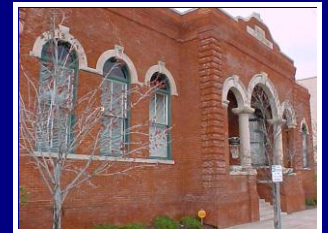


Communique

Communication: The Key to Successful Business



APRIL 2011

Some men see things as they are and say, 'Why'? I dream of things that never were and say, 'Why not'?
Robert Kennedy

Bessemer
Area Chamber of Commerce

UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL / MAY

04/18 - 04/23

**Pride Week in
Bessemer**

04/26 **Board of Director's
Mtg. @ Noon @
Chamber - Executive
Comm. 11:30 am**

05/03 **Ambassador
Meeting @ 8:15 am**

05/04 **Prayer Breakfast
Chamber at 7:30 am**

05/05 **National Day of
Prayer Program
Details TBD**

It Was An Honor to Recognize Our First Responders

Jefferson County District Attorney Brandon Falls was the keynote speaker at the annual First Responders Luncheon held on March 3rd at Lawson State Bessemer Campus. The DA addressed the skill and sacrifice each of our first responders exercise in their chosen profession whether it be as a law enforcement officer or fire fighter. It was a great meeting. Bob Sykes BBQ provided the meal and our Ambassadors welcomed all.

This year's recipients were: Fire Fighter of the Year-Todd Eddy, Law Enforcement Officer of the Year-Roy Harris, and Sheriff's Deputy of the Year-Brad Dickey. Recognizing the recipients were Bessemer Fire Chief Paul Syx, Bessemer Police Chief Nathaniel Rutledge, and Bessemer Cutoff Sheriff's Department Major Paul Logan. Mayor Kenneth Gulley also presented a special recognition to each officer with a sincere thank you from the citizens not only in Bessemer but all of western Jefferson County. DA Falls assisted the presenters in there outstanding presentations.

Expressing thanks from the Bessemer Business Community was Chamber President Ronnie Acker mentioning the great sacrifice of the officers in protecting and defending each of us. He also said,

"The Bessemer Business community wants to recognize the great sacrifice of these brave men and women's families. They have concern each time their loved one goes to work. We sincerely appreciate and thank you for your loved one's courage and professionalism."

The Bessemer Chamber encourages our membership and citizens to thank our first responders at every opportunity. Also, always remember our brave men and women in our Armed Forces. We are blessed as a nation to have such dedicated and valiant neighbors defending us.

Greg Waters Out Selling the *Southwest Jefferson County Area Today Magazine*

The Chamber in partnership with Tim Young and Alliance Publishing will kicked off the ad sales for the 2011 magazine in late January with a May 15th target date for printing. Greg Waters will be visiting businesses in the Bessemer and Hueytown area to give you the opportunity to place an ad in this year's publication. New this year will be a Hueytown section highlighting the City and businesses in the Hueytown area. There also will be an attorney/legal section, a physician/medical section, and a religion section. Alliance does a professional and high quality publication with outstanding photography and articles. Distribution will include area hotels, health care providers, advertisers, real estate offices, schools, library and Chamber members. Each of you will be contacted by Greg Waters from Alliance in February and March, he will have a letter of introduction from the Chamber and we will email you his name and the rate sheet. Be preparing now to take part in a most professional promotion tool for our region, be a part of your community publication. Contact Ronnie Acker at 425-3253 or Greg Waters at 218-6900 or email Greg at ads@alliancegrp.net.



Firefighter of the Year
Todd Eddy with Mayor Gulley
and Chief Syx



Law Enforcement Officer of the Year
Sgt. Roy Harris with Mayor Gulley and
Chief Rutledge



Sheriff's Deputy of the Year
Deputy Brad Dickey with DA Brandon
Falls, and Major Logan

50 Years & Going Strong

Fifty years definitely holds a lot of history for our country and around the world. Fifty years ago John F. Kennedy succeeded Dwight Eisenhower as the 35th President of the United States of America. The Beatles performed for the first time at the Cavern Club. Princess Diana was born. The construction of the Berlin Wall began. Babe Ruth's 34-year-old record was finally broken. Also in 1961, Charlie Brown of Hueytown founded BROWN Heating & Cooling and thanks to you BROWN is now celebrating 50 years of service in the Birmingham area! During those 50 years, BROWN has contributed to the success of countless well known businesses in our community as well as serving residential customers.

BROWN began as a small residential service business, but in 1984 Johnny White purchased the business and grew it with honesty, integrity, and superior service. White used his background in design to create some of the most innovative heating and cooling systems for churches, schools, hospitals, car dealerships, civic centers, and many other businesses. Word spread that White had one of the best fabrication shops around which included a computerized plasma cutting machine. White doubled the square footage of his building and began doing custom stainless steel jobs for restaurants, replacing the brushed stainless with mirrored stainless in elevators, and did extensive work for Children's Hospital. White even did some custom work for George Barber at Barber Motorsports museum. One of the projects White is most proud to have been involved in was the renovation of The Cathedral of St. Paul in downtown Birmingham. The church was constructed just a few years after the Civil War. So, needless to say, they didn't want just anybody working on this historical landmark. The leadership of St. Paul's Cathedral called their Trane distributor for a recommendation. Trane said that there was only one person who was meticulous enough for this job, and that was Johnny White with BROWN Heating and Cooling. BROWN still enjoys a strong relationship with The Cathedral of St. Paul today.

When asked what has been the driving force behind his business, White references his faith and building the business according to Biblical principles. Through the years White always knew and instilled in his service technicians the value of a job done with excellence. Today BROWN Heating and Cooling continues to strive for excellence in serving its commercial and residential customers. White and all his staff extend their thanks for the opportunity to serve Birmingham for 50 years and look forward to many more years of service.

Alabama Technology Network Hosts Business Leaders

Chamber President Ronnie Acker joined with other business representatives to get an update on the ATN programs available and the progress on existing programs. Partnering with businesses and helping them become more efficient and productive is the primary goal of Dr. Michael Bailey and his staff at ATN. If you need assistance in your business to be better contact ATN.

House Passes HB 61-Victory for Small Businesses

By a vote of 83-6, the House passed HB 61, by Rep. April Weaver, R-Brierfield, which allows qualifying employers and employees to deduct from their state income tax an additional 50 percent of the amount spent on health insurance premiums. Qualifying employers are those with less than 25 employees, and the qualifying employees are those whose annual wages do not exceed \$50,000.

The bill would help the smallest, most vulnerable, yet essential employers provide health coverage to their employees. The measure is considered an incentive for job creation and a way to reduce the number of citizens who otherwise would be added to the State's Medicaid and CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Plan) rolls.

If enacted, this measure would increase the 150 percent deduction, achieved during the 2008 legislative session, up to a deduction of 200 percent of qualifying premium payments. HB 61 has been assigned to the Senate Job Creation and Economic Development Committee, while its companion bill, SB 159, by Sen. Greg Reed, R-Jasper, received a favorable report from the Senate Health Committee this week. This bill is a top-tier item on BCA's 2011 Legislative Agenda. [Taken from www.bcatoday.org]

BCA Hosts Legislative Reception in Montgomery

The Business Council of Alabama and the Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama hosted the annual Legislative Reception at the RSA building in Montgomery. The room was packed with business leaders from all over Alabama awaiting the arrival of the Representatives and Senators representing their respective Districts. Chamber President Ronnie Acker attended representing our area and was able to meet and greet with some outstanding business folks who care about small business legislation and community growth. It was indeed a worthwhile evening.

GRAND OPENING - Best Western Bessemer Hotel & Suites

You are invited to attend the grand opening of the new Best Western Plus under the enhanced descriptor program of Best Western. Best Western in Bessemer has gone through a complete renovation which includes new beds, bedding, new HD Flat screen televisions, microwaves, refrigerators and lots more. Please go by to see the rest of the amenities they have to offer. Please make plans to attend this event on April 21st with a ribbon cutting at 4:30 pm and a grand opening / open house from 4-6 pm. They will have complimentary beer, wine and refreshments.



Nuke's Hosts Business After Hours

Over 50 Chamber members attended the March 17th Business After Hours celebrating St. Patrick's Day. A pot of gold dollar coins (donated by Julie Bell your local State Farm agent) was given away to the lucky winner, Seth Holloway. Several others carried away door prizes provided by our great Corporate Sponsors. Mayor Kenneth Gulley joined the crowd along with Council members Jesse Matthews and Sarah Belcher. Your Chamber Ambassadors did another outstanding job hosting the evening and everyone had a great time. Nuke's was a nice venue for the event and their food was great. If you have the chance drop by Nuke's and enjoy their food.



THANK YOU
St. Patrick's Day
Business After Hours Host
Nuke's Sports Grille



Minister's Committee Meeting

Rev. Reginald Calvert welcomed a group of local ministers to the Chamber's conference room as they met in their quarterly Minister's Committee meeting on March 31st. Rev. Calvert represents the faith based community on the Chamber's Board of Directors as the Chamber strives to move the City forward partnering with all to make Bessemer a better place to live and do business. Lunch was provided and Chamber Vice President LaTasha Cook sat in representing the Chamber.

CHAMBER MEMBER & COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR:

- April 14th** Reception, Open House & Tour @ Highlands Skilled Nursing @ the Oaks on Parkwood [4-6:30 pm] 2625 Laurel Oak Drive, Bessemer – just off Hwy. 150, adjacent to Lake Cyrus. Questions? Call 497-4560 or email sjohnson@nolandhealth.com.
- April 16th & 17th** Trade Days @ Tannehill State Park (www.tannehill.org) 12632 Confederate Pkwy, McCalla. Questions? Call 205-477-5711.
- April 17th *** Grand Opening & Open House @ McCalla Memorial Funeral Home (2-5 pm) **Ribbon Cutting @ 1:50 pm**, 4780 Letson Farms Pkwy, McCalla
- April 18-23** Pride Week in Bessemer
- April 21st *** Ribbon Cutting / Re-Grand Opening / Open House at Best Western Plus (4-6 pm) 5041 Academy Ln, Bessemer (Exit 108 on I-20/59) Ribbon Cutting @ 4:30 pm. Please call the Chamber at 425-3253 if you plan to attend.
- April 21st *** Holy Week Service at The Foundry's Worship Center (1801 5th Ave. N., Bessemer) from 12-12:30 PM
Speaker: Rev. Bill Heintz. Call 425-3253 to reserve a \$5 Boxed Lunch (Available To Go) following the service.
- April 30th *** 2nd Annual Bob Sykes BBQ and Blues Festival [Noon – 11pm] Debardeleben Park (1623 Second Ave., N. Bessemer) \$20 in advance (purchase at Bob Sykes BBQ, Courtyard Café and Bakery or online at <http://bobsykesbbqandbluesfestival.eventbrite.com>) \$25 at the Park (Children 12 and under are free)
- April 30th *** 2nd Annual Day at the Depot – Open Car Show (Vintage 1979 and Earlier) [9 am – 3pm] (Bessemer Hall of History, 1905 Alabama Avenue, Bessemer) Free to the public. Come enjoy cars, music, door prizes, food and drink. Entry fee for cars in show. Trophies given to Top 10, chosen by popular vote. Call 426-1633 for more details.
- April 30th** Trout Tournament @ Tannehill State Park (www.tannehill.org) 12632 Confederate Pkwy, McCalla. Call 205-477-5711.
- ONGOING** The DeMeco Ryans Foundation Invites You to Hire DeMeco Ryans for the Day - Call 404-808-4231 or email director@demecoryansfoundation.org.

*Indicates Bessemer Chamber Member

Commissioner Stephens Speaks at Scout Banquet

Over 70 local Boy Scout leaders from the Cherokee District met at the Pleasant Hill United Methodist Church in McCalla to give out awards and celebrate a great year. Held on March 3rd the annual banquet featured remarks from Tim Cooper, Executive of the Greater Alabama Council of the Boy Scouts of America, and County Commissioner Jimmy Stephens. Cherokee District Chairman Ronnie Acker, Chamber President, conducted the event and Cyndi LaFond coordinated the food, decorations, and program.

State Senator Greg Reed and Commissioner Stephens Update Western Mayors

In their monthly breakfast meeting the western area Mayors of Jefferson County welcomed State Senator Greg Reed and County Commissioner Jimmy Stephens as they updated them on state and county business including road repair and legislation. Mayor Doug Brewer, Chairman of the group, from Graysville led the mayors as they asked pointed questions about road resurfacing, State and County revenues, and other items. The meeting was held on March 4th at the Alabama Power building in Hueytown.

BSA American Values Luncheon Welcomes Drew Brees

Several Chamber members joined Birmingham area business leaders in the nation's largest Boy Scout Sponsored luncheon at the Birmingham Civic Center on March 24th. New Orleans Saints quarterback, Drew Brees, was the featured speaker and our own Sunny Lippert was honored for leading a successful American Values campaign. Medical West had a table with Tom McDougal and several local physicians attending, Sonny had a table with Chamber board member Julie Bell sitting with her and board member Charles King and Rural Metro also had a table full of their employees. Cherokee District Commissioner Teresa Castle (BellSouth/ATT) filled a table with local Scouting leaders and your Chamber also sponsored a table with Chamber board member Jim Byram, Rick Acker, Kim Thomas (Asst. District Commissioner) and City judge Scott Roebuck joining us. Local Scout Executive Anthony Edwards urged the participation of all of our area businesses in supporting the Boy Scouts. Look for the annual Western Area Mayor's Breakfast to be held at North Highlands Baptist Church in Hueytown to raise funds for Boy Scouts and featuring Coach Joe Pendry, Offensive Lind Coach at Alabama the last couple of years, as our speaker. Get involved with your community; it is both fun and rewarding.

MDA Locks Up Mayor and Chamber President

Mayor Kenneth Gulley was locked up along with Chamber President Ronnie Acker to raise "bail" money to support the Muscular Dystrophy Association of Alabama. Others leaders in the area also took part in being locked up to make this a successful event for our area. Jeff. Co. Court Clerk Benny Watson was taken even while his staff protested. It was all for fun and for support of a very worthwhile endeavor.



Helping Education

Bessemer City Schools took a cut of over \$631,000.00 due to proration from the State of Alabama. Mayor Gulley on Thursday, March 24, 2011 at 6:00 pm presented to the Bessemer Board of Education a check in the amount of \$526,521.37. These funds were made available from the 4.7 mill bond interest and sinking fund account.

Mayor Gulley stated throughout his campaign, and still maintains now that funds should never be pulled from the education of our children to fulfill other obligations that the city has not met. He stated that the board has not received any funds since 2007 and he has asked the board to work with them as they continue to honor the city's obligations to the board of education.



Mayor Kenneth Gulley presents check to School Board President Vera Eades

Local Western Area BSA Commissioner Honored with Silver Beaver Award

Teresa Castle was honored with the Boy Scout of America Silver Beaver Award on March 25th at the Gardendale Mount Olive Methodist Church. Teresa serves as District Commissioner of the Cherokee District which includes all of western Jefferson County. She was nominated by Ronnie Acker, District Chairman of the Boy Scouts, and was well deserving of the honor for all the hard work and sacrifice of time she has contributed to furthering the growth of Scouting in our area. Teresa works for AT&T and lives off Morgan Road.



It's Your Business

By: Ronnie Acker, President

As business men and women we need to be especially mindful of the lessons we have learned and then to act upon those lessons. Reminds me of a lesson I learned while playing junior high football at Bessemer Jr. High (now Davis Middle School). It was my privilege to play for a Coach who not only taught us football but taught us how to get along in life. Coach James "Red" Howell was someone I will always remember.

In my last year of playing for Coach Howell there was a rule change affecting just the punting of the football. I really don't remember now the exact change since it has changed several times since then. However, Coach Howell drilled the change into our minds making sure we understood its effects on the game. I listened but really did not think it would matter.

In a game that was both close in score and competitiveness the opposing team as I remember led near the end of the game 6-2, with us only able to score a safety. The punt was made and while the opposing team surrounded the punt no one picked it up and no whistle sounded. It then occurred to me that Coach Howell had taught us about this situation, he had drilled it into us. All we needed to do was act. Well I remembered his lesson, pick up the ball it is still live. I acted for whatever reason picking it up and ran the ball 25-30 yards into the end zone. I turned to see the referee signal touchdown. The opposing players stood in disbelief around the spot where the ball once was, and our team was looking on wondering what had I done.

Turning around I saw the opposing Coach running and screaming down the sidelines, throwing his hat and coat, and yelling, "NO! NO! NO!" but in more graphic terms. Coach Howell was jumping up and down yelling, "YES! YES! YES!" or words to that effect. We won the game 8-6. And the reason was someone acted on a lesson that was taught. I wasn't the best player on the field nor the best athlete, but I was the one that acted on my knowledge.

You as a business man or woman must not only learn the lessons of your business you must be ready to act upon them. Your competitors will be standing in disbelief as your business moves to the goal line passing them by. Your employees will be wondering how you knew to do that. The opposing competitor's "Coach" will be yelling words we cannot write and your "Coach" will be loving you for the rest of his life because you acted.

Coach Red Howell will always live in my mind and heart because he taught me to act. You need to always remember that education, knowledge, learning, experience are all needful in the business world. The thing that is most important is to know when to apply them, when to act. When in doubt do something.

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