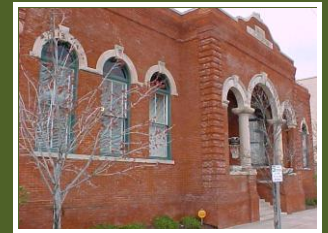


# Communique

Communication: The Key to Successful Business



DECEMBER 2010

**Bessemer**  
Area Chamber of Commerce

## UPCOMING CHAMBER EVENTS

### DECEMBER

- 12/01 Prayer Breakfast @**  
7:30 am at the  
Bessemer Chamber
- 12/07 Ambassador Mtg. @**  
8:15 am at Chamber
- 12/11 City of Bessemer  
Christmas Parade @**  
2pm in Downtown  
Bessemer
- 12/14 Bessemer Chamber's  
Holiday Open House**  
4-7 pm at Chamber
- 12/21 Executive Committee  
Chamber Board of  
Director's Meeting @**  
11am
- Chamber Board of  
Director's Meeting at**  
Chamber at 11:30 am
- 12/23-12/24, 12/31 & 01/03**  
CHAMBER CLOSED  
Christmas & New  
Years' Holidays

## Commissioner George Bowman Highlights Bessemer

Veterans, elected officials, American Legion members, and citizens gathered at the Bessemer City Hall auditorium to honor those men and women who sacrificed and do sacrifice today in service to our country. Military veterans and the first responders were our special guests. The City of Bessemer led by Mayor Kenneth Gulley and City Councilperson Sarah Belcher joined the Bessemer Area Chamber of Commerce and American Legion Post 149 and its Commander Gordon Seale in planning and hosting the annual program. Retired Major General George Bowman, who happens to be one of our County Commissioners, was the featured speaker as we also heard from Mayor Gulley, City Councilman Cleo King, Carol Campbell-District Commander/American Legion, Jeff McNaire-State of Alabama Sr. Vice Commander/American Legion, Navy Commander Doug Howell-Naval Reserve Center, William Madison-District DEC/American Legion, Willis Frazier-National American Legion Alt NEC, Ron Haygood-State American Legion Jr. Vice Commander, and Chrystal Maxwell-American Legion District County Commander. Making the event even more special were the patriotic songs sung by the Greenwood Elementary School Choir, the National Anthem sung by Mrs. Jackie Seale, prayers by Bessemer Police Chief Nathaniel Rutledge and the presentation of colors by the US Naval Reserve Center. It was a great tribute to our vets and Commissioner Bowman brought it added focus with his relating of the story of the Tuskegee Airmen.



Fire Chief Paul Syx, American Legion Commander Gordon Seale, Ret. MG George Bowman, Mayor Kenneth Gulley and American Legion Representative support program.

## New Mayor and New City Council Take Reins

On November 1<sup>st</sup> and again on November 5<sup>th</sup> the newly elected Mayor Kenneth Gulley and City Council took the oath of office and began a new era in the City of Bessemer. Mayor Kenneth Gulley promised an open and transparent administration with the City Council having full knowledge of all finances in the City. Sworn in as City Council members were: District 1-David Vance, District 2- Sherrina Rice (President Pro-tem), District 3-Sarah Belcher, District 4-Donna Thigpen, District 5-Ron Marshall, District 6-Jesse Matthews (Council President), and District 7-Cleo King. The new council promises to be open to ideas that move the City forward to reach its potential. Also taking the oath at the two events were the Bessemer School Board members including: District 1-Vera Eades, District 2-Earlean Cochran, District 3-Renna Scott, District 4-Sam Morris, District 5-Darlene Perkins, District 6-Christine Knight, and District 7-Hattie Aikerson. The Chamber looks forward to a new beginning and the opportunity to partner with our new elected officials to move our City and region forward.

## Come Join Us for the City of Bessemer's Christmas Parade Themed "A New Beginning"

A new beginning with a new mayor, 5 new City Council members, a new County Commission and a new majority in the State legislature. What a way to focus on Christmas with a parade featuring all of the new folks in politics. Come join us beginning at 2:00 PM on December 11<sup>th</sup> as we celebrate the Christmas season. The theme, A New Beginning, is an apt way to start the next few years as positive change sweeps our region. The Hueytown Christmas Parade will kick off at 10:00 AM so those wishing to be in both parades can then move to DeBardeleben Park for the Bessemer Parade. Bands, floats, vintage cars, horses, and Santa will make it a special time in downtown Bessemer. For more information contact the Chamber at 425-3253 or email mmilan1@bellsouth.net.



Bessemer's  
New Mayor,  
City Council  
and School  
Board  
Members  
attended the  
Inaugural Ball





Van Sykes and Shelly Reister thank Mayor Kenneth Gulley for supporting the Courtyard's ribbon cutting and grand opening .



LaTasha Cook (Chamber VP), Van Sykes and David Darby (Chamber Chairman) enjoy networking at the Courtyard Café and Bakery.

## Courtyard Cafe & Bakery Opens

Manager Shelly Reister and partner Van Sykes held the ribbon cutting and grand opening of the Courtyard Cafe & Bakery located on the corner of 19<sup>th</sup> Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue on November 4th. This was newly elected Mayor Kenneth Gulley's first official act. It was a joyous occasion and a great addition to downtown Bessemer. The food is outstanding as you would expect and the service is customer friendly. Shelly promises to provide the best in breakfast and lunch cuisine for all. Go by and enjoy some great food.



## GRAND OPENING Pictures--- McCalla Orthodontics

### Lawson State Parade Honors one of America's Best Community Colleges

After *Washington Monthly* named our own Lawson State Community College as one of "America's 50 Best Community Colleges", Lawson President Dr. Perry Ward wanted to celebrate. A parade celebrating this great achievement was held on November 3<sup>rd</sup> beginning on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and ending up at the Ethel Hall Building on campus. There were cars, the Bessemer City High School Band, Lawson Cheerleaders, and many student organizations and faculty. It was an outstanding way to let the students at the Bessemer Campus join in the celebration. After the parade there were hotdogs and drinks for all. Again the Chamber congratulates our Lawson State partners for a job well done.



David Darby (Chamber Chairman) assists McCalla Orthodontics' Dr. Olga Sanchez-Hernandez in cutting the ribbon at her new location at 4814 Bell Hill Road, Bessemer.



Ladies from Beta Sigma Phi graciously volunteered to decorate the Chamber's Christmas Tree and did an excellent job.

*You Are Invited to Attend*

*The Chamber's Holiday Open House & Elected Officials Reception*

*to be held on*

*Tuesday, December 14<sup>th</sup> from 4-7 pm*

*at the Bessemer Area Chamber of Commerce  
321 18<sup>th</sup> Street North, Bessemer*



*R S V P Required ~ Call 425-3253 by 12/10*





## It's Your Business

By: Ronnie Acker, President

Christmas, my favorite time of the year. Soldiers pause, workers take off, politicians go home, and businesses flourish. The air is crisp, a chill bites at our ears and noses, it is an awakening. Christmas most retailers say this is their most profitable time of the year.

But let us not forget why we celebrate Christmas. Some would want to call it the Holiday season and yes we do celebrate Hanukkah and Kwanzaa during this time frame but it all started with Christmas, December 25<sup>th</sup>. Christians like myself celebrate the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ, we do not push this on others but Christmas to Christians is a holy time of year.

In saying this I might be politically incorrect but truthful. You as a business person need to always be truthful and must try to be politically correct. However, the choice between truth and political correctness is no choice at all, truth should always be the winner. A quote I love goes like this, "The courage of life is often a less dramatic spectacle than the courage of a final moment; but it is no less a magnificent mixture of triumph and tragedy. A man does what he must – in spite of personal consequences, in spite of obstacles and dangers and pressures – and that is the basis of all morality."

I have friends of all nationalities, religions, races, and persuasions of which I may disagree on political, religious, or moral grounds, BUT they are still my friends. I do not and will not think less of them and hopefully them of me for our differing viewpoints. I base my beliefs, morals, and work ethic on my faith and knowledge in God and in myself as a son of God. My friends do the same whether they believe in God or not, they have faith in something.

During this Christmas season we need to hold our friends close. As businesses we need to hold our customers close, they are of all nationalities, religions, races, and persuasions but they are still our customers, the reason we exist as a business. When our customers disagree with our service or our product quality we need to listen to find out our differences and their concerns. We then as businesses work to improve, to make our businesses better.

As I listen to my friends with whom I may disagree, I listen but in my heart my faith becomes stronger and my knowledge even more sure and I fight being judgmental. However as I tell my friends my beliefs and viewpoints I hope they listen as intently to me as I will strive listen to them without prejudging or with a closed mind.

Christmas is the best time of the year. Enjoy your customers, enjoy your friends, enjoy your families. This time of year makes for you a great opportunity to listen to your customers with an open mind. Hear them because it is your business.



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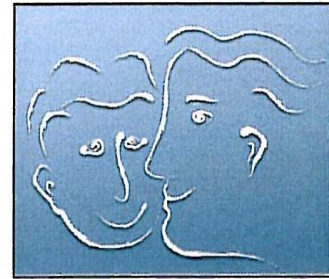
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**&**

**PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY**

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

**205-477-8004**

### 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Educational Program

The 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Educational Program that was held November 21<sup>st</sup> at Shady Grove Missionary Baptist Church was chaired by Senator Priscilla Dunn. Dr. Ethel Hall introduced the guest speaker Dr. Yvette Richardson. Pastor Victor Harkins presented \$750 scholarships to two area seniors. Senator Priscilla Dunn stated that, "We're making sure that we keep alive the fact that scholarships are necessary to ensure our children's success."

← Photo

## Community News

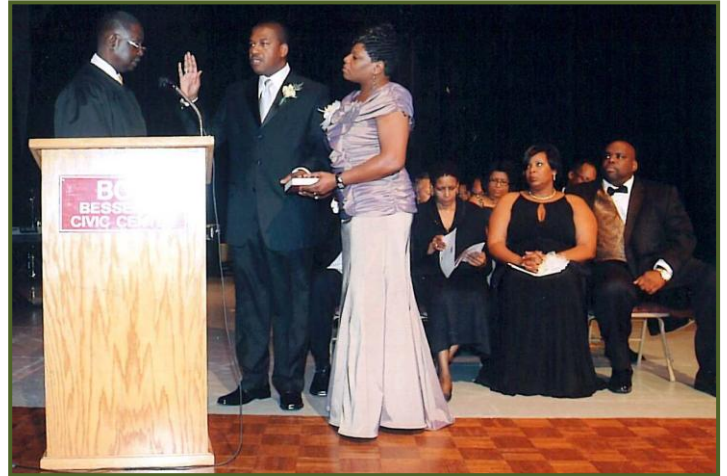
### Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs Sell BBQ

The Bessemer Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs held a fundraiser for the Legacy YMCA at First Presbyterian Church in downtown Bessemer on November 4<sup>th</sup>. A large and happy crowd sat down and carried out delicious Bob Sykes BBQ to support the clubs and their efforts. Y staff and the club's membership worked tirelessly to make the event successful. If you missed it contact a Kiwanis or Rotary member to donate to the cause. The Legacy YMCA is one of the gems in our community.

### City of Bessemer Hosts Inaugural Ball to Honor Newly Elected Officials



The Bessemer Civic Center was packed on November 5<sup>th</sup> with over 700 well wishers for the Inaugural Ball honoring our newly elected City officials including Mayor Kenneth Gulley. Besides the large crowd there was music, dancing, tributes, outstanding food catered by Chef Ron Cook and Cook's catering, and the inaugural address of our new Mayor. We look forward to working with these fine individuals.



### Medical West Holding Community Leadership Breakfasts

Tom McDougal, President and CEO of Medical West, is hosting along with his staff a number of breakfast meetings to update civic and community leaders on the hospital, its services, and strategic initiatives. The meetings will also provide the opportunity for input on how Medical West can best serve the community's needs. Tom said, "It is important we have the support of community leaders ... to make our hospital a better place." Your Chamber was represented by several board members and President Ronnie Acker on November 9<sup>th</sup>. It was a meeting with an excellent exchange of ideas and information.

## COMMUNITY HOLIDAY EVENTS:

### December 5, 2010 - The Christmas Heritage Tour of Pioneer Homes from 1 - 4:30 pm

Location: The Sadler House, The Owen Plantation and the McAdory House

Phone: 205-426-1633 or 205-428-9652

Price: \$6 (Tour all three - purchase tickets at any of the homes)

Description: The Bessemer Hall of History on Alabama Avenue in downtown Bessemer will have an open house during this tour. Go by and see the Christmas tree and enjoy the display of vintage toys.

Children 12 years and under are free with a paying adult. All three homes are located on Eastern Valley Road between McCalla and Bessemer. (From I-459 / Exit 1 - go one mile in either directions and you'll find one of the homes.)

### December 5, 2010 - Bessemer Hall of History Christmas Open House from 1 - 4pm @ the Hall of History

## Chamber News

### BCA/CCAA 2010 Annual Meeting and Luncheon

On December 6<sup>th</sup> the Business Council of Alabama and the Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama will hold their annual joint meeting and luncheon at the Harbert Center in Birmingham. Keynote speaker and special guest will be Fred Barnes, author and political commentator. The BCA will hold its annual business meeting as will the CCAA. It is anticipated that a large crowd of business leaders, elected officials and Chamber executives will be attending.

### 2010 Committee Days Reception

The Business Council of Alabama hosted a reception on November 17<sup>th</sup> at the Wynfrey Hotel in Hoover for business, political and community leaders. Chamber President Ronnie Acker attended with many others including State Representative Allen Farley and State Senator Priscilla Dunn. Over 100 were in attendance at the function along with BCA President Billy Canary and his staff.

### CCAA Holds Board Meeting

The Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama held its board meeting at the offices of CCAA on November 10<sup>th</sup> in Montgomery. In 2011 Bessemer Chamber President Ronnie Acker will be Chairman-elect of the CCAA Board and assume the Chairmanship in 2012.



**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

Derek Camp, Team Fever / Bama Fever

Gene Cochran, Liberty National Life Ins.

Randy Donaldson, Alabama Gas Co.

Don Holmes, Holmes Oil

Billy Parsons, CPA

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

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The Birmingham News - December 2007*

**2010 AMBASSADORS**

**Coordinator**

Minnie Roper, Retired

**Co Coordinator**

Sarah Belcher, Bessemer City Council

**Secretary**

Nelda Pate, Retired

Kay Baggett, Retired

Sarah Beasley, Joe Beasley Memorial  
Foundation, Inc.

LeeAnn Best, Lawson State - Bessemer

Regina Doriety, Lawson State - Bessemer

Connie Fuell, Konica Minolta

Lisa Hester

Louise Hickey, Legacy YMCA

Doris Lewis, City of Bessemer

Ernestine McNair, Liberty National

Claire Mitchell, Bessemer Beauty Institute

Tyndl Land-Roberts, Individual

Diane Sparks, Legacy YMCA

Katherine Taylor, Favor Realty

Ericka Watson, Individual



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