

The Chamber Perspectives online

In 2010 Post Your Events On The Community Calendar

Don't forget to post your community events on our free calendar at www.tuscaloosachamber.com.

You can subscribe to get a daily email/RSS feed & add items to your own calendar! You can also get a reminder email or text.

We now offer groups an online event registration service for a nominal fee.

Also, a group may put our calendar on its website and may even purchase a sublicense to customize it.

Call 758.7588 for more info.



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A Christmas Message From The Chamber: A Season For Renewal of Spirit & Service



At this joyous time of the year, as we celebrate a most holy season and gather together as families and friends, it is a very good time to renew our spirit and commitments to community and service.

However, while we may be enjoying the blessings and excitement of the Christmas season, there are many that are hurting, in harms way, lonely and without any of the blessings that we enjoy. So, it is essential that our hearts be sensitive to the needs of others and reach out in service.

So, as we celebrate Christmas and look ahead to an exciting new year, it is only appropriate, and perhaps essential, that we pause and renew our commitments to our community, to our civic leadership roles, and to each other.

In addition, as you look for that perfect gift for those special people in your lives, let me share a gift list I was given several years ago:

Give the gift of **listening** to someone who is alone. Just be there and listen.

Give the gift of **affection**. Be kind and generous with your hugs, kisses and the gentle squeeze of a warm handshake.

Give the gift of a **note**. A simple and unexpected thank you or I love you will make such a wonderful, lasting difference.

Give the gift of **laughter**. Help someone smile and experience the joy of laughing. It might just cheer a lonely heart.

Give the gift of a **compliment**. A simple, kind word will encourage a heart and let someone know they are special.

Give the gift of a **favor**. For no reason, surprise someone with a thoughtful and unexpected service.

Give the gift of **solitude** and meditation to yourself. Sometimes, we need to be alone with God and our thoughts. It can be as refreshing as a Spring rain.

Give the gift of **prayer**. Pray for those on your Christmas list as well as those that need your encouragement. Let them know that they are so special that you talked to God about them.

From all of us at The Chamber, including our families – and from our hearts to yours – Merry Christmas and may God bless you with His joy !



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2010 Chamber Leadership Team Announced

Claude Edwards, President of Bryant Bank, has been elected 2010 Chairman of The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama, effective January 1st, following an organizational meeting of the Board of Directors. Edwards succeeds Randy Skagen, Vice President & General Manager of Nucor Steel.

In addition, **Lin Moore**, Chairman of Pritchett-Moore, Inc. was named



Chairman Elect of The Chamber for 2011; **Mark Sullivan**, President of The Bank of Tuscaloosa, was elected as 2010 Treasurer and Chairman Elect Elect; and **Attorney Ryan deGraffenried, III**, was named Legal Counsel. **Randy Skagen** as Immediate Past Chair, and **Johnnie Aycock**, President of The Chamber, will both serve on the 2010 Executive Committee.

Elected as Division Vice Chairs and members of the Executive Committee for the coming year were: Economic Development – **Bill Lloyd**, owner of Wilhagen's; Governmental Affairs – **Roy Clem**, General Manager of WVUA 7; Community Development – **Pam Smith**, Business Manager, Ellis Architects; Education & Workforce Development – **Gary Phillips**, owner of Premier Service Company, Organizational Development – **Fitzgerald Washington**, General Sales Manager of Buffalo Rock/Pepsi.

Claude Edwards, a 32-year veteran in banking, has served as President of Bryant Bank since its inception in 2005. A graduate of Tuscaloosa High School, he is also a graduate of the University of Alabama and the Graduate School of Banking of the South at Louisiana State University.

An active business and civic leader, Edwards serves on numerous boards including the Black Warrior Council of the Boy Scouts, Tuscaloosa County Industrial Development Authority, DCH Foundation, Hospice of West Alabama, Caring Days campaign chairman, and Counseling Ministry Professionals. He is an active member of the First United Methodist Church where he serves on the Finance Committee. Edwards is a graduate of Leadership Tuscaloosa and is a member of the 2009-2010 class of Leadership Alabama.

An effective leader of The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama, he has served on the board of directors and executive committee and has served as Chairman Elect during 2009. Recognized for his leadership, he was the recipient of the 2008 Charles Land Chamber Member of the Year.

"The Chamber is a vital part of the fabric of our community, so it is a special honor to serve as Chair of The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama," said Edwards.

"During this time of continued economic uncertainty, it is important for our Chamber to maintain our influence and leadership in the areas of economic development, workforce development and education, cultural development, and governmental and public affairs, while supporting and encouraging our members with value-added services."

"I'm a home town guy", said Edwards. "I was born, raised and educated in Tuscaloosa and believe we are blessed to live in a community that has so much to offer and so much potential yet to be realized. We have exceptional local governmental leaders, an engaged and diverse business community and a great heritage. With our

natural, human, cultural and educational resources, there should be nothing that we cannot achieve as a community.”

“We have enormous potential to take our K-12 educational systems to even higher levels of performance and excellence, and it is important that the business community get involved with our schools. We need to find creative and effective ways to address technical education and build the region’s workforce capacity. And it is vital that we leverage our cultural resources for economic advantage and build the most livable community in America,” emphasized Edwards.

“The recent announcement that Tuscaloosa is the 2009 Entrepreneurial American Community underscores the spirit of our community as well as the opportunity to build an even greater region,” said Edwards. “We have the total package for economic progress and livability.” And we have an extraordinary leadership team ready and willing to move forward to take on the challenges and opportunities to build an even greater community and region.”

The 2010 officers and directors take office effective January 1st and will be presented at The Chamber’s annual celebration on January 14, 2010 at the Hotel Capstone.

Founded in 1900, The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama is a private-sector based, volunteer organization representing almost 1,100 employers in the Tuscaloosa County/West Alabama region. The mission of The Chamber is to provide vision, leadership and be a catalyst for the advancement of the economic prosperity, business climate, and quality of life for the total community.

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Save This Date

**The Chamber's Annual Meeting
January 14th
Hotel Capstone
11:30am**



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Anders Toy Shoppe Now Open



A Ribbon Cutting was held on December 3, at 11:00 to "officially" open the new Anders Toy Shoppe located in downtown Northport. They are located at 419 Main Avenue. For more information, please contact Rich Anders at 752-0461.

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Regency Retirement Village Open House



Regency Retirement Village celebrated the renovation of their Independent and Assisted Living Facilities with an Open House on Thursday, December 10th, 11:00 am - 2 pm and 4:00pm - 7:00pm. They are located at 5001 Old Montgomery Highway. For additional information you can contact Donna Christian at 752-5500.

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Welcome New Members

Anderson Accounting

Regency Retirement Village

Capitol Park Antiques, Interiors & Gardens

Alabama Book Store, Inc.

Midtown Village

ellie crimson

JM Wireless

Congratulations to JM Wireless who was our 100th new member this year! Special thank you to Laura Farmer, Ambassadors, Board of Directors, staff and volunteers who made this year's membership initiatives such a success.

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Buy Local Tuscaloosa County

[Click Here](#) to view The Chamber and AAF Tuscaloosa's latest Shop Local commercial.

By shopping locally...

- You keep dollars in the Tuscaloosa County economy
- You create local jobs
- You help our children through investing in education
- You embrace what makes us unique
- You develop Tuscaloosa's infrastructure and not another cities
- You help build our community
- You create more choices
- You invest in the local entrepreneurs
- You help make Tuscaloosa County a destination



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Members In The News

Tuscaloosa Accounting Firm Announces New Location, Name

A leading Tuscaloosa accounting firm, Jessup, Ingram & Associates, LLP, recently announced changes to its name and location. To better reflect its growing client base and services, the firm's name has been changed to include partner Robert T. (Robb) Burns, Jr. The firm's new name is Jessup, Ingram, Burns & Associates, LLP. Mr. Burns joined the firm as a partner in July, 2007.

In late December 2009, Jessup, Ingram, Burns & Associates, LLP will move into its new office building at 204 Marina Drive, just north of the Black Warrior River off of Rice Mine Road in Tuscaloosa. The new building provides employees over 9,300 square feet of office space and the latest in equipment and information technology. *"We can't wait to move into our new home. The new space will allow for future growth so that we can better serve our clients for decades to come,"* comments managing partner, Bobby Ingram, CPA.

United Way Campaign Celebration

Join United Way of West Alabama, Thursday, December 17, 2009 from 5 p.m. - 7 p.m. in the beautiful setting of the Westervelt-Warner Museum to find out how much the people of West Alabama raised for United Way this year. You'll enjoy delicious food from A Cutting Edge Caterers, beverages donated by local businesses, and holiday music

*performed by students in Tuscaloosa City Schools' Strings in Schools program. **FREE ADMISSION/No RSVP required.***

New Chamber Member Offers Welcome and Member Discount

Ellie Crimson an affordable women's clothing and accessory shop in celebration of joining The Chamber is offering any member a 20% off your purchase from now until January 31, 2010. Ellie Crimson is located on the Strip next to Swen. For more information call 205.345.3155.

"Green" Vehicles At T-Town Motorsports

T-Town Motorsports are proud to announce the addition of Tomberlin Automotive Group (TAG) to their lineup of energy efficient vehicles. Tomberlin produce all electric street legal golf cars referred to as LSV's (low speed vehicles). These golf cars meet ALDOT motor vehicle requirements to obtain tag registration. Please drop by for a test drive today. www.tomberlin.net

Shelton State Request Member's Feedback

As Shelton State prepares to upgrade its Web presence, input from our community and its leaders is crucial in developing the optimal site for a variety of audiences. Understanding that everyone's schedules are routinely full, particularly this time of year, we have developed a brief survey to help us gain some insight from users who may or may not regularly visit www.sheltonstate.edu. When you have a few moments, please visit the site and fill out the brief survey to help us move forward in this process.

You may use this link (<https://studentsurvey.sheltonstate.edu/survey/Fall%202009-10/website/website.htm>) to get to the survey, or just access it from the front page. We also welcome any suggestions, comments, criticisms, that you feel cannot be adequately shared through the survey, feel free to contact us at 391-5838 or cthrelkeld@sheltonstate.edu. Thanks in advance for your participation!

Wild Birds Unlimited Spreads Christmas Cheer

Now until December 19th, customers at The Tuscaloosa Wild Birds Unlimited Store located at 312 Merchants Walk, with a \$20 purchase you will automatically be entered into a drawing for a special hand-turned piece created by local artist Maurice Clabaugh.

They will also be having a drawing for a \$100.00 gift certificate to Wild Birds Unlimited on Monday, December 21st at Noon as well ----no purchase necessary to win this gift card.

Nancy Taylor Day Spa Member Discount

Nancy Taylor Day Spa provides refuge from the cold while we celebrate the Twelve Blessings of Christmas this year with hot apple cider, home made cookies, and chocolate delights! We are offering a 10% discount on all gift certificates, and 20% off all of those 100 dollars or more throughout the month of December. We're confident you'll find the perfect gifts, while enjoying our enchanting Christmas atmosphere! Happy Holidays!

NYE Gala 2009

Tickets are now on sale for Tuscaloosa's New Year's Eve Gala sponsored by the Junior League of Tuscaloosa! At this special event there will be live music featuring Brother-to-Brother, an open bar, gaming tables, dancing, great food and more! Play Blackjack, Roulette, Craps and more for your chance to win fabulous prizes including a weekend at the beach, amazing spa treatments and a Daniel Moore painting! The fun starts at 8:00 p.m. at The Zone at Bryant Denny Stadium. A Champagne toast will follow the evening's countdown to 2010! Stay for coffee and pastries until 1:00 a.m.

Tickets are \$75 per person. To purchase tickets email nyetuscaloosa@gmail.com or call the Junior League office at call 205-345-7416.

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