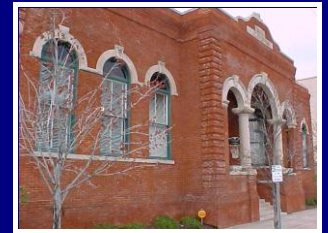


Communique

Communication: The Key to Successful Business



SEPTEMBER 2011

Bessemer
Area Chamber of Commerce

UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

09/08 Ribbon Cutting & Grand Opening @
11am at Sunoco
[1730 9th Ave. N.]

09/10 Ribbon Cutting @
8:45 am at Pet Smart
[4925 Promenade Pkwy.]

09/13 Ambassador's Meeting @8:15 am
at Chamber

09/22 Membership Luncheon With the Governor at the Bessemer Civic Center at Noon
Pre-Registration Required – see flyer

09/27 Board of Director's Mtg. @ Noon @
Chamber - Executive Comm. 11:30 am

OCTOBER

10/06 20th Annual Golf "FORE" Progress Tournament @ Bent Brook Golf Course at Noon – [See attached brochure for sponsorship or registration forms]



Please Join Us for This
Awesome Networking Event!

Ambassadors Are Honored at Chamber's Business After Hours

It was a great evening as the Chamber membership met at the historic Carnegie Library building, the Chamber building, to honor our great group of Ambassadors. Volunteers are the heart of a Chamber and the sacrifice of time and dedicated service of this group makes our area shine. It was with great happiness that the Board of Directors, led by Chairman Keith Pennington, paid back in a small way each Ambassador for a job well done. Keith said, "Besides their everyday dedication to the Bessemer Area, this group made a historic impact in the just completed membership drive bringing in 80 new Chamber members." Their work, professionalism, and dedication to the western Jefferson County region especially Bessemer means more than we can express. Please thank them for representing our business community so well. We appreciate all that Rural Metro does for the Chamber and especially what they did for the ambassadors and the Business After Hours. *(More photos on page 4)*



1st Row: Claire Mitchell, Sarah Beasley, Lula Walter, Diane Sparks, Ericka Watson, Lou Hickey, Sarah Belcher

2nd Row: Keith Pennington (Board Chairman) Nikki Jordan, Regina Doriety, Rachel Townsend, Kay Baggett, Doris Lewis, Connie Fuell, Nelda Pate and Shirley Horn

Group Photo Below:

A host of well wishers including Y staff, Chamber Ambassadors and staff, Y board members, and close friends attended Diane's retirement



YMCAs Rob Kirkland thanks Diane Sparks at her retirement

Retirement of the Legacy YMCA's Diane Sparks

Legacy YMCA hosted a retirement party for long time Chamber Ambassador Diane Sparks. Diane has served as the Ambassador Coordinator and been instrumental in the continuing success of this great volunteer group. Her service to the YMCA was extraordinary and exemplary as is her service to your Chamber. Diane will continue to work as an Ambassador and helping our business community to grow. Please take a moment to thank Diane for her YMCA service and for continuing with your Chamber. She is a great civic servant!



Chamber Hosts Work Place Conduct Training at Lawson State

John Moser and our own Van Sykes teamed up to help the Chamber host the first workplace conduct seminar centering on employee concerns and reporting. There were 17 attendees including HR personnel and management. First Response, John's company, offers a way to allow small to large businesses a legal remedy to most employee generated lawsuits and complaints. It guarantees that the employee has a way to report harrasment, retribution, and discrimination. Not only that but the First Response program offers training, workplace conduct solutions, human resource solutions, employee assistance programs, and employee screening. Protecting the most valuable asset you have, your employees, is essential to you and your business while at the same time reducing the legal risk to your business associated with conduct issues. Former District Judge Quinten Brown brought the legal perspective to the group and how simple things overlooked can mean legal trouble down the road. It was a great seminar and we hope to provide more.

CCAA Holds Summer Conference in Prattville

Partnering with the BCA in what is the Nations only such partnership of Chambers and the State Business leadership, the Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama held its annual summer conference in Prattville on August 17-18th with training, idea swapping, and seminars that will help Chambers across the state get better. Your Chamber's biggest concern is revenue generation and your Chamber spent as much time as possible in the sessions that trained on how to increase non-dues revenue and how to serve our membership better. Glenn Shepard a nationally known speaker and productivity coach made some great suggestions. 1.) Don't be boring-the Chamber needs to sell the sizzle, 2.) Remember people forget fast - stay in touch with the membership, 3.) Employee attitudes are contagious to customers-the staff should always be positive, 4.) Chambers must keep members engaged-invite members to use their membership by being involved, and 5.) run the Chamber like it is a for profit business. We also were trained on social media, the new immigration law's impact on business, the new ethics laws and their impact, and effectively communicating with Chamber members. It was a great learning environment and much good was taken home by those attending. You will see some of the suggestions being implemented very soon. Kirk Manser (Cullman Chamber), this years CCAA Chairman, and Susan Carothers, BCA/CCAA Partnership coordinator, along with the Summer Conference committee did an excellent job.

Business Council Hosts Annual Committee Meetings

With speakers like Lt. Governor Kay Ivey, Senate Pro-tem Del Marsh, and House Speaker Mike Hubbard the Business Council of Alabama hosted state business leaders in Prattville on August 17-18th for its annual Committee Meetings event. Working in committee the business leaders let their elected officials know what the state business community will be supporting this coming year and in the legislative sessions. BCA CEO Billy Canary and his staff did a fantastic job as usual. Lt. Gov. Kay Ivey spent a few minutes with your Chamber President and expressed her enthusiasm for the Bessemer area since she spoke at our annual banquet. She asked to be invited back and we have her scheduled to speak at the City of Bessemer Veteran's Day Program. Sen. Del Marsh talked about the progress made in the last session, making sure that the items those elected said they would pass did in fact get brought up. Rep. Mike Hubbard said there were several items that by a bipartisan vote passed because the leadership finally brought them to the floor. New ADO Director Doug Canfield made the emphatic statement that Alabama will be proactive in bringing industrial plants to the state because all thriving, progressive states in America having a thriving industrial base. He also said when it comes to industrial development in the state we can expect the buck to stop with him, he will take responsibility. The atmosphere was optimistic and encouraging, we need to let the representatives in our area know what we expect and what we hope they can accomplish to help business grow and create jobs.

BCA Health Care Forum Held at Wynfrey

Your Chamber was represented at the August 24th Healthcare Forum held at the Wynfrey Hotel at the Galleria. Business Council of Alabama Chairman Billy Canary and his staff did another outstanding job and provided some outstanding information and opportunities for the healthcare segment. Owen Bailey, Administrator of South Alabama Children's and Women's Hospital, was the host and welcomed a standing room only packed house of both business leaders and healthcare professionals. Speakers and presenters included: Danielle Wlaters, Associate VP-Government HC Programs at Sanofi; Kathleen Bowen, MD with BlueCross/Blue Shield of Alabama; Cyndy Nayer, President-Center for Health Value Innovation; Denson Henry, Henry Brick Company; Rick Finch, Drummond Company; Lauren Whitt, PHD-Wellness Coordinator UAB; Raymond Sieradzan, Area Manager-Sanofi; Katie Herndon-Pfizer; and Will Brooke-Managing Partner, Harbert Management Corp. The keynote address was made by Rebecca Kelly, PHD/RD-Director Wellness & Health Services at the University of Alabama speaking on "The Added Value of a Healthy Workforce: The Positive Impact on Your Bottom Line." A lot of information in a short time but very worthwhile. The Chamber has some copies of information on hand at the Chamber offices and how you can get copies of them. Please remember that a healthy employee is both happier and more productive.

Community News

Congresswoman Terri Sewell Visits Bessemer

On August 29th, our Congresswoman held a special "Congress in Your Community" town hall meeting at the Bessemer Public Library. Mayor Kenneth Gullely and State Senator Priscilla Dunn welcomed her to Bessemer. She reviewed the last session of Congress, and then updated her constituents on pending issues. Next, each attendee was allowed to provide specific questions to the Congresswoman that they wanted answers to and her to address. Representing the Seventh District and being a Democrat, her votes will not always agree with every businessperson in the District, she understands that, but she will do what she thinks is best for her district. As a business community please communicate with our Congresswoman and her staff. Locally, Chasseny Lewis is the District Director, and she can be contacted at 254-1960 or email Chasseny.Lewis@mail.House.gov. Also, working closely with the Bessemer Chamber is Oscar Berry, a great advocate for our area and member of her staff.



Business News

Standard Furniture Opens New Bedding/Mattress Section

On August 5th a large crowd gathered at the downtown Bessemer location of Standard Furniture to officially open their newest addition, a mattress store, which is outstanding both in the merchandise offered and in the quality of construction positively impacting the downtown area. Manager Glen Fuller welcomed everyone and we were impressed with his staff's positive customer service attitude and beautiful furniture. Standard Furniture was founded in Birmingham, Alabama in 1912. They originally began selling out of a peddlers wagon and they understand that buying furniture is one of the most important and sometimes one of the most expensive things that their customers do and because of that Standard Furniture wants to make sure that their customers are always satisfied with their purchases. When you are downtown please visit one of Bessemer's gems, you won't be disappointed.

T&S Boutique Ribbon Cutting

T & S held their ribbon cutting and re-grand opening Friday August 12th. Owner Terri Nelson welcomed the Chamber Ambassadors and guests to the ribbon cutting. T & S Boutique carries unique jewelry, shoes and clothing in all sizes and styles for ladies. The boutique is located at 806 19th Street, North Bessemer, AL 35020. The Bessemer Chamber also welcomes T & S as a new member of the chamber and encourages our members to visit and welcome T & S to the Chamber family.

Therapy South Open House a Big Success

A large crowd gathered at the Therapy South office in Letson Farms shopping center on August 23rd to see the tremendous rehabilitation programs offered by one of our newest Chamber members. Mayor Kenneth Gulley was on hand to thank the Therapy South staff for being part of our Bessemer business community. Clinic Director Sandy Edwards and her staff are dedicated to providing the highest quality rehab/therapy available. This is an amazing facility located across from McAdory High School and the Chamber encourages you to visit them when you have the need for the best in service.



Its Football Season Again!!!

Whether you are a die hard Auburn fan like past Chairman David Darby or an avid Alabama fan like Medical West's Tom McDougal, football season is much anticipated in the State of Alabama and in the Bessemer business community. And our local businesses understand why. Not only are we fans but as business men and women we know that the football season has a major impact on our bottom line. Retail, hotels, restaurants, service stations, all have reason to celebrate this time of year. As businesses in the area ramp up for the fall the Chamber wants to emphasize that Customer Satisfaction must be your goal, customers are why you exist, customers bring you revenue, and your employees' attitudes rub off on your customers. Customer retention is a must if you are to succeed. Have a great fall!



Event Photos



Left – Rural Metro’s Charles King and Rachel Townsend are thanked for their support by Chamber Chairman of the Board Keith Pennington

Right – Sarah Belcher receives gift for recognition as Ambassador of the Quarter

Business After Hours at the Bessemer Chamber – August 30th

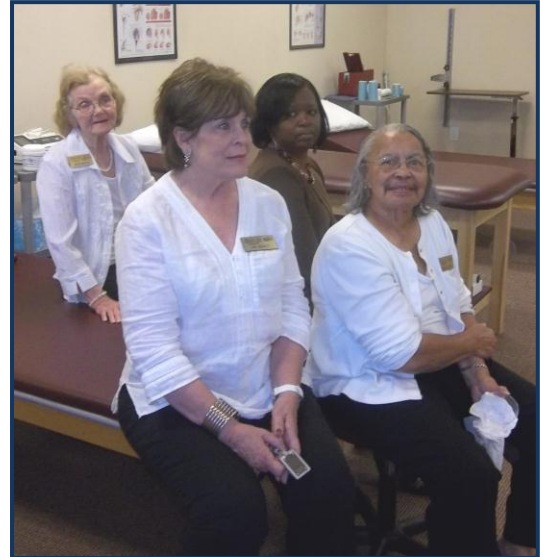


Photo at Left & Top – Crowd @ Therapy South

Middle Photo – Ribbon Cutting Certificate Presented @ T & S Boutique by Nikki Jordan

Bottom Photo – Ribbon Cutting Certificate Presented at Standard Furniture by Minnie Roper



It's Your Business

What a mess! Watching television is depressing except for sports, reading the newspaper is also, even surfing the web is not so exciting anymore. Why? Every facet of our lives is being assailed by regulation, government interference, bureaucracy, political correctness. What a crock!

According to the Washington Times: at the beginning of this year, the White House issued an executive order to all agencies to review regulations. The goal was to cut costs and take Washington off the backs of business. The president's order instructed all agencies that all rules "must promote predictability and reduce uncertainty" and "must identify and use the best, most innovative, and least burdensome tools for achieving regulatory ends." As you know that only resulted in one regulation being done away with and over 150 created.

We have government interfering in the operation of even the smallest business or wanting to. Washington thinks it knows what is best for you as a small business person and on how you should be doing business. Not only are we getting business regulation out the wazoo, we have government/political correctness entering or hindering our religious freedom, coming into our private homes, taking a bigger share of our hard earned money. What can businesses do?

First, get involved in the political process. Support those that want to expand your freedoms not narrow them. Vote for those who want to provide your business with the ability to do business the way you want it done. Vote for the persons who want government to stay out of your Church, your home, your business.

Second, be vocal! The squeaking wheel gets the grease. Let your elected officials know how you feel, let them know what you want them to do AND NOT DO.

Third, remember who you are. You are an American business leader, you are the foundation of our economy, you are the job creator. When you think of who you are stand up and act the part. Government cannot create enough jobs to get us out of the economic mess we are in, but YOU can. With the leadership of the American business leader and your know how, America can return to its greatness. But you have to act, take the reins like you do in your business. Lead in your community, in your church, in your county/state, and even be bold enough to take the reins of our Nation. We must act to revitalize our economy, we must act to make a difference and if we are working together as millions of business leaders across this nation we can be great again.

You are important, never forget that, you are special, and you are America. Get involved! Involved in your community, your Chamber, your professional/political organizations. You have to get involved because it is your business.

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2011 AMBASSADORS

Coordinator

Minnie Roper, Retired

Co Coordinator

Claire Mitchell, Hair Gallery Beauty Salon

Secretary

Nelda Pate, Retired

Kay Baggett, Retired

Sarah Belcher, Bessemer City Council

Sarah Beasley, Joe Beasley Memorial Foundation, Inc.

Regina Doriety, Lawson State - Bessemer

Beverly Edwards, Rural Metro Ambulance

Connie Fuell, Konica Minolta

Louise Hickey, Legacy YMCA

Shirley Horn, Retired

Nikki Jordan, Sarrell Dental

Doris Lewis, City of Bessemer

Diane Sparks, Retired

Katherine Taylor

Rachel Townsend, Rural Metro Ambulance

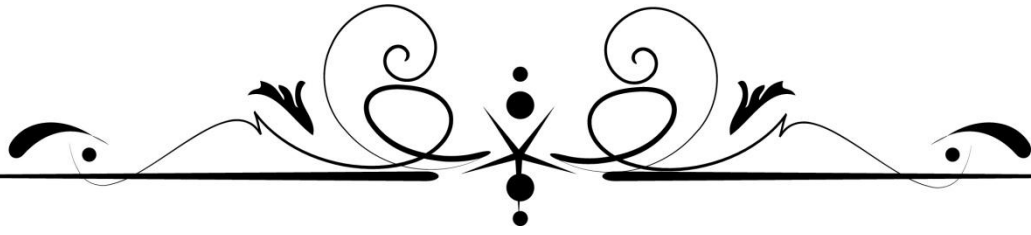
Lula Walter, City of Bessemer

Ericka Watson, Individual

Newest Ambassador:

Daryl Owens, Dr. Miracles, Inc.

You Are Invited to Attend



the Bessemer Area Chamber of Commerce's
Membership Meeting With the Governor

featuring
Governor Robert Bentley
State of Alabama

Space is Limited
RSVP Today



Thursday, September 22, 2011 at Noon
Bessemer Civic Center

Call 205-425-3253 today to reserve your seat - Reservation Deadline: Friday, Sept. 16th

Seating is on a First Reserved Basis

~ Seats are \$20 each or \$150 for a table of 8 - Includes lunch ~