, individual

approach to health, and she loves helping others figure out how to make simple changes that will help them feel happier and healthier! She has helped people get in better shape, lose weight, change jobs, prioritize the one-thousand items on a to-do list, find time to exercise, complete home-improvement projects, and more!

In her personal time, she enjoys taking long walks on the beach at Dauphin Island, solving word puzzles, and sometimes even mindlessly watching Netflix. She and her boyfriend like to travel internationally and especially like the food in southern Italy and the hiking in Crete. She has two grown daughters, and a lazy, spoiled dog named Alex.



Michael Hayes
President

p: 251-776-2362
e: michael@myproshieldpest.com
w: www.myproshieldpest.com

SouthWest Mobile County Chamber of Commerce

MONTHLY BUSINESS LUNCHEON

October 2, 2019

Networking 11:30 am / Meeting 12:00-1:00 pm

Wendy Robertson-General Manager of Operations at APM Terminals Mobile



Wendy Robertson is General Manager of Operations at APM Terminals Mobile. Wendy has worked with APM Terminals in the port of Mobile since 2008. Her responsibilities include overall management of the day to day operations of the container terminal, labor relations and strategic development of the facility. Wendy has 27 years of experience in the maritime industry. Her industry experience includes Vessel, Truck and Rail Operations, Customer Service, Information Technology, contract negotiations and management, Union labor relations, as well as Sale and Business Development.

She has worked for a number of industry leading companies including Inchcape Shipping Services, Marine Terminals Corporation, Orient Overseas Container Line, A. P. Moller Maersk and presently with APM Terminals. During her career Wendy has worked in the ports of, Long Beach CA., Los Angeles CA., Oakland CA., Seattle WA. , New York NY. and Mobile AL. Wendy was born and raised in Fairhope Alabama. She holds a Bachelors of Science degree in Accounting from the University of South Alabama.

Caterer:



2961 Dauphin Island Pkwy
Mobile, AL 36605
251-473-3900

Luncheon Sponsor:



1000 Hillcrest Rd #340-B
Mobile, AL 36695
251-265-1230

Menu:

Beef Stroganoff with
Egg Noodles
Veggie Medley
Garden Salad
Rolls
Chocolate Brownie Trifle
Sweet & Unsweet Tea

Please RSVP to 251.666.2488 or info@swmcchamber.com

\$12 for Members & \$15 for Potential Members



Market at the Corner

October 12th 2019

10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Furniture & Home Decor | Clothing & Accessories

One of a Kind Items | Food Trucks | \$5 Admission



Tillman's Corner Community Center

5055 Carol Plantation Road | Mobile, AL 36619

251.666.2488 or info@swmccchamber.com



Vendors Wanted!

All proceeds go to SWMCC Leadership Program

ATTENTION SWMC CHAMBER MEMBERS



Alabama Chambers Benefit Program



The Alabama Chambers Benefit Program helps members reduce health benefit costs by providing a unique, specialized program tailored to small and mid-sized businesses that emphasizes wellness, cost saving education, and concierge-level service.

Program Eligibility:

- Each chamber must be a member of the Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama and businesses must be a member of a local chamber
- Employees must be working full-time (at least 30 hours a week)
- Company must have two or more employees to apply
- Independent contractors are not eligible

Program Features:

- Customer service team dedicated to delivering an exceptional experience
- Stable health benefit costs
- Access to Smart Health 360 which equips members to live healthy
- 24/7 access to a Doctor through Teladoc with a \$0 copay
- Utilizes the BlueCross BlueShield of Alabama Network

Benefits to Chambers

- Enhanced member satisfaction and retention
- Attractive healthcare program to offer as a member benefit

Benefits to Members

- Easy access to customer service and resources
- Lower and stable health benefit costs

Benefit Program administered by  IRON REHEALTH
an Aetna company

 334-245-1099

 ccaabenefits.com

COMMUNITY NEWS

Mobile County Plans \$2.26 Million Upgrades to Park in Grand Bay



Odd Fellows Festival Park in Grand Bay is getting a new look. The Mobile County Commission recently approved \$1.9 million in upgrades and refurbishments to the park. Before work begins, Mobile County Commissioner Jerry Carl, along with community leaders from Grand Bay, broke ground on Friday, September 13th. The park is located at 10327 Taylor F. Harper Blvd. (site of the Grand Bay Watermelon Festival)

Improvements to the park will include:

- ADA Enhancements
- New Turfed Sports Field
- Graded/Stone Surface Parking Areas
- Irrigation System for New & Existing Sports Fields
- New Aluminum Bleaches
- Fencing Improvements
- NEW Field Lighting for Existing Fields
- NEW Concession/Restroom Building
- NEW Metal Utility Building

Funds for the project will be allocated from Mobile County Commission District 3. The project is expected to be completed by June 2020.

BUSINESS INSIGHT



One of the things we highly recommend for all of our clients is that they have a blog, news, or articles section on their website. For the purposes of this article I'll refer to this type of content as a blog. We suggest our clients have a blog for a couple of reasons.

First, let's discuss the types of content that businesses can publish so you can keep this in mind while we discuss the benefits of having one. We regularly publish how-to articles, press releases, new employee hires, fun cultural facts, industry news, information about new products or services, and research articles to name just a few. So keep this in mind as we move forward. All of the articles that you publish should have the goal of showcasing you as the expert in your field. That, to the reader, choosing to work with anyone else would be uncivilized because you are the only choice.

A couple of the things Google looks for when determining how to rank you, are Title Tags, appropriate Keywords, and Keyword Density. A blog gives you a place to put updates about the business that also increases the number of title tags you have and the keywords and their density. This is a bucket that you can continue to fill with information that pushes your ranking higher and higher.

We normally suggest writing at least a blog post or two per month. Google also tends to look at the frequency of updates to a website and the more often you can publish new content the better off you are going to be.

A place to publish content that you can link to from Social Media is also very important. You should be looking for ways to drive traffic to your website on a regular basis and blog posts that show you as the expert in your field are the perfect way to do that. When people visit a website they have a tendency to click around a bit. So driving traffic to your website through blog posts also increases the chance that they will see something else that entices them and makes them want to work with you.

If you keep using the excuse that you don't have time to regularly update a blog, then chances are pretty good you are not a writer. And that is ok. Know that there are other options, including hiring an agency, to write those articles for you. Need help? Call me.



FOOD DRIVE



We are sponsoring a "Show your Colors" food drive. So pick a team, donate a canned good and see who really has the best fans. Either way this is a win for the community!

Please turn in all food items by November 12th.

We are looking for businesses to also get involved and take photos of your food collections at your office and post these pictures on social media ([#SouthWestMobileCountyChamber](https://www.instagram.com/SouthWestMobileCountyChamber)). These photos will be reviewed and a winner will be chosen at the end of November and we will be recognizing the business that collects the most food.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR
**BUILDING CAREERS:
INTERNS TO EMPLOYEES**

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2019

8:30 AM

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
FACULTY CLUB
6348 FINCHER RD
MOBILE, AL 36688

PRESENTED BY:
THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
MITCHELL COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND
SOUTHWEST MOBILE COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



PLEASE RSVP TO
TINA POIROUX
251-666-2488

SWMC Chamber Christmas Parade Saturday, December 7th

Parade Applications are available at the Chamber Office and our website: www.SWMCChamber.com. For more information contact the Chamber Office 251-666-2488 or info@swmcchamber.com



Over 40 years the Chamber has sponsored a family friendly community parade with local businesses, churches, schools, organizations and individuals that participate. The parade is held each year the first Saturday in December.



Join us for Coffee with the Chamber

Tuesday, October 15th
7:30 a.m.

Sponsored by: Integrity IT Services



Drop by the Chamber on your way to work for coffee and networking. Don't forget your business cards. FREE to attend.

FREE flu & shingles shots
no cost to you

* with most insurance

Available at Coffee with the Chamber



WREATHS FOR CHARITY

This is the 6th annual Wreaths for Charity event sponsored by the SouthWest Mobile County Chamber of Commerce along with local businesses. The wreaths will be made by area schools, churches, civic organizations, businesses and individuals. They are sold to raise money for families in need.

We want to invite you to participate in this event. It is your participation that enables us to raise the funds necessary for our community programs.

Each wreath will be showcased at our December business luncheon and the breakfast with Santa, during which they will be offered for sale. There are no established size guidelines for the wreaths. All wreaths and door hangers must be artificial and suitable for hanging on a front door or inside a home or business. There will be a committee judging each wreath and the winner will be awarded a prize. The winner is chosen by creativity and keeping with the Christmas Theme.

Thank you for your friendship and support to the SouthWest Mobile County Chamber of Commerce. Together we can make our community a better place. If you are interested in making a wreath to donate to our Wreaths for Charity contact the Chamber Officer at 251-666-2488 or info@swmccchamber.com. The forms can also be found on our website www.SWMCChamber.com.



REAL ESTATE CORNER BY RON SIVAK

Local father and son entrepreneurs, **Jim Busby** and **Jimmy Busby**, the original founders of West Mobile-based **Centralite Systems**, announced in a press release the formation of a new start-up company to service, support and upgrade Centralite legacy products.

The new venture is called **Dragon Technologies Inc.**

With a history of spawning start-ups spanning decades, Busby Sr. is perhaps best known for founding another well-known West Mobile business, printer company **Quality Micro Systems (QMS)** in 1977. It became the Port City's first (and only) publicly traded firm, eventually carving out a niche on the **NASDAQ**.

Established in 1997, the Centralite brand and trademark most recently changed hands this past July when acquired by **Clifton, New Jersey-based eZLO Innovations**. The company provides smart solutions to homes and businesses across such industries as wellness, insurance and property management.

"We experienced a hostile takeover," Busby Sr. said. "The company acquired a majority shareholder, a **North Carolina-based cable company**, in December 2016. To that point, we had grown sales to \$35 million a year in both 2015 and 2016 and were slightly profitable."

"We were summarily removed from office the day after the takeover. Sales dropped from \$35 million to \$7 million in 2017 and lost \$5 million. Sales dropped further in 2018 to \$4 million and lost \$2 million more, whereupon they declared Chapter 7 liquidation bankruptcy in February 2019," he said.

He went on to say that Dragon Technologies bought the portion of assets they wanted and negotiated the rights to move back into their former Centralite headquarters located at **1704 Industrial Park Drive**. In the deal, existing finished goods inventory, raw materials in stock and production machines were picked up.

Jennifer Boozer, owner of **CannaBama: The CBD Store** found in downtown Mobile, has announced a second site opening in West Mobile and located at **2090 Schillinger Road, Suite K**. The space covers **1,740 square feet** with **500 square feet** to be set up as an internet café. **Colby Herrington** with **Herrington Realty** managed the transaction.

Lewis H. Golden of Hamilton & Company reported that an out-of-state investor has purchased **16 acres** of industrial property for **\$1.5 million** located at **4077 Hamilton Blvd.** in **Theodore**. The site is currently occupied by **Willscot**, a modular office space company. **John Peebles** and **Allan Cameron** with **NAI Mobile** represented the seller.

Malbis Plantation Inc. recently acquired an **11,000-square-foot** parcel of property located at **6001 Airport Blvd.** in West Mobile from a local healthcare company. **Jill Meeks** with **Stirling Properties** worked for the landlord in the lease of the property to **Infirmary Home Health Agency Inc.**

Newly opened **Your CBD Store of West Mobile** recently leased roughly **1,200 square feet** of retail space located at **1218 Hillcrest Road, Suite F.** near the intersection of Grelot Road. The start-up shop is locally owned by **Joe Brown**.

COASTAL 150 UPDATE

After a moratorium on new oil exploration was lifted in 2006, the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) was passed to prevent overharvesting and create the revenue-sharing program that has generated millions of dollars for coastal communities every year and is expected to keep growing. Under GOMESA, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas receive a share of revenue from oil and gas drilling in federal waters that help address coastal restoration, hurricane protection and watershed management programs in coastal Alabama.

There is legislation moving in Congress that would allocate OCS revenues to federal programs without increasing the amount of GOMESA revenues to be shared with Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi and Alabama. It is important to remember that qualifying OCS Revenues are distributed 50% to Treasury, 37.5% to gulf producing states and Coastal Political Subdivisions and 12.5% to Land and Water Conservation fund.

HR 3195, The Land and Water Conservation Fund Permanent Funding Act (LWCF), was reported to full house by the House Natural Resources Committee. The companion legislation is pending in Senate Energy and Natural Resources committee. This legislation would provide mandatory funding of \$900M Annually from OCS revenues for national and state parks and recreation opportunities under the land and water conservation fund. (By comparison, GOMESA revenue sharing with the four gulf coasts states is capped at \$375 M Annually)

CAP supports legislation amending GOMESA to increase the percentage of federal oil and gas revenues made available to Coastal Alabama and other Gulf States. CAP opposes any distribution of OCS revenues to federal programs unless the share of OCS revenues for GOMESA states is increased substantially.

Given this movement, 2 pieces of Legislation were introduced this summer. S 2414, the COASTAL ACT, this legislation increases the revenue share to GOMESA states from 37.5% to 50%, and removes the \$375M Cap. It also provides for a new authorized use of GOMESA revenues "Planning, Engineering, Design and Constriction, operations and maintenance of one or more projects that are specifically authorized by any other Act for Ecosystem restoration, hurricane protection or flood damage prevention and establishes a Revenue for Alaska.

Supporters of the LWCF and national parks bills are advocating that Congress pass their two bills now and deal with GOMESA at a later date. Of course, if this were to happen, Congress would quickly forget about increasing revenue for the four states. GOMESA revenues are an important stream of funding for coastal communities most imperiled by nearshore oil production and our funding should be protected and increased.



OUTSTANDING OFFICER OF THE MONTH



Congratulations, **Adam Hudson** on receiving the September award for outstanding officer of the month with Mobile Police Department Precinct 2. Hudson was presented with the award at the SouthWest Mobile County Chamber's monthly business luncheon on September 4, 2019. Officer Hudson's hard work is greatly appreciated. His dedication and exemplary contribution is gratefully acknowledged.

STAR STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



Eric Perez from W. C. Griggs Elementary
Sponsored by: **Mobile Memorial Gardens Cemetery**

Mahaylee Ladnier from Meadowlake Elementary
Sponsored by: **Elaine Sessions**

Tristan Pierce from Pearl Haskew Elementary
Sponsored by: **Payroll Vault**

Soffie Weaver from Lighthouse Baptist Academy
Sponsored by: **AIM Mail Center #153**

Drake Mallard from St. Vincent De Paul Catholic School
Sponsored by: **PolySurveying of Mobile**

Lindley Sandefur from Cottage Hill Christian Academy
Sponsored by: **Dick Russell's Inc.**

Kinley Davis from Nan Gray Davis Elementary
Sponsored by: **BLP Mobile Paint**

New Members:

Sgt. Foster L. Harrington
Detachment #1449 Marine Corp
312 Schillinger Road #322
Mobile, AL 36608

Thompson Wealth
Management & Life Planning
4333 Boulevard Park N
Mobile, AL 36609

Pilot Catastrophe
1055 Hillcrest Road
Mobile, AL 36695

Mobile Airport Authority
1891 Ninth Street
Mobile, AL 36615

Ash Tree Studios
5550 Racine Ave
Mobile, AL 36618



Business of the Month:
UpSpyre

Who is training your next crop of leaders?

Who is speaking at your next event?

Who is helping you reach your potential?

Who is Your coach?

THAT'S WHAT WE DO!

UPSPYRE.com

Business: 251-263-4410 Cell: 618-954-8330
upsyre@gmail.com

Let's start a conversation

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MOBILE COUNTY
CHAMBER of COMMERCE

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ZIPPY MART
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