

# The Chamber Perspectives online

## Upcoming Events

Sep 27  
[Franklin Covey's  
4 Disciplines of Execution  
Individual Addition](#)

Sep 28  
[Adopt-A-School Golf  
Tournament](#)

Sep 28  
[Adopt-A-School Tennis  
Tournament](#)

Sep 28  
[Board of Directors' Meeting](#)

Oct 3  
[Northport Citizen of the Year  
\(More Events\)](#)

Lunch and Learn  
Training

**October 17**

Only \$35  
for members

**Combating The  
Stresses of  
Life and Work**

11:00am - 1:00pm  
Four Points Hotel

Call 758-7588 to Register

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## 2007 Chamber Leadership Team Announced

**Jim Harrison, III**, owner of Harrison Galleries, has been elected 2007 Chairman of The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama, effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, following an organizational meeting of the Board of Directors. Harrison succeeds Gene Poole of Hudson-Poole Jewelers.

In addition, **Dr. Robert Witt**, President of The University of Alabama, was named Chairman Elect of The Chamber for 2008; **Chip Shields**, Chief Financial Officer of AFFLINK, was elected as 2007 Treasurer; and Attorney **Dennis Steverson** was elected Legal Counsel. **Gene Poole** as Immediate Past Chair, and **Johnnie Aycock**, President of The Chamber, will both serve on the 2007 Executive Committee.



Elected as Division Vice Chairs and members of the Executive Committee for the coming year were: Business Development - **Jeff Whittington**, President of Cadence Bank; Governmental Affairs - **Randy Skagen**, General Manager, Nucor Steel; Education & Workforce Development - **Terry Waters**, Western Division Vice President of Alabama Power Company; Community Development - **Nancy Dawkins**, Owner of Nancy & Company Jewelers; and Organizational Development - **Lin Moore**, Chairman of Pritchett-Moore, Inc.

Harrison attended The University of Alabama and is a long time business leader. He worked with his family and the Harco Drugs chain for over 23 years until the company was acquired by Rite Aid in 1997. An entrepreneur and cultural arts advocate, he opened Harrison Galleries in July, 2001, a fine art gallery, located in the old Central Drug Company location in Downtown Tuscaloosa, the first store in the Harco Drug chain started by his grandfather, Jimmy Harrison, Sr., in 1941.

An active community leader, Harrison has served in numerous leadership roles with The Chamber and for local, state and national professional, arts and business organizations. He has served as The Chamber's Chairman Elect this past year and as a member of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee. In 2004, he was the recipient of The Chamber's Charles H. Land Member of the Year award.

Harrison has provided leadership for a variety of organizations, including serving as the current Chairman of the DCH Foundation, a member of the Alabama State Council on the Arts Board, and member of the Board of Directors of the Community Foundation of West Alabama, Black Warrior Council of the Boy Scouts, Kentuck Museum Association Board, Tuscaloosa County Preservation Society, Wachovia Bank, and many other civic and business associations. He is an active member of the St. John's Catholic Church. Jim and his wife, Kaye, have one son, James Harrison, IV.

"I am delighted and excited about the opportunity to serve as Chairman of The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama in 2007," stated Harrison. "We have a wonderful team of officers, directors and staff to lead our Chamber over the coming year, along with a solid and loyal core of members that are involved in Chamber-led initiatives that are enhancing the quality of life for our community."

"The Chamber is a vital part of the fabric of our community and is the leading voice and advocate for business in the West Alabama region," said Harrison. "Because of this, it is very important that our membership be engaged and create effective working partnerships with the public, private and non-profit sectors of our growing community."

"It will also be important for our Chamber to maintain our influence and leadership in the areas of workforce development, cultural development, governmental and public affairs, and economic expansion, while providing our members with value-added services and support. The many, diverse programs of The Chamber are essential for our members, and we will strive to continue to deliver quality programs."

The 2007 officers and directors take office effective January 1<sup>st</sup> and will be presented at The Chamber's annual meeting in January.

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## **Roster Of Leadership Tuscaloosa Class For 2006-2007 Totals**

### **55**

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**Row 1: (Left to Right)** Holly Smith, Suzanne Dowling, Patrick Conner, Shelly Hood

Standridge, Jenny Ryan, Katie Butler, Patrick Agee, Angela Ward, Gladys Hill, Elizabeth Hamner, Tracy Perkins, and Sontonia Stephens **Row 2:** Margaret Purcell, Oscar Barnes, Ken King, Rhett Jordan, Tracy Waldrop, Phyllis Gamble, Coleecia Merriweather Perryman, Jeanine Summerville-Garrett, Marie Lawrence, and Shurrun Varner **Row 3 :** Hank Wilson, Robby Johnson, Willie J. Lang, Loo Whitfield, Robin-Anne Nelson, John Stephens, Chris Hutt, John Oakes, and Evelyn Gardner **Row 4:** Greg Gettings, Bill Squires, Shay Lawson, Nancy Hubbard, Jay Logan, George Elder, Jacque Cordle-Ramey, and Chris Williamson **Row 5:** Wayne Vickers, Charla Wells, Ward McFarland, Liz Obradovich, and Maia A. Lee **Row 6:** Tim Bowen, Tim Parker, Susan Bishop, Chris Turner, Brock Corder, and Brandon Farmer **Row 7:** Abner Patton, Leyla Goodsell, and Jay Welborn. Not pictured: Carolyn DeWitt Goode and Davis Jackson.

On September 12, the 23rd class of Leadership Tuscaloosa gathered at Tuscaloosa Toyota's new location on Skyland Boulevard to begin their nine-month study of the Tuscaloosa County community.

Fifty-five individuals with diverse backgrounds and interests comprise the new class. The program is coordinated by the Leadership Tuscaloosa Steering Committee with Yardley Bailey as chair, and by Geri Stone of the College of Continuing Studies at the University of Alabama.

Chamber President Johnnie Aycock said, "I'm really impressed and excited about the 2006-2007 group. Many of these individuals are leaders already, but Leadership Tuscaloosa will provide them with a wealth of knowledge about our community."

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### **If You Don't Have Any Job Stress, Skip This Chamber Seminar**

Stress seems to be a constant companion of nearly everyone in today's workplace. How to deal with that stress could be the key to increasing job satisfaction and work accomplishments.

On October 17, during a "Lunch and Learn" seminar, hosted by The Chamber, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) of the DCH Health System will provide proven techniques for reducing stress in the workplace.

The seminar will begin at 11 a.m., include lunch, and end at 1 p.m. It will be held at the Sheraton Four Points. Cost for Chamber members is only \$35; non-members can attend for \$70.

Dr. Emily S. Smith, director of the EAP, and EAP Specialist Pete Couch, will discuss the following topics:

- Understanding stress and its impact on your life
- Tips for a less stressful life at work and home
- Uncovering the root cause of personal stressors
- Proactive ways to create balance in everyday life
- Balance + Productivity = Contentment
- Maintaining motivation and momentum

Call The Chamber office at 758-7588 for more details and to register for the seminar.

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### **Alabama Power Celebrates A Birthday With A Face Lift**



Alabama Power Company, which has long been supportive of The Chamber and whose employees have filled many Chamber volunteer positions, is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2006.

Locally, the Power Company operations are led by Terry Waters who is very active in community affairs and will return to The Chamber's Board of Directors in 2007. Waters is a former Chairman of The Chamber's Board of Directors.

To celebrate its anniversary, Alabama Power created an exhibit of historical images and artifacts that will travel across the state. The exhibit opened in West Alabama on August 21 at the Harrison Galleries in Downtown Tuscaloosa and remained there until September 24. The exhibit highlighted the company's important ties to Alabama's growth and development, and to its people, during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

In conjunction with the centennial exhibit, Alabama Power sponsored an art contest open to fourth graders within its 14-county service territory in West Alabama. The winning entries are on display at the Children's Hands-On Museum until September 30. The creative art contest focused on the theme, "What electricity means to me."

Waters is shown in the photo in front of the Alabama Power Company offices at the corner of Queen City Avenue and Paul W. Bryant Drive. This building is scheduled to undergo a dramatic face lift in the coming months.

Expected to be completed by early 2008, the renovation will mirror its historic neighborhood.



Designed by Ellis Architects, the project will enclose the existing building in brick veneer and replace its windows.

"I'm very pleased with the classic and historic design of the new exterior of our office building," Waters said. "This project will certainly be important to the overall downtown redevelopment efforts and will be in keeping with the historic character of the surrounding neighborhood."

Alabama Power serves some 1.4 million customers around the state.

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## BFGoodrich To Mark 60th Anniversary In Tuscaloosa In October



Since the first tire rolled off the line at BFGoodrich in October 1946, the Tuscaloosa plant has seen many changes and much growth.

To wit: the original plant had 12 employees. Today, 1,400 people work at the facility on the city's west side.

Construction of the original plant began during World War II, and it was designed to produce military vehicles for the U. S. government. As the end of the war approached, the government decided to halt construction, and BF Goodrich Tire Manufacturing bought the partially completed plant and completed the 860,000 square foot facility in time to begin tire production late in 1946.

In 1954, the plant's mission changed its focus to manufacturing only belted bias tires for passenger vehicles. From 1961 through 1974, an additional 741,000 square feet was added, to handle increased production and the change from bias tires to radial tires.

Another expansion occurred in 1985, when 48,000 square feet were added. Also in 1985, a fourth work crew was added, and the plant implemented a seven-day work schedule.



In 1986, BFGoodrich and Uniroyal formed a joint venture, and the new company became Uniroyal Goodrich in August 1986. Four years later, the company was purchased by Michelin, and in 2004, the plant assumed its current name: BFGoodrich Tire Manufacturing.

*The photos show BFGoodrich employees and their families celebrating the company's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary on Labor Day 2006.*

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## Gulf States Paper Corporation Changes Name and Logo

"Flexible," "fluid," and "ever-evolving," are adjectives that could be used to describe the 122-year-old organization that has been known as Gulf States Paper Corporation since it moved to Tuscaloosa in 1927.

Founded by Herbert Westervelt in 1884, the privately held company has withstood multiple economic depressions, including The Great Depression, both World Wars, floods at multiple locations, and a host of other business-related hurdles. It is no stranger to change.

Now in its fourth generation of leadership, the organization led by Chairman of the Board Jon Warner, is looking to the future with a name and identity that reflect its new direction.



The organization will be known as "The Westervelt Company," and will undergo a name change process over the next nine to twelve months.

"From our earliest days in 1884 as Prairie State Paper Corporation in South Bend, Indiana, to the EZ Opener Bag Company in 1902 in Taylorville, Illinois, to Gulf States Paper Corporation in 1927, in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, four things have remained consistent: our commitment to honesty and integrity, our commitment to exceptional quality, our commitment to environmental stewardship, and the private ownership by the Westervelt family," says Mike Case, President and CEO.

In the book "Progress," author and former Chairman Jack Warner notes, "Prairie State Paper Company changed its name to E-Z Opener Bag Company to reflect the principal product of the mill" and quoted the organization's official position of "... being desirous that the name of our corporation should more nearly conform to the character of the goods manufactured."

"We no longer make paper, or paperboard packaging, and we feel it is best to identify ourselves with the future of our organization," said Case.

"Through our diverse business units we have developed multiple brands over the past ten years, and those brands are our primary business drivers. We will continue to focus our efforts on promoting these brands, while maintaining The Westervelt Company's commitment to quality, integrity, and a position as an employer of choice," Case said. The name change, with a new website and email addresses scheduled for rollout by the end of the year, should be completed by September 1, 2007.

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## **Two Mayors Join In Cutting Ribbon On New Peoples Office**



Northport Mayor Harvey Fretwell and Tuscaloosa Mayor Walt Maddox participated in the September 25 ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially open the new offices of Peoples Bank and Trust Company.

The new facility actually sits in both cities with the largest portion of the property in the City of Northport. The two mayors were part of a large crowd of supporters including Chamber of Commerce leaders, friends of the bank, employees and customers.

Howard Garrison, 2005 Chairman of The Chamber is president of the bank.

Photographed left to right, are Mayor Maddox, Mayor Fretwell, Bank President Howard Garrison, and Chamber Chairman Gene Poole.

The new office is located at 31 McFarland Blvd. in Northport.

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### **Northport Advisory Council Hears Probate Judge Candidates**

On September 11, the Northport Advisory Council, under the leadership of Tracy Waldrop, listened to the two candidates for Tuscaloosa County Probate Judge.

Challenger, Attorney Joe Powell, outlined a four-point plan for advancing the county. The incumbent, Probate Judge Hardy McCollum, followed with a discussion of his plans which emphasized his 30 years of experience in the job.

Lin Moore of Pritchett-Moore Insurance, and a member of The Chamber's Board of Directors, facilitated the discussion.

To read the candidates responses to The Chamber's survey questions, log onto: <http://www.tuscaloosachamber.com/tuscaloosa/election.php>

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### **Med Center North Opens In Northport**



A large crowd gathered on August 29th for the grand opening of the new Med Center North, located at 3909 McFarland Boulevard in Northport.

Participating in the ribbon cutting were Mayor Fretwell and Northport City Councilman John Myers.

Loo Whitfield, left, of The Chamber staff, helped with the ceremony, and the three physicians at the center are, left to right, Dr. Perry Lovely, Dr. Chris McGee, and Dr. Robert Posey.

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### **Housing Authority Grabs Top Honors; Herbert Recognized**

The Tuscaloosa Housing Authority recently received three of the top awards given out at the 66<sup>th</sup> Annual Alabama Association of Housing and Redevelopment Authorities (ASHRA) Conference.

In the most competitive awards category, the director of our local housing authority was chosen as the 2006 AAHRA Executive Director of the Year. Rick Herbert was recognized, among other things, for spearheading the efforts to obtain the \$20 million federal Hope VI grant that will revitalize the McKenzie Court area of Tuscaloosa.

James Jones, maintenance supervisor, was chosen as the association's Maintenance Employee of the Year. Jones has been with the Housing Authority for 28 years, starting his career as a laborer.

The third award the Authority received was for Best Agency Publication. "Hope VI Has Arrived" was the focus of a special issue of the agency's newsletter, Residents' Digest.

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### **Real Estate Company Changes Name After 10 Years As ReMax**

Remax Consultants have provided real estate services in Tuscaloosa County for more than 10 years. Recently, this locally owned and operated company changed its name to Consultants Realty.

The firm's telephone number remains the same: 391-9903.

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