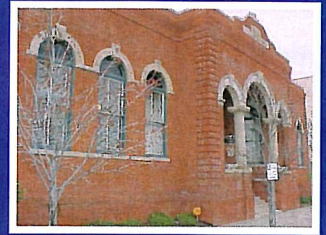


Communique

Communication: The Key to Successful Business



MARCH 2010

I never said most of the things I said. Half the lies they tell about me aren't true.

Yogi Berra

Bessemer

Area Chamber of Commerce

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 03/05 Ribbon Cutting at JC Penney's @ Colonial Promenade 9 am**
- 03/09 Ambassador Meeting @ 8:15 am at Chamber**
- 03/11 Open House @ Watermark Place 5-8 pm – RSVP Required**
- 03/16 Board of Director's Mtg. Noon @ The Bright Star Restaurant Exec. Committee meets at 11:30 am**
- 03/18 St. Patrick's Day Business After Hours @ Holiday Inn Express 5:30-7:30 pm**
- 04/05 City Wide Prayer Breakfast @ Chamber 7:30 am**

Bessemer Chamber Honors First Responders

On February 24th the Chamber gathered at Lawson State-Bessemer to recognize the dedicated and professional people who make up our Police, Fire and Sheriff's Departments. Bessemer Cutoff Chief Assistant District Attorney Bill Veitch was the keynote speaker with presentations of awards made by Chairman David Darby and the Chiefs, Mayor Ed May and Sheriff's Department Major Allen Farley. The City of Bessemer presented a special recognition to its two recipients. A capacity crowd was packed into the Ethel Hall auditorium provided by the great people at Lawson State Community College.

2010 recipients included: Law Enforcement Officer of the Year-Arthur Bracy; Fire Fighter of the Year-Markus Dunn; and Sheriff's Deputy of the Year-Jacob Bradley. Each was a deserving representative of the men and women who put their lives on the line daily to protect and defend each of us as well as our businesses. Your Chamber is honored to recognize these outstanding public servants. Please thank all of these public servants as you see them.



Those awarding and those receiving the first responder awards for 2009 were: l-r, Major Allen Farley, Sheriff's Deputy of the Year - Jacob Bradley, Police Chief Nathaniel Rutledge, Law Enforcement Officer of the Year - Arthur Bracy, Chamber Chairman David Darby, Firefighter of the Year - Markus Dunn, and Fire Chief Paul Syx.



Chamber Annual Banquet

It was an outstanding evening as close to 400 Chamber members and guests laughed, dined, enjoyed music and listened to one of the areas greatest promoters. Listening to Gene Hallman on February 5th the tremendous crowd we brought up to date on sports events coming to the area that will impact the economy in the Bessemer Cutoff region. Also, Gene emphasized the importance of getting what many think are small events, these grow into larger and larger events over time. He is also a big proponent of the domed stadium for Birmingham, saying it would mean millions of dollars of tourism and event money pouring into the area.

The Charles A. Long Award for 2010 was presented to Van Sykes (Bob Sykes BBQ). Van's family was present as last year's recipient Hank Tyler presented the award to Van. Speaking of the long time Bessemer business that is Bob Syke's BBQ and Van's parents raising him to make the business ever better, Hank mentioned Van's desire to make Bessemer a better place to do business. The Bob Sykes name is a partner to outstanding food and with their new location at Tannehill State Park the name continues to excite the taste buds of all. Van has done so very much to support the efforts of the Chamber and community to move us forward, and the Sykes family is always there to support civic activities and events. It was a well earned award for a great citizen servant.

Special thanks to the Ambassadors for another great job (see picture in Chamber section), our board of directors (see picture in Chamber section), to Loyle Seymour Jewelers (Larry and Carol Parsons), the Civic Center Staff, Cook's Catering, and our Corporate sponsors without whose support the Chamber could not function. Also, thank you to Bessemer City Council members who attended: Dorothy Davidson, Sarah Belcher, Jesse Matthews and Earl Cochran, their support of the Bessemer Chamber is vital. We cannot overlook the support from Becky Williams and Hueytown Mayor Delor Baumann who always support our efforts. Finally, we cannot forget the Chamber staff who worked tirelessly to make sure the banquet was a success.

See PHOTOS on page 6.

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It's Your Business

By: Ronnie Acker, President

This was sent to me last year and I may have shared this with you, however, I thought it would be great to share it again. In your business it's the people that make you successful, always remember that. As you read this try to relate it to your life, the way you want to be treated, and especially how you treat others. My life is happy because of the way a lot of you have made me feel, the kindnesses that you do not remember, and the laughs you shared with me. Hope you enjoy this.

The Taxi Ride

I arrived at the address where someone had requested a taxi. I honked but no one came out. I honked again, nothing. So I walked to the door and knocked. 'Just a minute', answered a frail, elderly voice. I could hear something being dragged across the floor.

After a long pause, the door opened. A small woman in her 90's stood before me. She was wearing a print dress and a pillbox hat with a veil pinned on it, like somebody out of a 1940s movie. By her side was a small nylon suitcase. The apartment looked as if no one had lived in it for years. All the furniture was covered with sheets. There were no clocks on the walls, no knickknacks or utensils on the counters. In the corner was a cardboard box filled with photos and glassware.

'Would you carry my bag out to the car?' she said. I took the suitcase to the cab, and then returned to assist the woman. She took my arm and we walked slowly toward the curb.

She kept thanking me for my kindness. 'It's nothing', I told her. 'I just try to treat my passengers the way I would want my mother treated'.

'Oh, you're such a good boy', she said. When we got in the cab, she gave me an address, and then asked, 'Could you drive through downtown?'

'It's not the shortest way,' I answered quickly.

'Oh, I don't mind,' she said. 'I'm in no hurry. I'm on my way to a hospice'.

I looked in the rear-view mirror. Her eyes were glistening. 'I don't have any family left,' she continued. 'The doctor says I don't have very long.' I quietly reached over and shut off the meter.

'What route would you like me to take?' I asked.

For the next two hours, we drove through the city. She showed me the building where she had once worked as an elevator operator. We drove through the neighborhood where she and her husband had lived when they were newlyweds. She had me pull up in front of a furniture warehouse that had once been a ballroom where she had gone dancing as a girl. Sometimes she'd ask me to slow in front of a particular building or corner and would sit staring into the darkness, saying nothing.

As the first hint of sun was creasing the horizon, she suddenly said, 'I'm tired. Let's go now'

We drove in silence to the address she had given me. It was a low building, like a small convalescent home, with a driveway that passed under a portico. Two orderlies came out to the cab as soon as we pulled up. They were solicitous and intent, watching her every move. They must have been expecting her. I opened the trunk and took the small suitcase to the door. The woman was already seated in a wheelchair.

'How much do I owe you?' she asked, reaching into her purse.

'Nothing,' I said.

'You have to make a living,' she answered.

'There are other passengers,' I responded.

Almost without thinking, I bent and gave her a hug. She held onto me tightly.

'You gave an old woman a little moment of joy,' she said. 'Thank you.'

I squeezed her hand, and then walked into the dim morning light. Behind me, a door shut. It was the sound of the closing of a life. I didn't pick up any more passengers that shift. I drove aimlessly lost in thought. For the rest of that day, I could hardly talk. What if that woman had gotten an angry driver, or one who was impatient to end his shift?

What if I had refused to take the run, or had honked once, then driven away? On a quick review, I don't think that I have done anything more important in my life.

We're conditioned to think that our lives revolve around great moments.

But great moments often catch us unaware-beautifully wrapped in what others may consider a small one.

PEOPLE MAY NOT REMEMBER EXACTLY WHAT YOU DID, OR WHAT YOU SAID, BUT THEY WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER HOW YOU MADE THEM FEEL.

Utmost Healthcare Center Opens

Dr. Philip Badewa and his staff welcomed a warm crowd of Chamber members and supporters to the grand opening of the area's newest urgent care/primary care/occupational medicine facility. Bessemer Chamber Chairman David Darby and board member Judge Eddie Vines joined Ambassadors Lisa Hester and Tyndel Roberts in providing the ribbon cutting ceremony. Mayoral Assistant Camillo Fuller represented the City of Bessemer and Rev. James Moore gave a blessing on the facility. Dr. Badewa graduated from the College of Medicine at the University of Lagos in Nigeria with further training at Florida A&M and LSU before entering a residency in Montgomery. He is family medicine board certified and offers help with common illnesses, minor emergencies, preventive vaccinations, chronic conditions, occupational medicine, government mandated procedures, laboratory testing and digital X-ray. Located at 1007 9th Avenue N. you can call for an appointment at 358-9300 or just walk in.



Dr. Philip Badewa and Mayor's Assistant Camillo Fuller cut ribbon at Utmost Healthcare. Pictured l-r, Chamber Ambassador Tyndel Roberts, Judge Eddie Vines (Chamber board member), Camillo Fuller, Dr. Badewa, Rev. James Moore, Chamber Chairman David Darby, and Ambassador Lisa Hester.

Open House to be Held

WaterMark Place Center is on the move and wants the Bessemer Area Chamber to be a part of the excitement. Owner, Anthony Underwood has a vision of "creating a robust business environment that exudes excitement and generates a profitable bottom line."

In an effort to turn this vision into reality WaterMark Place will have an Open House event on Thursday, March 11th from 5 pm to 8 pm. The purpose of this event is to expose business owners and entrepreneurs to the beautiful facility and available space that WaterMark Place has to offer.

Underwood says, "This is an ideal time for business owners to relocate or expand, and WaterMark Place is the perfect place for growth. Our goal is to generate a profitable bottom line for everyone involved; this includes our tenants, stakeholders and the community and we are committed to doing just that."

All Chamber Members are invited. Please RSVP to Aleshia Witherspoon (Property Manager) at 205-425-4554 ext 0.



Reid S. Christopher, MD

Wallace B. Purdy, MD

Board Certified, Internal Medicine

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Chamber Hosts Meet and Greet for Tom McDougal at Medical West

A big business welcome was given to Tom McDougal, new CEO at Medical West on February 3rd. Tom has a varied background in healthcare and provides a positive and energetic personality to lead our area's largest employer. The Chamber and the staff at Medical West joined together at a "Meet and Greet" in the Civic Room of the hospital to provide our members and the community the opportunity to meet Tom and his beautiful wife. Not only was Tom welcomed to the area, we also wanted to make him feel a part of our business community. Chairman David Darby and Chairman-elect Keith Pennington were on hand as well to make sure Tom became a part of our Chamber family. As usual Haley Montgomery and the Medical West staff were on hand and worked well with our Chamber Ambassadors to make the event very special for the large crowd that turned out.



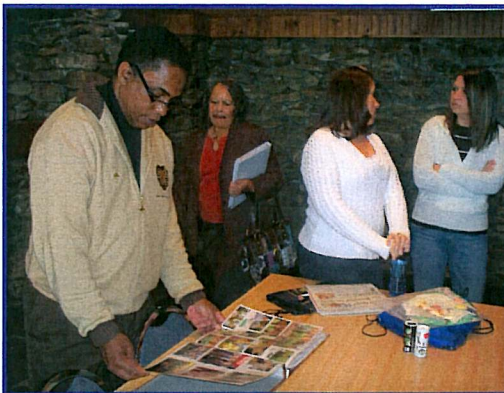
Chamber President Ronnie Acker, new Medical West CEO Tom McDougal and Chairman-elect Keith Pennington.



Ambassadors work the Meet and Greet at Medical West: l-r, Lisa Hester, Sarah Beasley, Minnie Roper and Diane Sparks.

A Great Planning Retreat Prepares Your Chamber for the Future

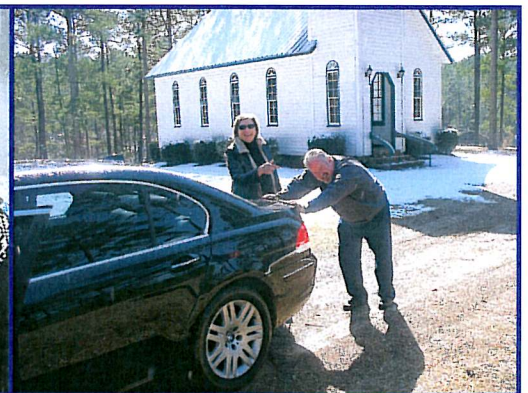
Your Chamber board of directors and Ambassadors gathered at the Heritage Trail Conference center to formalize plans for 2010. Concentrating on programs that both enhance our business community and provide sufficient revenues for Chamber events the planning went on all day Friday, February 12th and part of the day Saturday, February 13th. Chairman David Darby led the process and set the tone of the meeting. Board members and Ambassadors were placed on committees and they are to ask Chamber members to serve with them. If you have a desire to work on a committee please contact the Chamber office at 425-3253. We need your support. Also, we will be sending out a survey soon to see what the Chamber can do better to meet your business needs.



Rev. Doug Caddell (Canaan Baptist Church and Chamber board member) works with Ambassadors Sarah Belcher, Lee Ann Best, and Regina Doriety at planning session.



Meeting even in the snow board member Van Sykes (Bob Sykes BBQ) with Latasha Cook (Chamber VP), Ambassadors Sarah Beasley and Connie Fuell (Konica Minolta).



Board Chairman David Darby working hard pushing car out of mud with Board member Julie Bell (State Farm) giving encouragement.

Major Allen Farley Retires

On March 1st long time Jefferson County Sheriff's Major Allen Farley retired. Over 30 years of service and a lifetime of supporting the Bessemer Cutoff require each of us to thank him for all he has done to make our area safer and a great place to live and do business. Major Farley was honored at a Retirement Reception at the Bessemer Sheriff's office and was congratulated by friends and fellow officers. He will be missed and has been a big supporter of the Chamber. Please join the Chamber in thanking Major Allen Farley for his tremendous law enforcement career and wish him great success in anything he plans to do in the future.



Mayor Allen Farley will be missed, thanks for the great job.

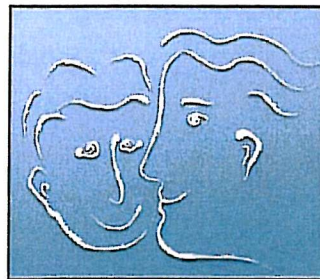
Bob Sykes BBQ and BLUES Festival

The 1st Annual Bob Sykes BBQ and Blues Festival will kickoff Saturday May 22, 2010 with live blues music featuring world known Blues Musicians, delicious BBQ, and children's activities. Bring a blanket, bring the family, and set up your spot for the day! All activities begin at noon on one stage at Tannehill Ironworks Historical State Park on the Farley Field, 12632 Confederate Parkway, McCalla, Alabama 35111.

Prices range from \$3.00 per person to enter Tannehill State Park, \$15.00 per person to enter Farley Field to attend the festival. 12 and under are free to enter the festival. All food and drinks are sold separately. Pre-event tickets will be \$12 and they can be purchased at various locations. Go to www.bobsykes.com and view locations where tickets will be sold. Pre-event tickets will be sold at: Bob Sykes BBQ Restaurant's in Bessemer and inside Tannehill State Park, Gips Juke Joint in Bessemer, Beanstalk Music Store in McCalla (477-5038) with more locations to be announced.

Entertainment will be by Worldwide Blues Musicians beginning at noon featuring Kenny Brown the famous slide guitar player who lives in Mississippi has become a prominent fixture with blues fans all over the world. Alvin Youngblood Hart from Mississippi carries his musical message all over the world. Kent Burnside and his New Generation band from the Mississippi Delta who is no newcomer to the blues scene. Kent is the lead guitarist for his 5 piece band. Dwayne Burnside from Holly Springs, MS is the son of the late blues legend RL Burnside. He picked up the guitar before he was old enough to play it himself. Little G Weevil Band from Dallas, Georgia plays Southern Blues music. 2Blu from Alabama is a true blues favorite. Daja Voodoo from Alabama is a southern blues rock band that has played in many festivals and special events around the southeast.

Bob Sykes BBQ will be selling their famous ribs, sandwiches, and many more of their items. A portion of the proceeds from the Bob Sykes BBQ and Blues Festival will benefit the Alabama Children's Hospital. All parking is free. Camping and RV parking is available at the park- Pet Friendly. Special thanks to sponsors: Buffalo Rock Company, Moore's Marinade, and UAB Medical West Hospital. For more details call 205-477-5711 or go to www.bobsykes.com.



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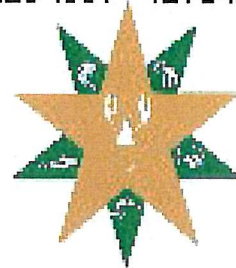
Olga Sanchez-Hernandez, D.M.D., M.S., M.S.

205-477-8004

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true to it's traditions through generations."
The Birmingham News - December 2007*



Hank Tyler (2009 Charles A. Long Award recipient) presented the 2010 Charles A. Long Civic Award to Van Sykes (Bob Sykes BBQ).



Dr. Horn passes gavel to David Darby



David Darby recognizes outgoing Ambassador Coordinator Diane Sparks (Legacy YMCA)



Gene Hallman addresses Chamber

Annual Banquet Photos



Bessemer High School singers perform at annual banquet



Gene Hallman, Dr. Deborah Horn (Past Chairperson), David Darby (Chairman), and Ronnie Acker (President).



Chamber Ambassadors work the Annual Meeting:

Left to Right – Tyndl Roberts, Tammy Tucker, Minnie Roper, Katherine Taylor, Ericka Watson, Kenneth Gulley, Sarah Beasley, Regina Doriety, Diane Sparks, Nelda Pate, Lisa Hester, Lou Hickey, LeeAnn Best, Syble Lamons, Sarah Belcher



Chamber board members contribute their time to make the Chamber better:

Left to Right – Eddie Vines, Dr. Jeremy Burns, CeCe Doss, Lynn Joyce, Van Sykes, Dr. Cynthia Anthony, Dr. Deborah Horn, Douglas Caddell, David Darby, Gene Cochran

Alabama Victory Gardens "Grow Communities-One Urban Garden at a Time"

The mission of Alabama Victory Gardens is to promote and establish community gardens. They work to inform and educate communities and the general public on issues related to gardening, nutrition, entrepreneurship, and individual and community well-being. Conducting research and administering surveys to determine the nutritional and food availability needs for various communities is one tremendous aspect of their purpose. The empower members of the community to establish gardens, promote community driven economic development, promote food sustainability, health awareness, agricultural education, and to develop an outlet for distribution of the produce of the community gardens. They work to develop leadership within the community to achieve this purpose. The Chamber supports efforts such as the Alabama Victory Gardens in making our communities better places to live.

*Upcoming Events Will Be Posted
on our Calendar
at www.bessemerchamber.com
and on Facebook
as Dates are Set!*

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

J.C. Penney Company Opens March 5th

Plan on welcoming our newest retail facility to the Colonial Promenade Tannehill on March 5th at 9:00 am. The official ribbon cutting and grand opening ceremony will be held and the Chamber invites all our members to drop in and welcome store manager Steve Anderson and his staff to the Bessemer business community. This is an event that has long been anticipated and we are thrilled to have them opened.

NEW MEMBERS - FEBRUARY

RKO Photography

Roger D. Owens

1013 Bridgewater Park Drive

Hoover, AL 35244-4406

Phone: 205-567-7364

Email: rkophotography@charter.net

Business Category:

Photography/Videography

Website: www.rkophotography.net

Individual

Zepora H. Delk

522 South 27th Street

Bessemer, AL 35020

Phone: 773-251-1432

Email: zdelk@earthlink.net

Business Category: Individual

ION247

Tony Campbell

119 Rayfield Drive, Bessemer, AL 35022

Phone: 205-365-1751, Fax: 205-639-5246

Email: TonyC@ION247.com

Business Category: Interactive Video Security

Website: www.ion247.com

2010 Ambassadors

Coordinator

Syble Lamons, Retired

Co-Coordinator

Minnie Roper, Retired

Secretary

Nelda Pate, Retired

Kay Baggett, Retired

Sarah Beasley, Joe Beasley Memorial Foundation, Inc.

Sarah Belcher, Bessemer City Council

LeeAnn Best, Lawson State Community College

Leigh Dewitt, Utility Auditing

Regina Doriety, Lawson State Community College

Connie Fuell, Konica Minolta

Kenneth Gulley, Lawson State Community College

Lisa Hester

Louise Hickey, Legacy YMCA

Doris Lewis, City of Bessemer

Ernestine McNair, Liberty National

Claire Mitchell, Bessemer Beauty Institute

Tyndl Land-Roberts, Individual

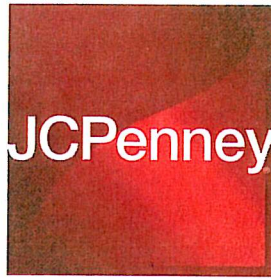
Brenda Smith, Individual

Diane Sparks, Legacy YMCA

Katherine Taylor, Favor Realty

Tammy Tucker, Golden Living Center Meadowood

Ericka Watson, Individual



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J. C. Penney Company, Inc.

*Requests the pleasure of your company
at the Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony
for the Grand Opening of our new store at*

*Colonial Promenade
4835 Promenade Pkwy.
Bessemer, AL 35022*

Friday, March 5, 2010

9:00 a.m.



*RSVP (if attending)
by February 26, 2010
phone: (205) 565-2720
e-mail: sanderso@jcpenney.com*

St. Patrick's Day Business After Hours

Thursday, March 18, 5:30-7:30 pm

@ the Holiday Inn Express

(located at 5001 Academy Lane, Bessemer)

DON'T FORGET TO CALL US @ 425-3253

**BY TUESDAY, MARCH 16TH
IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND**

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to See
You
Hope
to See
You
There!**



- Network with Fellow Chamber Members
- Door Prizes
- Refreshments