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DOWNTOWN ALLIANCE NEWS

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BANKING CHANGES REFLECT THE GROWTH OF DOWNTOWN MOBILE

By Rhonda Davis

The banking industry has seen many changes throughout the years, but none as wide-spread as the changes we have experienced recently. Through bank acquisitions and mergers, some of the familiar old names we have seen for decades have fallen by the way-side and new names of huge regional banks have appeared. The growth of the coastal region, the effects of several violent hurricane seasons, and the renaissance of downtown Mobile have attracted new players to downtown's banking scene. In the mist of all the change one locally owned bank has established itself as a powerful banking house; a small South Carolina bank is coming in to test the market; and a bank from Canada has purchased long established bank branches and set up their Alabama operations in downtown.

A significant change that is affecting Mobile is the merger of AmSouth Bank with Regions Bank. These two powerhouse banks have had a presence in downtown Mobile for decades. Originally known as First National Bank and Merchants National Bank respectively, they have served Mobilians for generations. Their magnificent buildings were anchors in downtown, defining our financial district, and they employed hundreds of people while servicing thousands more.

As many of you know, the mergers of these two large and powerful banks caused a monopoly in the industry and the Federal government declared that AmSouth branches had to be sold off, opening the door for RBC Centura Bank and their parent company Royal Bank of Canada to purchase the branches and enter the Mobile area. Many of you AmSouth customers experienced the first phase of the change early this spring with the divestiture of several AmSouth branches and the conversion of those branches to RBC Centura Bank. However, AmSouth's downtown branch and offices were not included in the divestiture.

The former AmSouth Bank, located for decades in the AmSouth Building, has already gone through a temporary signage change and will be fully converted to Regions Bank on July 13. The move of the former AmSouth Bank into the RSA Tower will tentatively take place in November. At that time the leadership and departmental offices will move from their long-time home at the corner of St. Francis Street and Royal Street across Royal Street into their new offices. Regions Bank will occupy four floors in the RSA Tower and open a new branch in the Lobby. Regions Bank customers will then have the option of banking in the historic Regions Bank Building on St. Joseph Street or in the newly constructed RSA Tower. Regions Bank will continue to offer Drive-Thru services in the "Car Park" at the corner of St. Michael Street and Royal Street.

Regions Bank is the largest bank in Mobile and offers every banking service available. They offer everything from a simple basic checking account to investment banking and financial planning to commercial banking and mortgage loans.

RBC Centura Bank is a new bank with familiar faces. With the purchase of the AmSouth Bank branches, RBC Centura retained those employees and recruited some of AmSouth's most talented downtown bankers to fill key management positions. Among those who joined RBC Centura are Cedric Hatcher who assumes responsibility as Regional President for Business Banking and Claire McCarron, Senior Commercial Account Manager. "We may be the new bank in town, but our people aren't new. Most of them are the same familiar faces our customers are used to seeing," stated Scott Stafford, President, Consumer and Private Banking for Alabama. "We offer our customers that personalized attention of a smaller regional bank, with the resources of the seventh largest financial institution in North America."

"We are extremely excited about entering Alabama as the sixth state in which we have branches," Stafford stated. "RBC Centura Bank has been providing financial services to customers in the southeast for over 100 years and we are in Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Florida and now Alabama. You will be interested in knowing that our state headquarters for Alabama will be located in downtown Mobile. We are the second largest bank in Mobile and we believe Alabama represents tremendous opportunity for our growth and look forward to strengthening our position in the market," he continued.

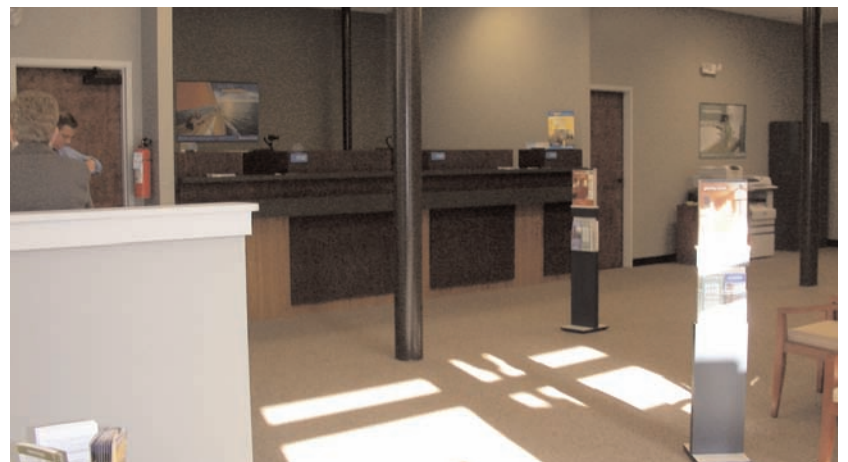
RBC Centura Bank has established their state headquarters in Landmark Square, 169 Dauphin Street.

When asked if and when a RBC Centura Bank downtown branch will open Cedric Hatcher reported "We have completed our site search, but final negotiations are still pending. We hope to make this announcement very soon and to have a branch open within the next 120 days."

"RBC Centura Bank's entry into the downtown Mobile market has created several jobs of which we have chosen to employ Alabama residents, those that are familiar with the customers as well as the market. Of the nearly 450 employees in the state working for RBC Centura, only four of those employees are from other states," shared Stafford. "We may be a new bank in town but our people aren't new," added Hatcher. "We want the community to know that we are committed to making this community we call home a better place to work and live."

Another new bank coming to town is Woodlands Bank, opening this summer in the newly renovated Park Building, located on the northwest corner of Conception Street and Dauphin Street, across from Bienville Square. Woodlands Bank is a small bank based out of Beaufort, South Carolina. Heading the expansion into Alabama will be Mobile native Michael Druhan. Woodlands Bank has opened two branches already in the Mobile area: one at 901 Springhill Avenue and one in Eight Mile. With the opening of the downtown branch, Woodlands Bank will occupy one of downtown's most desired corners. Their location on Bienville Square is another example of expanded banking options offered to consumers off St. Joseph Street.

Hancock Bank is another new player in downtown. New to our area, but not to the banking industry, Hancock Bank was founded in 1899 in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi. Hancock Bank opened their new downtown branch on Monday, April 30 on the ground floor of the newly restored St. Emanuel Place, a mixed-use development on the corner of Dauphin Street and St. Emanuel Street, also across from Bienville Square. "Our new location at 127 Dauphin Street supports the ongoing resurgence of downtown Mobile – an effort that has been underway for some time," stated Jerry Broughton, Mobile Market President, Hancock Bank.



Hancock Bank opened their new downtown branch on April 30 in St. Emanuel Place, 127 Dauphin Street.

"Hancock's move into downtown Mobile reflects our century-old business philosophy of providing a full range of consumer and commercial financial solutions for families and businesses – especially small businesses – throughout the Gulf South cities and towns Hancock has called home since 1899," explained Broughton. "We opened a business financial center for loan production in west Mobile in September 2003. To enable us to serve customers relocating to metropolitan Mobile after Hurricane Katrina, we received special limited retail banking privileges from the state in 2005, followed by a banking charter in 2006. Many of our officers, associates, and existing customers have family and friends in Mobile, regularly travel in the area, and/or do business in Mobile and

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DIRECTOR'S LETTER

By Elizabeth Sanders

SURVEYING DOWNTOWN

This winter the Downtown Mobile Alliance mailed out a survey to 400 residents of downtown Mobile. These were people who lived in different neighborhoods of downtown including Church Street East, De Tonti, and LoDa. We asked them a bunch of different questions about the places they shop and dine, and the services they use; and we asked them to comment on the safety and cleanliness of the area. Lastly, we asked them about themselves – whether they rent or own; household income, age, etc. The findings were quite fascinating.

First of all, we asked people to rate “Places to Shop” “Places to Eat” “Entertainment” “Recreation and Health Facilities” and “Services.” Most people rated Downtown Grocery Stores or Markets as “Lacking or Insufficient” (82%). This was no surprise to us as we hear all the time about the need for a good grocery store. Right now we just do not have enough residents to attract a grocery, but what is exciting is the possibility of small markets taking up the opportunity. Todd Henson, owner of restaurants “219” and “La Pizzeria”, is nearing completion of his new market. About a year ago Mr. Henson, purchased the building at 217 - 219 Conti and has been renovating the space at 217 for a neighborhood market. Mr. Henson envisions doing a robust carry out/take home business with prepared foods, but also plans to be a useful neighborhood market by having milk, health & beauty aids, wine, produce, etc. We all need to support this market and make it work for the neighborhood. How wonderful it will be for all of us to not have to drive 3-5 miles west of our homes to pick up those basic items. Mr. Henson promises to have a version of “window delivery” for the truly harried among us. Others are trying to fill in pieces of this untapped and growing residential market – to which we say, “Hurry up!”

Interestingly “Pharmacies” received a fairly good rating. 66% indicated a rating of “Very Satisfied” or “Adequate” for “Downtown Pharmacies,” with most saying that they used the CVS at Broad Street. “Convenience Store” “Home Furnishings” “Men's Clothing” and “Women's Clothing” all were rated “Lacking or Insufficient” by more than 50% of the respondents. This may suggest that there are some untapped markets for some of our existing retailers to look into. Possibly some new lines in an existing store or new stores with different lines/concepts might be worth considering. We have a small, but excellent group of professional retailers downtown who may be the first group willing to look at underserved markets. The planned renovation of 51 South Conception into the “Parkside” home furnishings store is something to look forward to. Owner Tim Burt of Birmingham hopes to be open in late fall, just in time for the holiday season. Of course it all depends on how quickly his construction goes.

Regarding “Places to Eat” and “Entertainment” the picture was much better in certain categories. “Casual Dining” and “Fine Dining” got 76% and 47%, respectively, rating “Very Satisfied” or “Adequate.” Coffee Shops” and “Fast Food” got 50% and 62%, respectively, rating “Very Satisfied” or “Adequate.” Still, a whopping 37% of downtown residents rated “Fine Dining” as “Lacking or Insufficient.” Clearly, there is room for more fine dining establishments. Ever try to go to Noja without planning far in advance? You have to be pretty lucky to get in. All of the categories for “Entertainment” were rated pretty highly by those who had an opinion. This seems to reflect the strength of our entertainment offering.

We found that most of the respondents felt very safe downtown. The ratings dropped slightly between day and night, but I would expect that to be the case. Still the numbers of residents who reported not feeling safe or feel that downtown is dangerous were very small.

Cleanliness likewise received fairly high ratings. Overall, 83% of residents ranked downtown “Very Clean” or “Moderately Clean.” Like with safety, a very small percentage gave the lowest rankings in any of the cleanliness categories. In terms of lighting, the BID area received the highest ratings for lighting, with only 14% saying that the area was not well lit or too dark. The other neighborhoods that are more residential in nature received slightly lower ratings on lighting, but neighborhoods tend to be less well lit so that people have some darkness at night.

The last opinion question we asked dealt with “Walkability.” The ratings were strong overall (66%) and for Dauphin Street (70%) that the respondents rated these areas as “Pleasant and Safe,” the highest rating. Some other streets, and you know them, rated poorly on the “Walkability” scale.

The demographics of the respondents were most interesting. 66% were owners and 34% were renters. The two largest income groups were “Under \$20,000” at 28% and “\$100,000 or more” at 25%. 22% of the respondents were under 45, but 50% were 60 and older. We have both ends of the spectrum living downtown and we see this trend continuing with the types of housing units that are under consideration/construction. How wonderful and diverse this makes our neighborhood.

We got so much wonderful feedback from this survey. Our thanks go out to all who took the time to fill it out and return it to us. Please go to our website – www.downtownmobile.org – to read the full report on the survey. Our thanks go to our winter interns – Adrienne Hunter and Colleen Macon and our spring intern Leslie Carpenter for their work on this survey. They did extensive research to create the survey and the mailing list and compiled the data into the form we have it today.

LIBRARY OPENS AFTER MAJOR RENOVATION

by Rhonda Davis

June marks the long awaited opening of the Mobile Public Library's Ben May Main Library. Weeks before the opening, Carol Hunter and I had the privilege of touring the Main Library with the delightful Amber Guy, Information Services Officer for the Library. With workmen and craftsmen still hard at it, the Library was abuzz during the final days of construction. During our walk-through shelves were being assembled and installed; the carpet was almost completely laid; the plasterwork and paint were still drying; lighting was being wired and hung; and furniture was in the process of being delivered and unwrapped.

The renovation and construction of the new 22,000 square foot addition brings the Ben May Main Library to a total of 49,258 square feet. The construction cost - an impressive \$10,000,000.

The changes to the Library are amazing and well thought-out. On the first floor, visitors and users will find a new Café and Coffee Bar run by Sean McLaughlin of Creative Catering. The Children's Library has expanded and includes a new Storytime Room, lots of new low shelves that are easy for young readers to reach, a computer area for kids, and family restrooms. The second floor expansion houses a new Non-Fiction area, the



The new circulation desk is conveniently located in the spacious addition near the new entrance.

Popular Collection, and an adult reading room.

One of the most stunning moments of the tour came when we viewed the new entrance on the south side of the Library. The entrance features a beautiful and well-designed stained glass logo set in the top of an impressive two-story wall of windows and doors. The logo is perfectly designed to complement the 1928 feeling of the building. The new entrance floods the building with natural light and takes people directly from the parking lot to the circulation desk. The new second floor balcony overlooks the entrance.

There are many new additions to the Library and enhancements to the services offered. One important change is the addition of a Technology Center for Adults. New computers have been installed too, bringing the total of Internet-accessible computers to 65. Reading seats have been expanded from 70 to 161.

The Reading Room, the room that most people identify with the downtown Library, has been restored thanks to an additional \$250,000 donation from the Crampton Trust. The Reading Room has been renamed the Katherine C. Cochran/Crampton Trust Reading Room in honor of this generous gift. The restored Reading Room will still feature the beautiful chandeliers and matching bronze torchieres that lends stateliness to the room. Windows original to the building but long covered with bookcases have been opened up creating cozy reading niches between the shelves. You can now see through the old building into the new expansion area. The most interesting and subtle addition is the faux painting of the columns and walls surrounding the room. The faux painting was done to mimic the scored limestone used in the 1928 construction of the Library and uncov-



The Katherine C. Cochran/Crampton Trust Reading Room, pictured during the renovation process, has been restored and refurbished. The room will feature new reading tables and chairs, new décor, the original marble steps, and the stunning newly restored chandeliers and bronze torchieres original to the building.

ered when the original wooden shelves were removed for the renovation. The Reading Room is truly impressive. And by the way, the original wooden shelves have been reinstalled.

Bernheim Hall has also gone through a major renovation. The acoustic shell has been taken down exposing the original footprint of the stage. Windows were also uncovered and restored. The original ticket window was discovered, and though it is unusable, has been restored. The color scheme of the Hall was changed to a lovely cream and white with soft warm brown accents. The seats have been reupholstered and reinstalled. Now Bernheim Hall is light and elegant. A new Reception Room has been added adjacent to the performance hall for special events, artist receptions, and meetings.

Holle Briskman, a past President of the Library's Board of Directors, has served as Co-Chair of the Capital Campaign, along with Conrad P. Ambrecht. A long-time Mobile Public Library supporter and leader, Briskman has worked tirelessly for the Library. "This has been a dream of the Board of Directors since the 1950s. Now in 2007 we see the completion of a long term vision for the Mobile Public Library system. In the past five years we have built a new Toulminville Library, built the West Regional Library, expanded the Library at Trinity Gardens, moved and opened the Theodore Oaks Library, and constructed a new Library on Dauphin Island Parkway on the same site as the Library destroyed by Hurricane Fredrick in 1979. With the opening of the Ben May Main Library, we will have fulfilled our charge," proudly stated Briskman. "And we have no future plans for projects," she laughed.

According to Briskman, one of the most amazing things to experience during this process has been to work with the Library staff. "The staff has been incredible," bragged Briskman. "They have given money to the capital campaign and been good stewards of the property. They have physically moved the Library's books four times. They packed and moved everything from the Main Library to Expo Hall before construction began. When Expo Hall was damaged during the Hurricane, they packed everything and moved it to Mini Main. They then



New shelves and a new desk are just part of the additions to the second floor Non-Fiction area.

packed one more time and moved back into the Ben May Main. They are incredible. We could not have done this without their dedication."

The Ben May Main Library was originally constructed in 1928 and designed by renowned architect George Rogers. Funds to construct the original library were raised by local citizens who advocated for a library in Mobile.

The new addition and renovation plans were designed by Nick Holmes, III. The design will allow Library goers to see where the old building stops, and keeps the transition into the new spaces defined but seamless at the same time. The scale of design is perfect and some additional touches like the decorative fireplace in the Adult Reading Room contribute to the historic feel of the Library. Original materials of the building were salvaged and recycled in other areas of the building too. For example the tile you see on the floor in the



The newly constructed South Entrance features two stories of windows and a beautiful new stained glass logo.

new Reception Hall has been moved from another area of the building and reinstalled.

The construction was executed by Rod Cook Construction Incorporated.

The June opening of the Library marks the kickoff of the very popular Summer Reading Program. The Mobile Public Library Summer Reading Program serves as the largest summer reading program in the State of Alabama.

The Ben May Main Library is located at 701 Government Street. For more information on this and other branches of the Mobile Public Library, please visit their website at www.mplonline.org.

Ben May Main Library Summer Events

June 2 – Summer Library Program Kickoff, guest appearance by Winnie the Pooh, 10:00 a.m.

June 7 – The Mobile Assembly of Sages and Savants, A Night of Southern Poetry, 7:30 p.m., Bernheim Hall

June 9 – The Children of Summers Past: Work & Leisure, 10:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m.

June 11 – Classics Revisited Book Club, 6:30 p.m.
It's A Mystery Film Series

Tuesdays, 7:00 p.m., Bernheim Hall

June 12 - The Thin Man

June 19 - The Return of the Pink Panther

June 26 – TBA

July 11 – Classics Revisited Book Club, 6:30 p.m.

Gotta Dance Film Series

Tuesdays, 7:00 p.m., Bernheim Hall

July 10 – For Me and My Gal

July 17 – Billy Elliot

July 24 – Shall We Dance

GO ZONE BOND APPLICATION UPDATE

By Denise Browning, Hunter Ventures

In October of 2006 the Downtown Mobile Alliance prepared an application for a \$46 million Gulf Opportunities Zone bond allocation, which was sent to the Governor with a letter of support from Mayor Sam Jones. The application pooled together funding for 17 borrowers and 28 projects in the downtown area. 65% suffered direct damage from Hurricane Katrina. 57% of the properties have been vacant for at least four years, and some for decades. 80% are new economic developments. Projects requesting funding ranged from \$175,000 to \$15 million in size.

Within this application 3 projects had funding needs of \$5 million or more. The rest were generally too small to warrant the upfront costs associated with issuing tax exempt bonds. The benefit to a pooled project of this size is that it allows smaller borrowers to gain access to the tax exempt bond market where longer maturities and lower interest rates can offer material benefits.

In addition to the benefits to the prospective Borrowers, this pool is expected to generate 800 construction jobs, and 330 new permanent high paying jobs with total salaries and wages in excess of \$10 million per year, creating a material economic benefit to Mobile.

As with all economic development tools, resources are limited and projects must compete for bond allocation. The downtown GO Zone application has been on hold pending the site selection of the ThyssenKrupp steel mill. Although Mobile County will be home to the new plant, officials say they don't expect the company to use any GO Zone money. We remain hopeful the application for downtown Mobile will be approved this year.

In December, 2005 the President signed into law the Gulf Opportunity Zone Act of 2005. This Act provided incentives to encourage rebuilding and improve employment opportunities for counties hardest hit by Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. For more detailed information go to www.house.gov/jct/x-88-05.pdf and consult your tax advisor. The incentives include:

- Increased allocations of Low Income Housing Tax Credits, New Markets Tax Credits, and an increase in the Federal Historic Tax Credit.
- An additional \$2.1 billion of private activity Tax Exempt Bonds and a reduction in the restrictions for using them, subject to approval by the Governor.
- Accelerated depreciation of 50% in the year the project is placed in service on all depreciable costs associated with real estate, equipment, and personal property used in the active conduct of a trade or business.
- A 50% deduction for Katrina related cleanup costs in the year they are incurred.
- Environmental remediation cost tax deductions for a contaminated site.
- Carry back of Net Operating Loss for qualified GO Zone losses for up to 5 years.

ALTERNATIVE TO I-10 BRIDGE PRESENTED

By Carol Hunter

If you drive a car in Mobile, you don't need to be told that traffic is bad and getting worse: Hillcrest Drive in the afternoon, Dauphin & I-65 at noon, I-10 at the Wallace Tunnel on the weekends and Airport Boulevard just about any time of the day or evening.

To ease the congestion at one of those points, I-10, the Alabama Department of Transportation is proposing a new bridge that would cross the Mobile River adjacent to downtown and connect with the existing Bayway near the Battleship. This bridge would certainly relieve some of the congestion in the Wallace Tunnel, as through traffic would be diverted around the city.

However, a diverse group of opponents to the proposed bridge has emerged, concerned with everything from tourism to historic preservation to protecting the city's maritime industry. Not convinced that the Department of Transportation proposal was the best long term solution for the future of Mobile, several waterfront interests formed a coalition called Keep Mobile Moving. It hired Street Smarts, an Atlanta-based transportation consultant, to study the issue of relieving congestion in the Wallace Tunnel and make recommendations.

The results of the study were presented to the community at a couple of meetings on May 7th and 8th. Marsha Bomar, president of the Street Smarts, found that a bridge over I-10 near downtown is not the only option for relieving congestion, and would not be the least expensive. Opponents to the proposed bridge had long suggested that routing traffic over the underused Cochran-Africatown Bridge would achieve many of the DOT's goals while preserving the waterfront and the integrity of historic neighborhoods.

Bomar studied regional traffic flows from west Mobile to the Eastern Shore and developed an alternative solution to the proposed I-10 bridge that, according to the report, "provides much of the same traffic relief but with a lower cost and faster implementation schedule." The five core projects identified from this study are:

- Rerouting truck traffic to I-65 and I-165, as is done in cities such as Atlanta
- Upgrade and expand the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) which relies on monitors and variable signage to alert drivers to accidents or congestion ahead. An ITS in the Mobile area is already in the process of being installed by AL-DOT.
- Convert the Cochran-Africatown Bridge from I-165 to the Bayway to a four-lane limited access road.
- Widen I-65
- Expand the Bayway to six lanes

The study found that two other future improvements would also relieve congestion on I-10 near downtown:

- Upgrade the approaches to and from the western end of the Wallace tunnel to reduce accidents and other driving hazards.
- Build the Western by-pass, which has been planned by AL-DOT for decades.

Bomar told about 200 citizens who attended the two meetings that the alternative proposal would achieve the same amount of congestion relief at a lower or comparable cost to the proposed new I-10 bridge, projected to run \$653 million in 2005 dollars. Additionally, a study commissioned by AL-DOT found that an I-10 bridge could create the loss of 5397 shipyard jobs, resulting in a loss of almost \$500 million in business and tax revenue for Mobile annually. Keep Mobile Moving is optimistic that AL-DOT will now consider the alternative solution as it moves forward with the next phase of the study process.

RIDING THE WAVE

As summertime driving demands threaten to drive up gas prices you may be thinking about joining the millions of Americans who rely on public transportation to get around. When prices at the pump topped \$3.00 a gallon after Hurricane Katrina, Mobile's bus system experienced a noticeable increase in ridership and has been working since then to make The Wave more responsive to rider needs and desires. Routes are in the process of being reworked and frequency is being improved.

Still, if you've never ridden The Wave, the process can be a little confusing and intimidating. Electronic wayside signs are being installed at Dauphin and St. Joseph Streets, Government and Joachim Streets and St. Francis and Joachim. The signs will tell riders when the next bus is arriving. Wave management is also considering installing route maps at bus stops, but until then, The Wave's web site is a complete source of information. Need to get downtown from the University of South Alabama or to Brookley Field from Toulminville? Just go to www.thewavetransit.com and click on *Riding the Wave* and go to *Schedules, Maps and Station Information*. If you don't have internet access, call 344-6600 for information.

The Wave also offers Neighborhood Service in the Tillman's Comer and Schillinger/Airport Roads areas, and special services for those with physical or functional disabilities. To arrange for these services, call 344-5656.

And whenever you're downtown, be sure to catch the moda! for free service on electric trolleys that stop at 22 businesses, restaurants, hotels and government offices.

MEETING AND CONVENTION SCHEDULE

Scheduled for the Arthur Outlaw Convention Center

JUNE

African Methodist Episcopal Church June 9 – 14

Alabama Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers June 19 – 22

International Taekwondo Alliance June 20 - 23

JULY

Christian Congregation of Jehovah Witnesses July 5 –

Amateur Softball Association July 6 – 9

State Dept. of Education Mega Conference July 8 – 13

United States Tennis Association July 20 – 29

Sons of Confederate Veterans July 23 – 29

REAL ESTATE REVIEW

Each edition of the Downtown Alliance News will feature a different downtown property. The goal of this feature is to provide information to the public on real estate options in the downtown area. If you would like more information on the property featured, please contact the management company or leasing agent directly.



PARKVIEW PLAZA

Address: 182 St. Francis Street
Owner: Southland Capital Realty, LLC
Management: Southland Capital Realty, LLC
Telephone Number: (251) 450-1007
Year Built: early 1940s
Occupancy Rate: 100% leased with a waiting list
Square Footage of building: 18,000 square feet including common areas
Leasing Rate: \$13.00 - \$15.00 square foot
Leasing Agent: Todd Drummond
Leasing Telephone Number: (251) 450-1007

Parkview Plaza has quietly stood on the corner of St. Francis Street and Conception Street since the early 1940s. Overlooking Bienville Square, the three story building has been a neighbor to the old-line Athelstan Club, downtown banks, the Waterman Building, and hotels that have long ago been razed or destroyed by fire. Throughout the years, Parkview Plaza has been home to many reputable downtown businesses including Colonial Bank and Mobile Gas. In 1992 David Ball renovated the building, bringing Parkview Plaza to its current understated elegance.

Meanwhile, Todd Drummond had moved from north Alabama to Mobile to attend the University of South Alabama. After earning a degree in Finance, Drummond landed a job as a commercial lender at Regions Bank. While at Regions, Drummond learned the finance game. He worked hard to hone his business instincts,

Park Plaza stands on the northeast corner of St. Francis Street and Conception Street. Built in the early 1940s, this building is home to the Secret Service, Southeastern Natural Resources and a new web design company Web Operations.

meet new clients, and learn everything he could about the Mobile market. During this time, Drummond was introduced to David Ball by mutual friends. Ball, a real estate developer with many investments in downtown, soon became the mentor of the young Drummond. Then in July 2005, Drummond purchased his first piece of property, Parkview Plaza, from Ball, becoming one of the young new real estate developers investing in downtown Mobile.

Drummond serves as a solid and faithful steward for Parkview Plaza. As a testament, one of the building's tenants, Bankruptcy Trustees, has leased space in Parkview Plaza for over 10 years. The building is also the home to the Secret Service; Southeastern Natural Resources, another long-term tenant; Kennedy, Bell & Adams, a downtown law firm; and Webb Operations, a new website design firm. "Parkview Plaza is a high profile property for small firms," explained Drummond. "Law firms can take their clients to lunch at the Athelstan Club, businesses can entertain their families and clients during Mardi Gras and watch parades from our balconies, and you have beautiful Bienville Square that we overlook." The building also has gated and secured parking – a nice perk for tenants, and plenty of public parking just steps away from the building.

"People talk about office space in downtown being overbuilt with the RSA Tower. That is not true. Not everyone needs a large office space. We have a high profile property to offer for small firms," explained Drummond. "Everyone doesn't want to be in the RSA Tower. We have a smaller building that is appealing to small businesses, especially law firms," expressed Drummond.

When asked about moving into real estate development at such a young age, Drummond, who is 31, assured me of his business acumen. "My career move from commercial lending to real estate development gives me the best of both worlds," stressed Drummond. "I am not an office person. Working in development gives me an opportunity to be out, meet people, and come back to the desk to put the numbers together and develop the plans." And he had a great advisor too. "David Ball was an incredible mentor. We would drive around downtown and he would tell me who owned each building, how many square feet it was, the sale price and the history," explained Drummond.

"He was a great teacher! He knew everything about downtown."

"I enjoy history, architecture, and all the things that reflect our Southern history. I was raised to respect our past," explained Drummond. "History is very important to me and to my family. People have to take an interest in preservation. We must save our history. When we had the opportunity to purchase properties in downtown we did because we believe in downtown," said Drummond. "I feel very strongly about downtown. I feel like there is a lot more to come."

When asked about his success as a young developer Drummond was quick to point out his hard work and the tutelage that his older counterparts had given him. He respectfully gave credit where credit was due. "For years these people had a vision for downtown Mobile. They redid buildings, pushed, beat their heads against the wall trying to make downtown a success. It was a stressful business for them," explained Drummond. "Now, they are older, they have moved on to larger projects, many have moved to projects out of town, or they have retired. When I talk to them now, they are excited about downtown. They think it is so great."

He astutely reminded me that he and other young developers didn't experience downtown during the dark times of the 1970s and 1980s. "I didn't see tumble weeds blowing down Dauphin Street like people talk about. All I see is opportunity."

Parkview Plaza Tenants

Bankruptcy Trustees
Southeastern Natural Resources
Secret Service
Ball Properties Inc.
Kennedy, Bell & Adams, P.C.
T 2 F Security
Web Operations

WEAVING THE FABRIC OF DOWNTOWN MOBILE

By Rhonda Davis

Each issue of *Downtown Alliance News* will feature a brief profile on a downtown business, a non-profit organization and a resident. Look for this profile to discover more about our community and our neighbors.

LYONS, PIPES & COOK PC

Name: Lyons, Pipes & Cook PC
Address: 2 North Royal Street
Telephone Number: (251) 432-4481
Website Address: www.lpclaw.com

Lyons, Pipes & Cook PC, one of the South's leading law firms, was founded in Mobile in 1899. Joseph H. Lyons, a graduate of Harvard Law School, and Thomas M. Stevens, a renowned trial lawyer, originally established the firm as Stevens & Lyons. After that partnership dissolved, Mr. Stevens moved on to create the new firm of Stevens, McCorvey & Dean, a predecessor of the present firm Johnstone, Adams, Bailey, Gordon & Harris.

"We are defined in part by where we are located."

Mr. Lyons formed the firm of Lyons & Courtney and over the years the law firm changed and grew into what is known today as Lyons, Pipes & Cook.

For many years the firm was located in the original First National Bank Building. In 1967 it moved into the newly constructed high-rise, the First National Bank Building (known today as the AmSouth Building). In 1979, a time when many businesses were leaving downtown for newer facilities in west Mobile, Lyons, Pipes & Cook purchased property downtown and constructed a new building at 2 North Royal Street. This building continues, 28 years later, to be the home of the firm.

Today the law firm employs 64 full time employees including 28 attorneys. LPC is a full service law firm. In addition to the civil and corporate practice, it also has a domestic and criminal practice. The firm operates an office in Pascagoula which has been rebuilt in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and it opened a third office in Gulf Shores last August.

LPC has recently completed a \$700,000 renovation of its 16,000 square foot building on Royal Street. Much of the renovation was done to repair damage the building sustained in Hurricane Katrina. "There was six inches of water sitting in the building for over 12 hours," explained David Constantine, Office Manager for LPC. "A day after the Hurricane, employees were here, voluntarily, ripping up carpet, sweeping water out of the building, and cutting sheet rock down. It was such a team effort," he continued. "And the \$700,000 construction cost doesn't include the cost for new furniture and fixtures," he added.

LPC has a long history of supporting downtown Mobile. "The decision in 1979 to move from the First National Bank Building, purchase property and build our building shows our commitment to downtown. That is how much the firm and the founding fathers believed in downtown," stated Constantine. "Our commitment to downtown is strong. Personally and professionally, the partners' investments support downtown." LPC's belief that as long as the courthouses, banks and Mobile River

were located downtown, then that's where LPC was going to be as well.

"Our location and building are well known to anyone who comes downtown. We've never had a client call and say they couldn't find us. They just park and walk right in," stated Cooper C. Thurber, President of LPC. "We are defined in part by where we are located."

Their contribution to downtown's revitalization also goes beyond just building a building at 2 North Royal Street. "In the 1990s the firm started acquiring property in downtown. This was done to eliminate off-site storage cost," explained Constantine. "The firm would renovate a building, people would approach us wanting to buy it, we would sell it, buy another building and do it all over again. This has happened to all of the buildings we have renovated," he continued. "We have renovated a



Lyons, Pipes & Cook, established in 1899, is a cornerstone of the Mobile law community. Located at 2 North Royal Street, Lyons, Pipes & Cook has called the northeast corner of Royal Street and Dauphin Street home since constructing the building that houses their law firm in 1979.

total of nine properties in downtown. We also own two parking lots. We bought a house at 5 North Claiborne Street to be used for large case storage (court cases that have large volumes of records and documents). The house was severely damaged in the Hurricane. We restored the house as a residence and it was recently bought to be used as a home."

"We continue to look for opportunities in downtown and actively pursue investment in downtown," stated Constantine with conviction. The firm's most recent project is the restoration of 7 North Royal Street., the old home of Areas Gift Shop. This building has been transformed into an inviting space that features exposed historic hand-made brick, a pressed tin ceiling, cherry floors upstairs and a catering kitchen. The building also has a new iron balcony on the front, adding a romantic touch to the streetscape of Royal Street. LPC will use the downstairs area for storage while the upper floors will have a smaller meeting room and a large room for receptions, meetings and small events. The stairway has been designed as a venue to showcase artwork.

The firm is also a great philanthropic organization. The firm's lawyers sit on many boards, hold memberships in non-profit and civic organizations, are involved in the downtown revitalization process, and work as legal advisors to non-profit organizations. LPC is also a responsible and dependable monetary donor. "We do our best to support organizations that our employees and their families are involved in – the Junior League of Mobile is one organization we really support," explained Constantine. "We sponsor Young Lawyers Play Day.

We are involved in the charitable works of our clients as well. We work with Log-A-Load, Camp Rap-A-Hope and other projects," he continued. Although Constantine graciously declined to give the dollar amount the firm donates in a fiscal year, I am sure it is beyond generous.

As an example of Lyons, Pipes & Cook's dedication to downtown, the firm has voluntarily installed new planters in front of the parking lot it owns on Royal Street. The parking lot sits just north of their building, separating the firm and the newly restored Battle House Hotel. They have also re-landscaped all of the flower beds surrounding the firm as a way to make Royal Street visually seamless.



The Community Foundation of South Alabama held the grand opening of their new headquarters at 212 St. Joseph Street on Wednesday, May 2.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF SOUTH ALABAMA

Name: The Community Foundation of South Alabama
Address: 212 St. Joseph Street
Telephone Number: (251) 438-5591
Website Address: www.communityendowment.org

The Community Foundation of South Alabama was formed in 1975 and incorporated in 1976 as The Mobile Community Foundation. The concept of The Community Foundation came from United Way. The newly formed public foundation was designed to complement the work of United Way by providing grants to agencies other than the social service organizations supported by United Way.

In 1994, The Mobile Community Foundation changed its name to The Community Foundation of South Alabama as a way to recognize the eight county area that the organization now serves.

Since its inception, the mission of the organization has been to provide leadership to Mobile and surrounding communities by offering a flexible vehicle for donors with varied philanthropic desires to make gifts in perpetuity. Serving as responsible stewards of these funds, The Community Foundation makes grants to non-profit organizations in the fields of arts and recreation, education, social services, health, community, civic and others. The Undesignated Endowment Fund allows The Community Foundation to respond quickly to the needs of our growing region by providing leadership and direction through proactive grants to non-profit organizations throughout South Alabama.

"United Way started The Community Foundation from scratch," explained Tom H. Davis, Jr., Executive Director, "there was no large benefactor. Our first gift was a check for \$50." Now in the 31st year of opera-

tion, the assets of The Community Foundation are in excess of \$52 million. "The Foundation has been built and supported by individuals from our community, numerous philanthropists who understood the purpose of The Community Foundation," stated Davis. "When I think about The Community Foundation of South Alabama I think about us as being the savings account for the community, while the United Way serves as our community's checking account," Davis continued. "We compliment the United Way."

Since its founding, The Community Foundation has issued grants for over \$40 million to organizations throughout its service area.

In the days following Hurricane Katrina, The Community Foundation stepped forward as the organization that collected and distributed money for hurricane relief in our area. With an excellent reputation, a dedicated staff, and an organizational system in place for donating money, The Community Foundation of South Alabama raised \$1,900,000 in donations for Hurricane Katrina relief for South Alabama. "There was tremendous flooding in the Mobile area causing damage everywhere. Even our offices were flooded," recalled Davis. "By partnering with United Way and WKRG we were able to raise relief money and provide a reputable organization for people to make donations to who knew their contributions would get to people in need. We had foundations and individuals from across the country giving money for relief. The Hewlett Packard Foundation contributed \$100,000 and the Charles Barkley Foundation donated \$250,000. Many organizations were able to donate money to be used for specific purposes during post-Katrina days."

Of the \$1,900,000 raised in hurricane relief funds, \$1,700,000 were processed through grants and given out for hurricane relief. The Community Foundation retained \$200,000 in a reserve fund - \$100,000 used for the general funds and \$100,000 for a rebuilding program.

"The Ford Foundation has recently contributed \$250,000 for a two year capacity rebuilding program that has been established as the Community Economic Development Initiative - the CED," explained Davis. "This is significant for our area because the Ford Foundation, based in New York, has recognized Mobile as an important community to invest in."

The CED is a three-part program that includes a grant-making portfolio that will encompass housing, financial literacy and other areas of need; a community health component; and a workforce development component. "In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, workforce development was an issue we realized is escalating in our community. For example, when you look at the seafood industry, you have generations of family members who have worked as fishermen. When something devastating like a hurricane comes and destroys that industry what will these people do to survive? Through work force development we will be able to help them find other means of employment. We will be able to train young people and help them move into what they want to do," stated Davis. "By pulling together partners, we can help this happen."

The Community Foundation of South Alabama's move into its new home on St. Joseph Street is another example of the growth of this organization. "We believe in downtown Mobile. This is an ideal location for us. We

are also close to Water Street, I-10 and I-65. We are accessible to everyone," smiled Davis. The new home includes a large meeting room, an area to host receptions, a reading room stocked with information used by

"This is significant for our area because the Ford Foundation, based in New York, has recognized Mobile as an important community to invest in."

non-profit organizations, and enclosed parking. "We want to share. We want people to come downtown and meet instead of going to West Mobile to meet," emphasized Davis.

For more information on The Community Foundation of South Alabama please visit their website at www.communityendowment.org. If you would like to obtain an Annual Report; or if you are interested in information on their gifting program, would like to make a donation, or establish an endowment for your organization, please contact their office at (251) 438-5591.



Bobby Williams moved into St. Francis Place about a year and a half ago. "I wake up everyday happy," he exclaimed. St. Francis Place is an upscale gated condominium development that was originally built as the Convent of Mercy, an all girl's Catholic school. St. Francis Place is located at 753 St. Francis Street.

ON MOVING HOME

Bobby Williams grew up in Mobile. After graduating from UMS in 1981 Williams left for Birmingham to attend college: first at Birmingham Southern College and then Cumberland School of Law. His next destination was Atlanta, an exciting metropolitan area filled with career opportunities, thousands of young professionals, and non-stop things to do.

Like many young people of his age, Williams moved to a larger city because of the opportunities offered. During this time in Mobile's history, unemployment was at a record high and corporate headquarters were moving out. Then the slow winds of change began to blow. By the mid-90s Mobile was on the upswing again. Downtown was coming back to life. Industry in Mobile had weakened and the medical and technology commu-

nities were beginning to grow. Mobilians that left during the dark time of the 80s were slowly beginning to migrate home.

In 2000, Williams had an opportunity to transfer home to Mobile. "I still have my family here and was pleased to see the changes going on in Mobile," recalled Williams. "I accepted a new position with (BLP) Mobile Paint Company as their Director of Human Resources, moved home, and bought a big old house in mid-town on Dauphin Street. After going through several hurricanes and tiring of the maintenance and upkeep of my house, I began to look around for something smaller," Williams explained. "I looked in DeTonti Square and in Church Street East, but there was nothing available. All of the condos in the Warehouse development and the Mattress Factory had been sold. Then I stumbled onto St. Francis Place by mistake," Williams continued. "I had never been in St. Francis Place and when I looked at the development I fell in love with it. About a year and a half ago, I moved in," Williams said.

"I enjoyed living in mid-town. However, the same disadvantages of living in mid-town are the same disadvantages as living downtown (lack of a good grocery store for example), only there are more advantages to living downtown. You can walk to restaurants, walk to events like Arts Alive! and to the Market on the Square. It is safe. I have had no problems whatsoever," Williams expressed. "And I have wonderful neighbors! Everyday I wake up happy!"

"I enjoyed living in Atlanta. It was great fun!" reminisced Williams. "I don't miss the traffic, or the rat-race, or the hassle of living in a big city. I do miss the convenience factor you have in a city. There is wonderful shopping and great restaurants" he reminded. "There is a grocery store on every corner and they have different kinds of grocery stores," lamented Williams. "The one thing that has been an adjustment for me here in Mobile is remembering that many locally owned restaurants are closed on Sunday and Monday."

All in all, moving back to Mobile has been a positive experience for Williams. "I do more here than in Atlanta," stated Williams, a patron of the arts. "I love opera. In

"Everyday I wake up happy!"

Atlanta having season tickets to the opera was cost prohibitive," he explained. "I have season tickets to Mobile Opera. And here, when you attend events you see the same people over and over, and then you meet them, and then you become friends," he cheerfully explained.

Since moving back to Mobile, Williams has become an active member of our downtown community. A graduate of Leadership Mobile, Williams was introduced to the arts community through his involvement in Leadership Mobile. He is a member of the Mobile Arts Council and now serves as Vice President of the Board of Directors. He is a member of the Downtown Rotary Club and is the Alumni Advisor for the Lambda Chi Alpha Social Fraternity at Spring Hill College. He is also one of those people who pitches in anytime he can. "As the saying goes 'the work we do is the rent we pay in life.' I believe that and try to live by that creed," said Williams.

continued from page 1

Baldwin counties,” continued Broughton. “Establishing a downtown Mobile presence is a natural expansion of our services to current customers and potential customers in the Mobile and Baldwin county markets.”

The newly opened Hancock Bank branch downtown is one of several new branches scheduled to open in Mobile and Baldwin counties this spring and summer. “The downtown financial center will offer all of Hancock’s comprehensive financial solutions – including traditional banking, consumer and commercial loans, mortgage services, small business resources, and a full array of wealth management services. With the exciting growth and revitalization of downtown Mobile, we believe it’s a perfect fit for Hancock Bank of Alabama to have its main office on Bienville Square,” Broughton concluded.

Whitney National Bank, founded in New Orleans in 1883, is no stranger to the Mobile market. In response to the growing downtown area, Whitney Bank has expanded their offices on Royal Street and beefed-up their International Banking Department. “We have renovated our Royal Street office and located our Facilities and Security functions, in addition to our International Department at this office. As with all of our 11 locations in South Alabama, we want to provide personalized and convenient services for our business and consumer customers,” stated Robbie Baker, South Alabama Regional President, Whitney Bank.

“Our Royal Street Office is a vital location for the Mobile downtown area and for Whitney Bank. With the revitalization of downtown gaining momentum, and the new Battle House RSA Tower opening directly across the street, we see our office as being a convenient and viable place for our business and consumer customers to do their banking business,” explained Baker. “We have a full-service office with Night Depository and ATM for 24 hour availability. Our recent addition of a dedicated



Whitney Bank has expanded its Royal Street offices and enhanced its International Banking Department to accommodate the growth in downtown Mobile.

International Banker in Sue Wilkinson (formerly of AmSouth’s International Department) provides many of our business customers direct access to important services that assist them in doing their business most efficiently,” stated Baker. “With the extensive level of expertise of Whitney’s Corporate International Banking Department out of New Orleans, Whitney can provide virtually any financial service needed by our customers to do their business here and abroad.”

Whitney’s commitment to downtown was recently expressed through their generous donation to the new Maritime Museum planned for the waterfront. “We are very excited about the prospects for the new Maritime Museum and the impact that this facility will have on growth and business downtown. Whitney Bank recently committed \$150,000 to the Building Fund for this vital and strategic center of commerce,” expressed Baker.

With all of the changes in the banking industry, only one downtown bank has remained unchanged. BankTrust remains our only locally owned downtown bank. Founded in 1989 as Mobile National Corporation, the bank changed its name to South Alabama Bancorporation, Inc. in 1993. In 2002 the company again changed to BancTrust Financial Group, Inc. BankTrust began in a modest sized office and today occupies a graceful three-story building on St. Joseph Street that features cast iron balconies that nod to the days of old Mobile. BankTrust is a growing regional bank. Their growth is reflected in the addition of new branches outside the Mobile market and in the purchase of Royal Place, located on the northeast corner of St. Louis Street and Royal Street. Royal Place has been converted into BankTrust’s Operations Center. The addition of a second downtown location is significant for BankTrust, and serves as a testament of their commitment to downtown Mobile.

Wachovia Bank, the fourth largest holding company in the United States, merged with South Trust Bank several years ago. Wachovia Bank, located in the his-

toric Waterman Building, now known as the Wachovia Building, has a tradition of strong leaders who support downtown’s revitalization. Charles E. Harmon, Jr. has been named Market President. Harmon replaces Lee Moncreif who recently retired.

A change for downtown Wachovia Bank customers has been the Drive Thru service. Wachovia closed its Drive Thru on Water Street and St. Francis Street and sold the property to the Retirement Systems of Alabama to enable the construction of the new RSA Tower. Wachovia then moved its Drive Thru facility into a temporary space on the northeast end of Water Street near the old Delchamps corporate offices. They will open a new Drive Thru on the ground floor of the RSA Parking Garage on St. Francis Street when it opens, continuing Drive Thru services for their customers.

Compass Bank was recently acquired by Banco Bilbo Bizcaya Argentaria SA of Spain. The acquisition has strengthened Compass Bank and has increased their presence in the global banking market.

With all of the changes, including the establishment of new banks, the restoration of buildings and the opening of the RSA Tower, one thing has remained constant - downtown continues to serve this region as a financial hub. We consumers are the beneficiaries of this change. All of the banks have competitive products to offer, all promise outstanding customer service, and all are employers of our friends or family members. Without the presence of the many banks in downtown, our revitalization would be slower to come, our developers and business owners would not have the financial resources vital to their success, and our residents would have fewer employment opportunities. Change, especially in banking, is a positive sign of successful endeavors to come.

Downtown Banks at a Glance

Bank Trust

100 St. Joseph Street
(251) 431-7800
www.banktrustonline.com

BankTrust is a Mobile owned bank. Founded in 1989, BankTrust now operates 29 offices in Alabama and Florida. Their corporate headquarters continues to be located in downtown Mobile.

Compass Bank

1 South Royal Street
(251) 470-7460
www.compassbank.com

Compass Bank operates 415 full-service banks including 164 in Texas, 89 in Alabama, 75 in Arizona, 44 in Florida, 33 in Colorado and 10 in New Mexico. Compass is among the top 30 U. S. bank holding companies by asset size and ranks among the top earners of its size based on return on equity. Compass Bank was recently purchased by Banco Bilbo Bizcaya Argentaria SA of Spain.

Hancock Bank

127 Dauphin Street, suite 101 & 102
(251) 433-7640
www.hancockbank.com

Hancock Bank was founded in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi in 1899. They currently have 150 banking and financial services offices and 130 fee-free ATMs across Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida. On April 30 they opened their downtown branch at 127 Dauphin Street.

RBC Centura Bank

169 Dauphin Street
(251) 432-8612
www.rbccentura.com

RBC Centura Bank has established their Alabama state headquarters in Landmark Square, 169 Dauphin Street. They plan to open a downtown branch in the next 120 days. RBC Centura Bank is the second largest bank in Mobile.

Regions Bank

106 St. Francis Street
(251) 690-1212
www.regions.com

Regions Financial Corporation is a member of the S&P 100 Index, with more than \$140 billion in assets. Regions Bank operates some 2,000 AmSouth and Regions Bank offices and a 2,600-ATM network in 16 states across the South, Midwest and Texas. Regions Bank is the largest bank in Mobile.

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MEET THE BID SERVICES MANAGEMENT TEAM



Dennis Robinson joined the BID this year after 23 years with the University of South Alabama.

by Carol Hunter

For almost two years now the Regents and Stewards of the Downtown Mobile District Management Corporation have been tirelessly cleaning the sidewalks, patrolling the streets and assisting patrons of the Business Improvement District. By now they are a familiar presence in their purple and yellow uniforms, a reassuring sight if you've ever needed help or simply wanted to see a friendly face.

Since the first day of operations, Clayton Ratledge has been providing the leadership and direction for the Stewards and Regents, showing them by example how to care for the District and its people. Clayton, a graduate of McGill-Toolen High School, says he fell in love with downtown on his first day of work...the day after Hurricane Katrina hit and devastated many blocks of the District. A few weeks later he was named the Assistant BID Operations Manager, a few months after that he was asked to head up BID Operations.

In the weeks after Katrina, he raked and piled and hauled truckload after truckload of debris, all the while developing what he calls "a passion for what the District Management Corporation is doing in downtown Mobile." Make no mis-

take about it: downtown is Clayton's turf. As he drives through the District, he sees things no one else notices, things that are out of place or need attention.

Clayton has trained the Stewards to look for imperfections and things that hinder accessibility and walkability. He expects the Regents to be an extra set of eyes and ears for the police and always to be looking for people in distress. The teams' efforts so far have made a noticeable difference in the look and feel of downtown, but Clayton admits downtown is not yet where he wants it to be. He insists, "I won't be happy until the District is perfect every day. That's my goal."

A total of 11 Stewards and Regents care for the District and its people and one of them is now assisting Clayton in the management of those teams. Dennis Robinson joined the operation in April of this year and comes to downtown after 23 years as a construction supervisor for the University of South Alabama. He has also been in the security business for several years.

Dennis says he's seen a tremendous improvement in the cleanliness and the friendliness of downtown since the Regents and Stewards hit the streets, and he'd be proud to be one of them. "I'm a real people person," he adds, "and there's no greater feeling than being able to help someone."



Clayton Ratledge has been with the BID since Day One and has headed up operations for the past year and a half.

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Regions Bank Second Location

(The former AmSouth Bank)
31 North Royal Street
(251) 694-1515

The AmSouth to Regions Bank conversion will be completed on July 13. Regions Bank's move into the RSA Tower is tentatively scheduled for November. At that time they will open a new branch in the Lobby of the RSA Tower.

Wachovia Bank

61 St. Joseph Street
(251) 431-9222
www.wachovia.com

Wachovia Bank was founded in 1879 in Winston, North Carolina. They merged with First Union Bank, founded in 1908, on September 1, 2001 creating Wachovia Corporation. Wachovia Bank is the fourth largest bank holding company in the U.S. They operate retail and commercial banking operations in 21 states; have retail brokerage offices in 48 states; have mortgage lending in 50 states; have auto finance covering 46 states; and globally have 40 offices around the world. Wachovia's assets total \$706.4 billion.

Whitney National Bank

50 North Royal Street
(251) 662-1050
www.whitneybank.com

Founded in 1883 in New Orleans, Louisiana as Whitney National Bank, they currently have 150 branches and over 175 ATMs throughout Southern Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, Alabama, and the panhandle of Florida. They also have a foreign branch on Grand Cayman in the British West Indies.

Recently, Whitney Bank announced the promotion of two Mobilians to key management positions. John C. Hope was promoted to President and Chief Operating Officer, and John Turner will move from Mobile to New Orleans to assume the Executive Vice President and Manager of the Gulf Region position.

Woodlands Bank

Dauphin Street and Conception Street
www.woodlandsbanking.com

Based in Beaufort, South Carolina, Woodlands Bank has transferred Mobilian Michael Druhan home to open their branches in Alabama. Look for the opening of their new downtown branch in the early summer.

DOWNTOWN EVENTS

JUNE

Through June 3 – *A Day in Pompeii*, Gulf Coast Exploreum and Science Center

Through June 24 – *Green Space: Environmental Concerns in Contemporary Art*, Space 301 Off Centre

Through September 3 – *Captive Passage: The Transatlantic Slave Trade and the Making of the Americas*, Museum of Mobile

June 2 – *Past to Present: Tracing Your Ancestors*, 10 a.m. until 11:00 a.m., Mobile Public Library Local History & Genealogy Division

June 2 – *Southern Market's First Saturday Art Market*, sponsored by Museum of Mobile Southern Market and the Coastal Artisans, 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., Green Space, Government Street and Royal Street

June 8 – *LoDa Artwalk*, 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m., Cathedral Square Arts District

June 9 – *Davis Avenue Arts Festival: A Festival of Art, Culture, History, Religion and Food*, 11:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Dearborn YMCA Community Center and Davis Avenue

June 9 – *Beth Nielsen Chapman & the Mobile Symphony Orchestra*, 8:00 p.m., Saenger Theatre

June 10 – *Second Sunday at the Space: For the Young at Art*, noon until 2:00 p.m., *Green Space Panel Discussion*, 2:30 p.m., Space 301 Off Centre

June 12 – *B. B. King*, 7:30 p.m., Saenger Theatre

June 16 – *Marshall Tucker Band & Georgia Satellites*, 8:00 p.m., Mobile Civic Center Theater

June 22 – *Hope: A Dance Project* presented by Alabama Contemporary Dance Company, 7:00 p.m., Saenger Theatre

June 25 - *Jazz Jambalaya* presented by Mystic Order of the Jazz Obsessed, 6:00 p.m., Gulf City Lodge

June 28, 29 & 30 – *America's Junior Miss 50th Anniversary National Finals*, 7:00 p.m., Mobile Civic Center Theatre

June 29 & 30 – *Promise Keepers*, 8:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m., Mobile Civic Center Arena

June 29 through August 5 – *A Time for War or Peace: Art That Confronts the Realities of the Present*, Reception June 29, 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m., Space 301 Off Centre

JULY

July 1 – *American Hair & Style Awards* presented by Chow Entertainment, 6:00 p.m., Saenger Theatre

July 8 – *Second Sunday at the Space*, Space 301 Off Centre

July 13 – *LoDa Artwalk*, 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m., Cathedral Square Arts District

July 21 – Concert, *Herman's Hermits starring Peter Noone*, 8:00 p.m., Saenger Theatre

July 23 – *Jazz Jambalaya* presented by the Mystic Order of the Jazz Obsessed, 6:00 p.m., Gulf City Lodge

CLASSES

Weekly rehearsal: Gulf Coast Gay Men's Chorus, 7:00 p.m., St. Francis Street United Methodist Church.

Conductor: Judson Martin. For more information visit www.GulfCoastGMC@comcast.net.

For a daily email update on events happening downtown and throughout the metropolitan area contact Charlie Smoke at the Mobile Arts Council, 432-9796.

SAENGER SUMMER FILM SERIES

All films shown on Sundays at 3:00 p.m.

July 15 *Pillow Talk*

July 22 *Shenandoah*

July 29 *His Girl Friday*

August 5 *On the Waterfront*

August 12 *It's A Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*

August 19 *The Magnificent Seven*

Tickets are \$6 for adults and \$3 for senior citizens and children under 12. Tickets will be sold at the door on the day of screening.

For more information on the Saenger Summer Film Series please visit the Saenger Theatre website at www.mobilesaenger.org.

NEED HELP?

CALL THE ALLIANCE'S REGENTS DISTRICT HOTLINE
251-327-SAFE
(251-327-7233)

The Regents provide motorist aid, escorts to vehicles and visitor information.

Keychain tags with the telephone number printed on it are available at the DMDMC office. Pick one up the next time you walk by. The Hotline phone service is provided by Cingular Wireless.

If you would like to be added to the Downtown Alliance News mailing list, please call (251) 434-8498.



FARM FRESH FLAVOR

MARKET ON THE SQUARE
OPEN EVERY SATURDAY
APRIL 28 - JULY 28
7:30 A.M. UNTIL NOON
CATHEDRAL SQUARE

Main Street Mobile, Inc.
P. O. Box 112
Mobile, Alabama 36601

Address Service Correction

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by Carol Hunter

For almost two years now the Regents and Stewards of the Downtown Mobile District Management Corporation have been tirelessly cleaning the sidewalks, patrolling the streets and assisting patrons of the Business Improvement District. By now they are a familiar presence in their purple and yellow uniforms, a reassuring sight if you've ever needed help or simply wanted to see a friendly face.

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In the weeks after Katrina, he raked and piled and hauled truckload after truckload of debris, all the while developing what he calls "a passion for what the District Management Corporation is doing in downtown Mobile." Make no mistake about it: downtown is Clayton's turf. As he drives through the District, he sees things no one else notices, things that are out of place or need attention.

Clayton has trained the Stewards to look for imperfections and things that hinder accessibility and walkability. He expects the Regents to be an extra set of eyes and ears for the police and to always be looking for people in distress. The teams' efforts so far have made a noticeable difference in the look and feel of downtown, but Clayton admits downtown is not yet where he wants it to be. He insists, "I won't be happy until the District is perfect every day. That's my goal."

A total of 11 Stewards and Regents care for the District and its people and one of them is now assisting Clayton in the management of those teams. Dennis Robinson joined the operation in April of this year and comes to downtown after 23 years as a construction supervisor for the University of South Alabama. He has also been in the security business for several years.

Dennis says he's seen a tremendous improvement in the cleanliness and the friendliness of downtown since the Regents and Stewards hit the streets, and he'd proud to be one of them. "I'm a real people person," he adds, "and there's no greater feeling than being able to help someone."