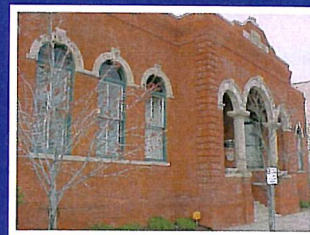


Communique

Communication: The Key to Successful Business



FEBRUARY 2010

Bessemer

Area Chamber of Commerce

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 02/03 Meet & Greet**
Tom McDougal
4:30-6:30 pm @
Medical West
- 02/05 88th Annual
Banquet @**
Bessemer Civic Center
**Call the Chamber
TODAY** to reserve a
ticket.
- 02/12 & 02/13**
**Annual Board &
Ambassador
Retreat @ Heritage
Trails**
- 02/12 Board of
Directors Mtg.**
(to be held at retreat)
- 02/14 Valentine's Day –**
Remember those
you love!
- 02/24 Membership
Meeting to Honor
First Responders**
Noon at Lawson
State-Bessemer
*Call to reserve a
seat – see flyer*
- 02/26 Concerned
Citizens Banquet**
BCC @ 7pm
- 03/01 City Wide
Prayer Breakfast**
@ Chamber 7:30 am
- 03/02 Ambassador
Meeting @ 8:15 am**
at Chamber

Entrepreneurs and their small enterprises are responsible for almost all the economic growth in the United States.

Ronald Reagan

Chamber Annual Banquet February 5th

Make your plans now to attend your Bessemer Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet to be held Friday evening February 5th at the Bessemer Civic Center beginning with Happy Hour at 6:00 pm. Highlighting this year's program will be sports promoter and events planner Gene Hallman. There will be live music, a buffet dinner and the usual awards including the 2009 Charles A. Long, Sr. Award. It will be a great evening as you just sit back and enjoy being with your friends and peers.

City of Bessemer Christmas Parade

Over 120 entries dotted the downtown streets of Bessemer on December 12th as one of our largest Christmas parades moved its way through the City center. Bands from McAdory High School and Jess Lanier High School, were joined by floats, horses, antique cars, cheerleaders, dancers, and walkers to make this one of the best ever parades. The rain held off to allow our citizens the chance to applaud the parade participants. US Army, Navy and Marines were also a part as the patriotism of our citizens shined forth.

This year's Grand Marshal were the men and women of our armed forces riding in the back of a Premiere Chevrolet Avalanche. Santa was also present and driven by our Bessemer Fire Department. A special thanks to JefCo Commissioner Shelia Smoot who was a sponsor of the Christmas parade as she is every year. The parade was escorted by our Bessemer Police Department and they did their usual outstanding and professional job.

Chamber Christmas Open House

Since we did not have a newsletter in January the following pictures are presented from the annual Christmas Open House.



David Darby, Anthony Underwood and Jon Staggs enjoy open house festivities.



Ambassador Coordinator Diane Sparks and Board member Sunny Lippert welcome David Hobby.



The Chamber staff welcomes all to Open House, l-r: LaTasha Cook, Mary Milan, Jean Brown and Ronnie Acker.



Jon Staggs, Eric Raymond, Minnie Roper, Steve Self, LeeAnn Best, Regina Doriety, and Leigh Dewitt having fun.

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Chamber News Pg 3,4
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It's Your Business

By: Ronnie Acker, President

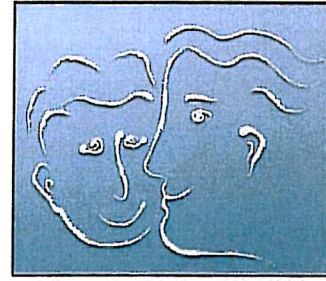
It is always certain that what you sow that will be what you reap. Just as the farmer sows corn but has to fight weeds before he reaps his harvest so does the business man or woman have to "weed" their business as it grows and expands. If you sow bad customer service, less than the best products, and/or bad financial management, then you reap the rewards which are not pretty. And those items can creep into the best business just as weeds infest the garden. You as the owner/manager have to "weed" your business continually.

You must watch for employees or even yourself developing bad customer service habits. Customers are not always right but they perceive that they are most of the time. Your job is to make them happy with your product. Customer service is a term that has been taught to me as making the disgruntled customer happy without selling my company down the river. This is sometimes hard, sometimes almost impossible but always rewarding. In rare instances you may not be able to do what the customer perceives as right but you can always make sure the customer knows you have done all that your business can to reach his perception of right. Having an attitude of customer first and a happy disposition to be of service goes a long way toward helping the customer accept your solution as theirs. Always weed out anyone or anything in your business that does not work to make your customers feel good about your company.

Next, you need to use your product. Test it yourself. If you sell a certain brand then do not use another. Your customers notice what you use. This is true in the car you drive, the clothes you wear, and the food you eat. Whatever you sell or make you better make sure you use it. A quick way to lose a customer is to sell them your product and they find you use your competitor's product. This should be encouraged with your employees. Yes, it is a free country and employees just work for you but if they make a living selling your product then why in the world would they want to use a competitor's. This should be a vetting as well as a weeding process.

Finally, if you do not sow sound financial management principles in your business you will reap insolvency, you will fold. Logically you would want the best, most transparent, and most ethical financial principles guiding your business. If your business revenues cover the cost of doing business and you plan to apply them to the growth of the business but are reluctant to have your books audited then that should raise a red flag. Auditors are your friend, they will keep you and your business as well as your employees protected and progressive. Auditors help you identify the problem areas and help you find the best way to guide your business. Do not be afraid of auditors or your certified public accountant. Use them to make your business better.

So as you can tell a business that sows ethical and customer oriented principles will flourish while those that do not will reap their reward. Be a business that maintains the highest degree of principles and then you will have a business that is seen by its customers as the preferred place to do business.



MCCALLA ORTHODONTICS & PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

Olga Sanchez-Hernandez, D.M.D., M.S., M.S.

205-477-8004

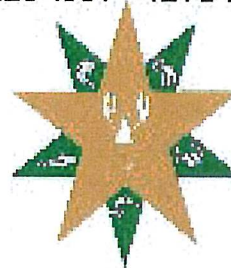
Call the Chamber @ 425-3253 Today to Reserve Advertising Space

\$40 per month in 2010

Actual ad size equals 4 in. x 4 in.

The Bright Star
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*"The food is excellent and it's right forward.
The restaurant has an amazing history and remained
true to it's traditions through generations."
The Birmingham News - December 2007*

Welcome Tom McDougal to Medical West

Come help us give a big business welcome to Tom McDougal, new CEO at Medical West. Tom has a varied background in healthcare and provides a positive and energetic personality to lead our area's largest employer. Please join the Chamber and the staff at Medical West at a "Meet and Greet" on February 3rd in the Civic Room of the hospital. This will be an opportunity to meet Tom and to make him feel a part of our business community. For information contact Haley Montgomery at 481-7272.

Make Saving Part Of Your New Year's Resolution

Recent debates about Social Security and the increasing number of employers reducing or eliminating employee pensions have underscored the need for a sound retirement plan. Gone are the days when employees were guaranteed a percentage of their salaries once they leave a company. While Social Security may or may not change, it was never intended to be the sole source of retirement income.

Retirement planning is something everyone needs regardless of their existing situations. If the current financial debates tell us anything it's this: the only funding you can count on is that which you do yourself.

Some of the options you have are individual retirement accounts (IRAs) or an employer-sponsored plan such as a 401(k). Contributions you make to a 401(k) can reduce your federal income tax burden and the contribution limits are higher than those of an IRA. Plans are available for any size business, be it a large corporation or a small mom and pop operation.


Contributions to Traditional IRAs may be income-tax deductible. While Roth IRA contributions are not deductible, qualified distributions are received free from federal income taxes. An IRA is something you can set up with the help of a financial professional. There are a number of options available when choosing how you want to fund your IRA.

No one can be sure what the future holds in store. Making preparations for a number of possibilities can begin with careful planning. You can start by contacting a financial professional to discuss your goals and how to reach them.


Written by Julie Bell, Chamber Board member and State Farm Agent Bessemer, AL

POSCO-AAPC Breaks Ground at JEFMET Industrial Park

Mr. Ki-ho Han, President of POSCO-AAPC, will be the primary contact at the new coiled steel plant in McCalla. Mr. Han welcomed a great crowd of local business and civic leaders to the official ground breaking including Jefferson County Commissioner Bobby Humphries and newly elected Birmingham Mayor William Bell. Tim Thornton, Chairman of the Jefferson County Economic and Industrial Development Authority, and several JCEIDA board members were also present. Your Chamber was there and also made the Korean based company POSCO feel at home. The facility is scheduled to open in July 2010 and will employ 60 which will be all new jobs for the area. POSCO Senior Vice President Mr. In-hwan Oh addressed the reasons for POSCO coming to Alabama with its first United States plant. Thanks for the recruitment of this outstanding company to our state and county goes to JCEIDA and the Birmingham Business Alliance. Please join the Bessemer Area Chamber in welcoming our newest business community member, POSCO-AAPC.




COMMITTED TO BESSEMER.
COMMITTED TO YOU.




David C. Darby
Area President and
Commercial Lender

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Chamber News

Ralph Stacey Named Sr. VP of Business Council of Alabama

The first Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama, Ralph Stacey, has taken a position with the BCA as Sr. VP of Communications and Partnership Coordinator. That means Ralph will still have ties to the Chamber organization but this is a great opportunity for him and the Bessemer Chamber wishes him well. Future opportunities with the CCAA will be announced as they occur.

Strategic Planning Meeting

Almost all of the Chamber's board members and Ambassadors will meet on February 12-13 for a planning session making specific goals for 2010. Led by new Chairman David Darby the session will include a review of 2009 budgets and programs. Then the planning will begin as all attendees will divide into their 2010 committees.

Why Do You Volunteer?

"I volunteer because I believe in the organizations mission to help."

"I volunteer to be available with a friendly ear and hand to help.....It feels great to be able to give back, especially to a child, in some small way."

"Volunteering helps me to keep life in perspective and to appreciate those in my life more. It is a reminder that life is too short."

"I wanted to volunteer because I wanted to give something back to my community. But what I have found is that I am receiving so much more than I am giving."

"It's so fulfilling to be a volunteer."

A **volunteer** is someone who serves in a community primarily because they choose to do so. Many serve through a non-profit organization – sometimes referred to as formal volunteering, but a significant number also serve less formally, either individually or as part of a group. Because these informal volunteers are much harder to identify, they may not be included in research and statistics on volunteering.

Beyond personal choice, a number of factors exist around individual motivation and around the rewards for doing service within the community. There is in most cases a range of opinions about the point at which this service changes from volunteering to something else.

Altruism – volunteering for the benefit of others.

Quality of life — serving community because doing service makes ones own life Included here would be the benefits people get from being with other people, staying active, and above all having a sense of the value of ourselves in society that may not be as clear in other areas of life.

Giving Back — many people have in some way benefited from the work of an organization, or more generally, and volunteer to give back.

A sense of duty — some see participation in community as a responsibility that comes with citizenship – in this case they may not describe themselves as volunteers

Religious Conviction — Many faiths hold that service to others or the community is a spiritual duty or a means of reaching higher spiritual states.

Financial — Being motivated by finances is not generally included within the definition of volunteering. Some organizations are able to pay the expenses of a volunteer, others provide what is essentially a stipend or honorarium.

Career Experience — Volunteering offers experiences that can add to career prospects and many employers value volunteering experience.

Social Reasons — Volunteering is a good way to meet a lot of different people from other walks of life and it is often easy to make new friends.

NEW MEMBERS

{December & January}

Bath Fitter

Eva Patterson
434 Industrial Lane Ste. G, B'ham, AL 35211
Phone: 205-876-1760, Fax: 205-876-1799
Email: epatterson@bathfitter.com
Business Category: Bath Remodeling
Website: www.bathfitter.com

D. A. Jeff. Cnty AL Bessemer Div.

Lynneice O. Washington
701 Courthouse Annex, Bessemer, AL 35020
Phone: 205-901-6452, Fax: 205-481-4157
Email: washingtonlynneice@yahoo.com
Business Category: Government - District Atty.

DeMotte Heating & Cooling

Nancy DeMotte, Boyce N. DeMotte
1138 Lake Drive, SE, Bessemer, AL 35022
Phone: 205-585-0222, Fax: 205-267-5991
Email: desnd2@bellsouth.net
Business Category: Heating & Air
Website: www.bign.com/bdemotte

Express Medical Transporters

Gale Hughes, David Blake
1715 Pleasant Grove Road, Ste A,
Dolomite, AL 35061
Phone: 205-225-4332 (Hughes)
Phone: 727-423-5106 (Blake)
Fax: 205-443-3829
Email:

ghughes@projectpeoplemovers.com,
dblake@projectpeoplemovers.com
Business Category:
Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

Medi Weight Loss Clinic

Reid Christopher, MD
Rick Stephens, MD, Lisa Christopher
1088 Ninth Avenue, SW, Ste 106
Bessemer, AL 35022
Phone: 205-425-6876
Fax: 205-425-6878
Business Category: Weight Loss Clinic
Website: www.mediweightlossclinics.com

South Pointe Partners

Timothy R. Leary
1000 South Pointe Dr. Ste 1507
Miami Beach, FL 33139
Phone: 305-773-7196
Email: Tleary@southpointepartners.com
Business Category: Real Estate

2010 Board of Directors

Chairman

David Darby, BankTrust

Past Chairman

Dr. Deborah Horn, Miles College

Chairman Elect

Keith Pennington, Medical West

Treasurer / Finance Chairman

Lynn Joyce, First Financial Bank

Dr. Cynthia Anthony, Lawson State

Julie Bell, State Farm Insurance

Dr. Jeremy Burns, Eagle Vision

Jim Byram, Development Solutions

Doug Caddell, Canaan Baptist Church

Gene Cochran, Liberty National Life Ins.

Randy Donaldson, Alabama Gas Co.

Don Holmes, Holmes Oil

Tom Nicholson, US Pipe & Foundry Co.

Billy Parsons, CPA

Erik Raymond, Rural Metro Ambulance

Allen Rice, ITT Technical Institute

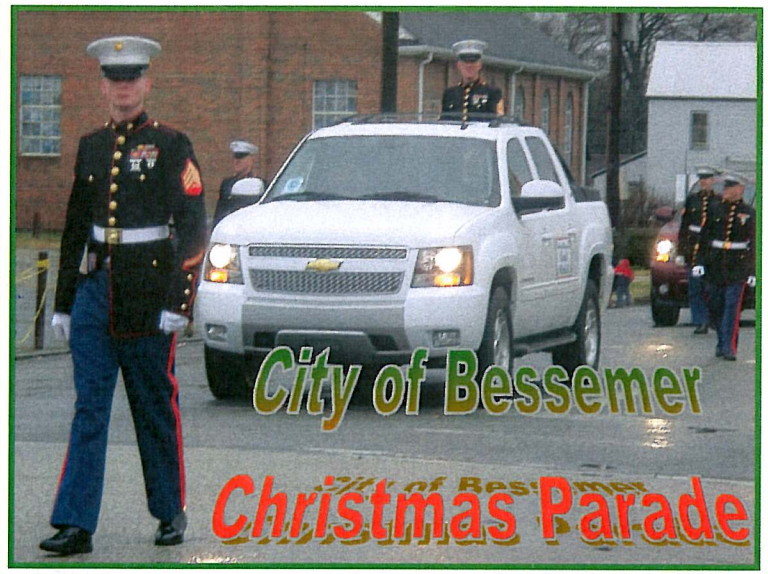
Pam Segars-Morris, Sebro Realty

Steve Self, Buffalo Rock Company

Van Sykes, Bob Sykes BBQ

Devron Veasley, Bessemer Business Incubation System

Eddie Vines, District Judge





ABOVE - Members of the Bessemer Board of Education prepare for the ribbon cutting at the new Bessemer City High School on Sunday, Jan. 3rd.



LEFT - Kenneth Gulley (Chamber Ambassador) and Ronnie Acker.

The Chamber Ambassadors and Staff Wish to Thank You for Supporting The Ora H. Foster Community Service Scholarship Fundraiser in December and Making it Successful!



Your Chamber Ambassadors are Excited to Serve in 2010!



BESSEMER AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMBERSHIP MEETING



Firefighter of the Year
Lt. Michael Brannon



Law Enforcement Officer of the Year
Officer Christian Clemons
{2008 Recipients}



Sheriff's Deputy of the Year
Deputy Nathan Nichols

You are Invited to Join Us as We Recognize

2009'S

***Deputy Sheriff of the Year, Law Enforcement Officer of the Year &
Firefighter of the Year***

on

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2010 @ NOON

LAWSON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Bessemer Campus - Ethel Hall Auditorium



SPEAKER:

Arthur Green
District Attorney
Jefferson Co., AL
Bessemer Division



MEET AND NETWORK WITH OTHER CHAMBER MEMBERS

Reservations Required

**** Call 425-3253 no later than Friday, February 19th to RSVP ****

The cost is \$12 each or purchase a table of 6 for \$70 (includes lunch)



Valentines Special
1 hour Hot stone massage
and a 30 minute
Rose Facial
\$100 (valued at \$185)
gift certificates available
Call Gayle Seabrooke
to make an appointment
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Morgan Chiropractic

