



perspectives



**A message for
our members p. 18**





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Habitat partner DeeDee Durham and her son, Brian Foster, pick a house plan. The Durham/Foster house will break ground soon.

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perspectives

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| | |
|--|---|
| Chairman's Column The importance of satellite meetings... 4 | School Stuff The CHOICES Program growing strong ... 9 |
| Executive Committee Our new leadership... 5 | Leadership Tuscaloosa Here are some of their experiences. ... 10 |
| Staff Profile: Carolyn Tubbs Putting Education and Business together. ... 6 | Downtown Motor Company: Going the extra mile Southern hospitality that drives a business. ... 14 |
| Northport Citizen of the year Serving customers and her community. ... 7 | Mark Moody: New Ideas Stretch Success for Jupiter Bar and Grill ... 15 |
| Adopt-A-School A hole in one for the schools. ... 8 | Introduction of new members Welcome them to the team. ... 16 |
| Re/Max Partners opening Real estate with a new location. ... 7 | Spiller Grand Opening Fully furnished in Northport. ... 17 |
| Office Depot Opening Now your office needs in Northport... 8 | Tale of the Wayfaring Wrapper Picking up after ourselves ... 18 |

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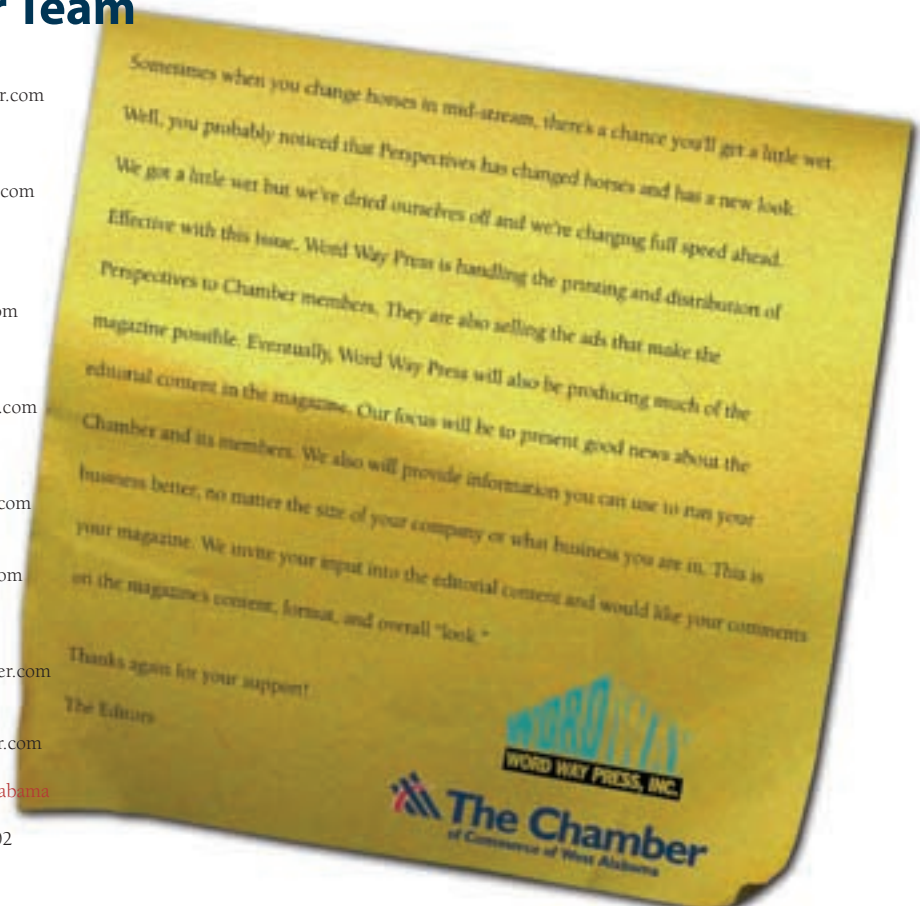
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Chairman's Column



A year or so ago, The Chamber set up the President's Council, a group of volunteers whose primary focus is to help us add value to a member's investment in our organization.

Their first effort has been to plan and implement a series of "satellite Chamber meetings" in various parts of the county. There are several reasons for these meetings, but the most important reason is to offer members, at a location near their business and at a time that might be less disruptive, an opportunity to get answers to questions about what The Chamber is (or isn't) doing and to provide input to Chamber leadership.

Six such meetings have been held: at Merchants and Farmers Bank, Premier Service Company, Riverhill Enterprises, Woods 'n' Water, Tidwell DeWitt LLC and Tingle X-Ray. Attendance at these meetings has grown,

and we believe the meetings will eventually become a staple of The Chamber's programming. The President's Council, under the very able leadership of Bernie Grappe and Michael Ford, is certainly not disheartened. They know that the satellite meeting concept is a good idea, but they also understand that sometimes new ideas take time to catch on.

If the Council hasn't planned a satellite meeting in your business "neighborhood", just hang in there. One will be coming to a location near you before too long.

And when you get an invitation to that meeting, I hope you'll put the date on your calendar. Then go to the meeting, enjoy yourself, learn more about your Chamber, give us your input, and network with others.

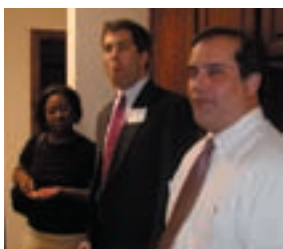
Satellite meetings can be one way to maximize your investment in The Chamber.



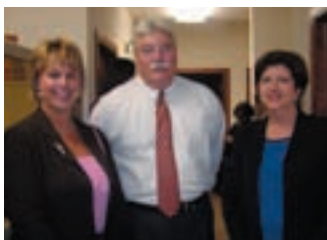
Satellite Meetings

The President's Council this fall has coordinated a series of satellite meetings for Chamber members. Six of these meetings have been held in different areas of the county. The meetings are designed to give Chamber members an opportunity to network with fellow members, ask questions about Chamber programming, and give input to Chamber leadership.

The location was great—Woods 'n' Water—the food was good, and the enthusiasm of the President's Council team was super. Unfortunately, thunderstorms and the forecast for possible tornadoes kept attendance at this November satellite meeting low. Left to right under very threatening skies are: Gene Poole, Chamber vice chairman for organizational development; Mark Collins, Chamber member; Lynne Hughes and Mary Power, President's Council members, and Michael Ford, President's Council co-chairman.



One of the most recent satellite meetings was held at Tidwell DeWitt LLC. Ray Dyer, right, of that firm was host for the meeting. Sparkle Mallisham, a member of the President's Council, handled introductions at the meeting, while Michael Ford, co-chairman of the Council, talked about Chamber activities.



Nancy Dawkins (left) chairs the Chamber's Northport Advisory Council. She attended the satellite meeting at Tidwell DeWitt LLC, as did Alan Harper, director of economic development for the City of Northport. Carol Woodruff, a member of the President's Council, chaired the Council team that planned the meeting.





Executive Committee

Our new Executive Committee

Following an intense planning session in late October, The Chamber's 2005 Executive Committee will soon have a road map for what promises to be another busy—and exciting—year.

The Executive Committee serves as the helmsman for The Chamber's Board of Directors.

"We have an outstanding leadership team for 2005," said Howard Garrison, 2005 chairman. "The team is hardworking and committed to The Chamber's mission.

"Of course, we're building on a mighty successful tenure by Jim Flemming," Garrison said. "His team set some high standards for the 2005 team."

Garrison said The Chamber would soon be sharing its 2005 Program of Work with the organization's 1,100 members.

The 2005 Executive Committee includes:

Howard Garrison

Duckworth-Morris-Garrison Real Estate,
Chairman.

Gene Poole

Hudson Poole Jewelers,
Chairman-elect.

Jim Flemming

Bank of Tuscaloosa
Immediate Past Chairman

Kimberle Barton

CTX Mortgage
Vice Chair for Organizational Development.

Carolyn Dahl

University of Alabama College of Continuing Studies
Vice Chair for Education and Workforce Development.

Jim Harrison III

Harrison Galleries
Vice Chair for Business Development.

Lin Moore

Pritchett-Moore
Vice Chair for Community Development.

Dr. Robert Witt

President, University of Alabama
Vice Chair for Governmental Affairs.

Jeff Whittington

National Bank of Commerce
Treasurer.

Herbert Newell

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Carolyn Tubbs



One key objective of The Chamber is to work with business and industry to help improve the quality of education in Tuscaloosa County. Staff member Carolyn Tubbs plays an important staff role in working toward that objective.

Carolyn is a native of Mississippi and commutes from Greene County to Tuscaloosa every workday. She is the education assistant for the Adopt-A-School Program and assists with the administration of the CHOICES program. And of course, like all

Chamber staff members, she pitches in to help, when needed, in other areas of Chamber operations.

“I really like the part of my job that requires me to talk to a lot of people, both in education and in business,” Carolyn said. “I enjoy meeting new people, and this interaction gives me an opportunity to better my communications skills.”

Carolyn feels fortunate to work with Chamber leaders and volunteers. “Until I came to work here, I didn’t have a chance to be a part of an organization that’s constantly focused on improving the community and the people in it.”

“I’m part of an organization that’s truly making a difference.” In addition to a stiff workload at The Chamber, next Spring Carolyn will receive her Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management from Stillman College. She’s also attended Shelton State and received a degree from Wallace Community College in Selma. She was graduated from Paramount High School.

Job One for Carolyn, though, is being wife to husband, Keith, and mother to Le’Lashe, Joshua, Gregory and Tre. She’s also a Troop Leader for the Girl Scouts. She is a praise and worship leader at the Worldwide Church of God, and is a member of the current Leadership Tuscaloosa class.

To take a breather? For Carolyn, it’s watching “Law and Order” on television.

She sees the Adopt-A-School Program as an important part of The Chamber’s work. “The foundation of any business is education. What better way to improve that foundation than working with those ‘at the source?’”

Carolyn believes business, by investing in the Adopt-A-School Program, is investing in students, who are the future of the community and its future leaders.

The CHOICES program is directed toward 8th graders, and Carolyn talked about how it teaches students to make wise choices and practice self-discipline. “It’s a highly valuable program, full of great information for the kids,” she added.

Carolyn’s enthusiasm for Chamber work is evident. “The Chamber continuously searches for ways to improve the quality of life in the Tuscaloosa community. Through the years, The Chamber has had a major impact on the community, and many businesses and industries have benefited from those efforts.”

“I’m glad to be a part of The Chamber Team.”

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Northport Citizen of the year

Serving customers and her community



When Frances Rice Pool isn't serving customers at Stein Mart, she's often serving her community, Northport.

And her community service was recognized on October 4 when Frances was named 2004 Citizen of the Year in Northport. Mal Moore, athletics director at the University of Alabama, was the featured speaker at the banquet. The Chamber coordinates the recognition program each year.

Frances' interests range widely, and so do her community service efforts. She's been active in the Friends of Historic Northport organization. But it's her work on behalf of education that really stand out.

She was involved in the Foundation for Academic Excellence and serves as president of the Tuscaloosa County High School Alumni Association. She helped raise funds to build a new school for her alma mater.

Other Northport leaders were recognized at the banquet:

Heritage Pioneer Award: Carl Adams, Adams Antiques

Educator of the Year: Wayne Vickers, principal, Crestmont Elementary

Religious Leader of the Year: Dan Livingston, deacon, Northport Baptist Church

Business Person of the Year: Charles Sealy, Sealy Realty and Construction

Public Safety Leader of the Year: Lt. Mike Sparks, Northport Fire Department



Re/Max's new location

Smiles were aplenty recently when Re/Max Partners opened their new offices on University Boulevard in Tuscaloosa.

Among those smiling was Tuscaloosa Mayor Al DuPont, who dropped by the office at 1707 University Blvd. to cut a ribbon for Iris Hinton, broker, and her staff.

Left to right are: Cindy Denney, Iris Hinton, Mayor DuPont, Jane Nichols, Bret Reece, Karen Mullins, and Connie Pate.

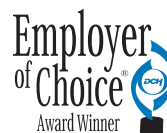
Re/Max Partners is a new member of The Chamber



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DCH Regional Medical Center
Northport Medical Center
Fayette Medical Center
Pickens County Medical Center





Adopt-a-School golf brief

A hole in one serving for our schools



It is poetic justice that a company which, among other things, deals in trophies, should have the team that wins the first place trophy in the 2004 Adopt-A-School golf tournament.

The Randall Publishing Company team of David Wright, Tommy Belk, Shane Elmore, and Jack Harris won overall honors for lowest net score in the tournament, which attracted 33 teams representing 24 schools. The Randall team played for Central High School, which will now keep the trophy until next year's tournament.

The tournament was held at the Country Club of Tuscaloosa.

"We especially want to thank our corporate sponsors for the tournament," said Deloris McMullen, coordinator of the Adopt-A-School Program for The Chamber. "Those sponsors were Alabama Gas and Jim Myers Drugs."

David Kelly was chair of the tournament.

While the golfers were golfing, a women's doubles tennis tournament was drawing another great crowd of players. Some 44 teams representing 23 schools participated at Indian Hills Country Club.

Competition was held in four categories, and the winners were:

All Americans: Sharon Quimby and Marnie Elmore

Lettermen: Donna Terry and Rebecca Fletcher

Varsity: Gina Robertson and Kim Anderson

Preps: Caryn Madden and Laura Ryan

Angela Burton served as chair for the tournament.



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Office Depot Grand Opening



Office Depot's recent ribbon-cutting drew a large and enthusiastic crowd. Among those who crowded around the ceremonial ribbon are, left to right, Charity Golden of Colonial Bank and a Chamber Ambassador; John Myers, Northport City Council; Steve Webb, Northport City Council; John Warner, district manager for Office Depot; Carla Bailey, CHOM and a Chamber Ambassador; Northport Mayor Harvey Fretwell; Chamber Chairman Jim Flemming of the Bank of Tuscaloosa; Gloria Effinger, Cingular Wireless and a Chamber Ambassador; Store Manager Carl Wright; Chamber Vice Chairman Gene Poole of Hudson Poole Jewelers, and Patti Jackson of Jamison, Money and Farmer and a Chamber Ambassador.





Schools

Helping make the right CHOICES for our Schools

Volunteerism is the lifeblood of Chamber programming, and 23 such volunteers made sure the CHOICES program this school semester had a strong and regular heartbeat.

These volunteers presented the special program to 8th graders in all Tuscaloosa County Schools. Some 950 young people learned about the importance of making good decisions about their education and their life in general.

Deloris McMullen and Carolyn Tubbs of The Chamber staff are looking for additional volunteers to present the program to 8th grade students in the Tuscaloosa City School System. What's involved? A 3.5 hour training session in January. Once trained, the volunteer presents CHOICES during two class periods on two consecutive days during the first quarter of 2005.

Some special sponsors have made the CHOICES

program possible this year. They include: Afflink, The Bank of Tuscaloosa, Harrison Galleries LLC, McAbee Construction, Regions Bank, and Phifer Wire Products.

OK, Chamber Members, Here's Your Chance.

Here's a great opportunity for some of you to make a difference in the lives of our school children.

Four schools need co-adopters in the Adopt-A-School Program, coordinated by The Chamber. They are Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary, Myrtlewood Elementary, Northside Middle School, and Walker Elementary.

Co-adopters don't have to bear the full responsibility and work load in working with a particular school. They can share in the challenges—and the fun—offered by the Adopt-A-School Program.

So call Deloris McMullen at The Chamber. Her telephone number is 391-0563.



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Leadership Tuscaloosa Graduates Tout Benefits Of Program

More than 750 people have gone through the Leadership Tuscaloosa experience over the last 20 years. This program, coordinated by The Chamber and the College of Continuing Studies at the University of Alabama, has helped prepare these people for leadership roles in the community. We thought it would interesting to talk to some of the graduates about their experience.



Angela Fulmer
DCH Regional Medical System
Class of 1989

How do you feel Leadership Tuscaloosa has helped you?

I can't say enough about the value of Leadership Tuscaloosa in helping me to improve my personal skills, learn about community issues and to develop a network among others in the community who are

working to help make this a great community in which to live and work.

What was the most important/interesting thing you learned during your Leadership Tuscaloosa experience?

It was very interesting to learn so much about the community in such a short period of time. It was fascinating to hear from so many agencies and individuals who are working to address the many complex community issues. We were able to ask tough questions in an environment of common purpose and trust.

What are you doing now, in terms of involvement in the community, that you might not be doing if not for your Leadership Tuscaloosa experience?

I had a great opportunity to serve in many capacities in the community because of Leadership Tuscaloosa. First of all, the Chamber did an excellent job in following up with graduates and providing avenues of service. Whether working with community leadership, education, quality of life or economic development, I continued to learn and apply what I gained from Leadership Tuscaloosa. My most recent work that evolved due to Leadership Tuscaloosa involves Challenge 21. I was involved in the original series of countywide meetings where citizens described the kind of community they want for their families. Through Challenge 21, I have continued to be active in facilitating citizen involvement and deliberation about community issues.

Dr. Hobson Bryan
University of Alabama
Class of 1986



How do you feel Leadership Tuscaloosa helped you?

The substance was excellent and the topics were engaging. But the networking really was the most helpful. It meant a lot to me to get to know other people who are interested in the community and have a sense of community responsibility.

What was the most important/interesting thing you learned during your Leadership Tuscaloosa experience?

I was really impressed with the concerted effort by the community to develop new jobs and develop new industry. I also learned a lot about our city government.

What are you doing now, in terms of involvement in the community, that you might not be doing if not for your Leadership Tuscaloosa experience?

I've served on some committees, especially those relating to the environment. I was involved early on with the efforts to preserve the quality of Lake Tuscaloosa. For the most part, though, I've worked behind the scenes. Leadership Tuscaloosa was a big help in showing me whom to talk to, who could get things done. After all, when all's said and done, it's all about people.

Don Kelly
Tuscaloosa County Park and Recreation
Authority
Class of 1985



How do you feel Leadership Tuscaloosa helped you?

The program introduced me to other aspects of the community. I learned about the total community. I also developed relationships with a variety of individuals within the community, and I've been able to learn something from each of them.

What was the most important/interesting thing you learned during your Leadership Tuscaloosa experience?

