

Entrepreneurs

of the Year

Honored



Clay Kilgore, Patsy Baker, and Lynn McKelvy

The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama has honored outstanding business leadership and success during the 15th annual Entrepreneurs of the Year awards program held on May 15th. The program is designed to spotlight the achievements and contributions of area small businesses and entrepreneurs in Tuscaloosa County and West Alabama.

Sandy Hartley of National Bank of Commerce and Chairman of the Entrepreneurs Awards Committee of The Chamber, pointed out that "our community is blessed with an exceptional and broad base of business talent. All of our nominees reflected leadership, high standards of commitment, and the entrepreneurial spirit of our community."



Mike Echols, and Bill Lunsford

Awards were presented in four categories: Entrepreneur of the Year; Advocate of the Year; the Rising Star Award, designed to recognize new, young firms; and the Lifetime Achievement Award, given to honor business leadership and service to the Tuscaloosa County region over a significant period of time.

A change in the name of one of the awards became effective with the 2003 honors. To honor the memory of Past Chamber Chairman, **Pettus Randall**, who was the 2002 Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, The

Chamber's Board of Directors has officially designated the primary award – the **H. Pettus Randall, III Entrepreneur of the Year Award**.

The 2003 Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to **Gordon Rosen**, Attorney



Jack Marshall

and partner in the firm of Rosen, Cook, Sledge, Davis, Cade & Shattuck. A long-time community leader, Mr. Rosen was honored for his consistent service to his profession and his unselfish and dedicated efforts through a variety of civic, charitable and professional organizations over a long period of time.

Selected for the 2003 H. Pettus Randall, III Entrepreneurs of the Year were: **Bill Lunsford**, President of Bill Lunsford Construction and Development Company; **Keith Madden**, Owner of Madden Lincoln Mercury; **Jack Marshall**, Owner of Jack Marshall Foods, Inc.; **Gary Fitts**, Owner of The Fitts Agency; and **Raymond & Lena Steele**, Owners of Fashion Cleaners & Laundry in Eutaw, Alabama.

The 2003 Rising Star Award, designed to recognize an emerging, young business, went to: **Louis Horvath**, General Manager of Genius Rollerscreen Systems; **Lynn McKelvey**, President of McKelvey

(Continued next page)

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Gordon Rosen

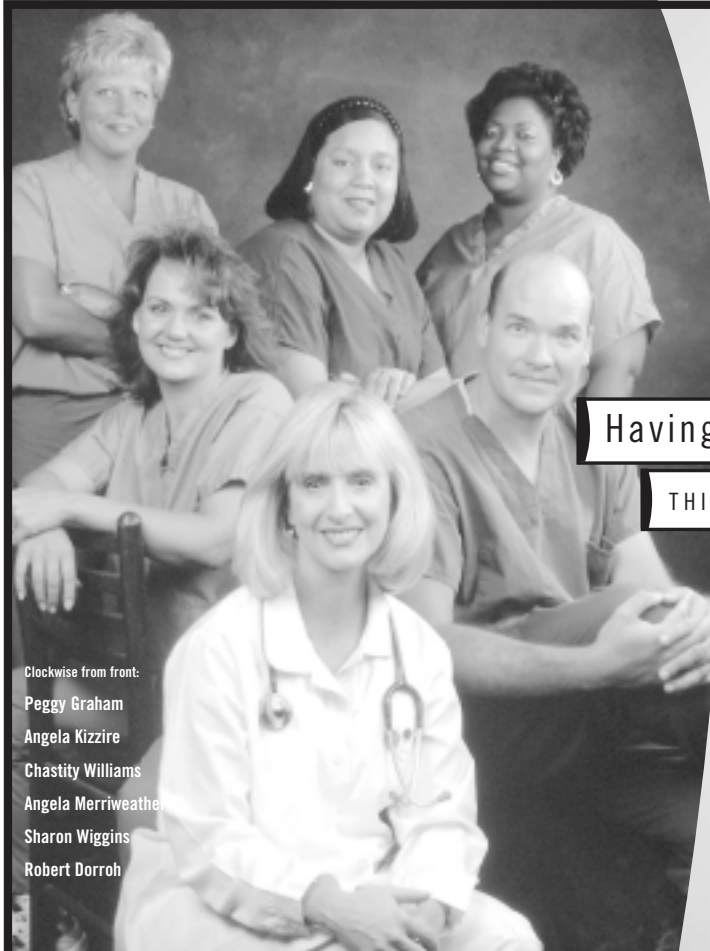
Mechanical; **Clay Kilgore**, President of Clay Kilgore Construction Company; **Bob Falls**, Owner of Black Warrior Mechanical Contractors; and **Patsy Baker** and **Kay Grayson**, Owners of Sisters.

The 2003 Advocate of the Year Award was presented to **Mike Echols**, CPA and Owner of Michael H. Echols & Associates. He was honored for his advocacy role on behalf of his clients, business owners, and the community's business climate through his counsel, active political involvement on behalf of business issues, consulting and support relationships.

"We had wonderful participation in this year's program", said Hartley. "The nominations represented a cross-section of area firms and our recipients certainly reflected the very essence of private enterprise and entrepreneurship. We are very proud of our honorees and extend our congratulations to each of them for their dedication and achievements."

Members of the 2003 Entrepreneur of the Year Committee were: **Sandy Hartley**, Chair, National Bank of

Commerce; **Mary Nell Hallman**, Bank of Tuscaloosa; **Mark Mooney**, Compass Bank; **Janet Moore**, Jamison, Money, Farmer & Company; **Sam Parks**, SouthTrust Bank; **Jordan Plaster**, Merrill Lynch; **Bill Tate**, Tidwell DeWitt; **Debbie Watson**, AmSouth Bank; and **Chris Williams**, Regions Bank.



Clockwise from front:
Peggy Graham
Angela Kizzire
Chastity Williams
Angela Merriweather
Sharon Wiggins
Robert Dorroh

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Riverfront Master Plan Provides Exciting Blueprint For The Future

The evolution of a final master plan.

The final distance of the entire Tuscaloosa Riverwalk greenway stretches a length of over thirteen miles.

To the south side of the Black Warrior River, the master plan is divided into multiple vicinities moving upstream from areas west of downtown Tuscaloosa towards the Holt Community.

North of the river, the greenway trail begins at the Mary Ann Phelps Recreation Center and travels south and westward paralleling the Black Warrior and North Rivers, terminating at the city limits of Northport.

City of Northport, West End, Downtown Tuscaloosa, University of Alabama, Gates of Wellington, Holt Community, Confluence of the North and Black Warrior Rivers, Lake Tuscaloosa.

Almon Associates City of Tuscaloosa Tuscaloosa, Alabama

non-traditional uses. This encourages a 24-hour a day citizen presence and discourages the negative consequences of suburban sprawl.

- Establish a design philosophy that appears to have no boundaries and encourages adjacent communities to become involved with activities in and around the project site.

- Implement a sustainable design that will serve generations in the future.

The planning team developed two design scenarios for the entire 13-mile greenway study area, which allowed the exploration of different options from a list of potential site criteria. Among the different features of each design were waterfront promenades, an amphitheater, open greenspace, walking, hiking and biking trails, overlooks and other features.

(See "Riverwalk" page 12)

Exciting and encouraging progress is being made as the final touches are put on the City of Tuscaloosa's riverfront master plan. Under the professional guidance of **Almon Associates of Tuscaloosa** and their planning partners, Woolpert, LLP of Charlotte, North Carolina, and Jordan, Jones & Goulding of Norcross, Georgia, the planning process is nearing an important stage.

- To create a trail system for a variety of uses linking multiple nodes along the Black Warrior River – from Downtown Tuscaloosa to the University of Alabama to Lake Tuscaloosa.

- To introduce development that combines both traditional and

Since the Spring of 2002, the project team has been meeting with leaders from the public and private sectors of Tuscaloosa, gathering data, soliciting input from the public, completing an analysis of existing conditions, and testing conceptual designs. Out of this extensive effort, a list of project goals were developed. Among these include:

- To transform the area of land between Downtown Tuscaloosa and the Black Warrior River into a livable, workable, and recreational outlet for citizens of the Tuscaloosa metro area.

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Members In The News



Super China Buffet Opens

Mayor Al DuPont, along with several Chamber Ambassadors, were on hand for the ribbon cutting festivities for the new Super China Buffet. Following the ribbon cutting, **Cindy Lam** and her staff served lunch to all those in attendance. The new restaurant is located at 4126 McFarland Boulevard East in Tuscaloosa.

Sun & Soul Opens New Business



Mayor Al DuPont along with Chamber officials toured the new Sun & Soul Tanning and then cut the ribbon to officially open this new Tuscaloosa business. Sun & Soul is located at 1130 University Boulevard on "The Strip" in the new University TownCenter.

Ellis Architects Honored



Ellis Architects of Tuscaloosa recently was honored as the 2003 Outstanding Architect of the Year from the Alabama Associated General Contractors (AGC). Principal architect, **Michael Ellis, AIA**, accepted the award at the AGC's annual "Build Alabama Awards" ceremony in Birmingham.

Ellis Architects has operated in Tuscaloosa for more than ten years, producing quality designs for schools, office and retail buildings, medical facilities, apartment complexes and customer residences. Among the firm's latest projects include Northridge and Bryant High Schools for the Tuscaloosa City Board of Education and Northside High School for the Tuscaloosa County Board of Education.

University Orthopaedic Clinic



Frederick S. Graham, M.D., has recently joined **University Orthopaedic Clinic**. Board Certified in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Dr. Fred

Graham specializes in non-operative orthopaedics and has a special interest in spinal problems. He brings to UOC added expertise in interventional spine and epidural block procedures.

Dr. Graham completed both his medical degree and residency program in physical medicine and rehabilitation at the University of Alabama School of

Medicine. He also recently completed a fellowship in interventional spinal procedures. Dr. Graham joins colleague **Dr. James Barnett** who is also a physiatrist with special training in nerve testing and rehabilitation.

Apex Broadcasting Upgrades WANZ 100.5

Davis Hawkins, veteran radio management executive, has announced that Tuscaloosa's WANZ Z-100 will relocate its tower from Northport/Tuscaloosa to Vance and will begin broadcasting from its new tower with 100,000 watts power at 100.5. The new **Z 100** will feature the best modern rock hits of today and last fifteen years to an expanded market that will include Tuscaloosa/Northport and Birmingham.

In addition, the new Z 100 has introduced a new morning show that will have strong ties to the Tuscaloosa Birmingham communities, listeners and advertisers. Apex Broadcasting is a Tuscaloosa-based broadcasting group which also owns and operates WTUG-FM, WBEI-FM 101.7, and WTSK-AM 790 in Tuscaloosa; WFFN-FM and WTID-AM in Jasper; and other stations in Charleston, South Carolina and Lake Charles, Louisiana.

South's Finest Meats Opens New Location

South's Finest Meats opened its third Tuscaloosa area location. Northport's **Mayor Harvey Fretwell** cut



Members In The News

the ribbon as co-owners **David Snow** and **Richard Snyder** looked on. Chamber Ambassadors were also on hand to congratulate the new business owners. The new location is at the intersection of Highway 82 and Highway 69 in Northport.

Northport Wal-Mart Opens SuperCenter Expansion



Northport Wal-Mart, located at 2491 McFarland Boulevard, has opened its newly expanded SuperCenter. **Mayor Harvey Fretwell** was on hand to cut the ribbon. As part of the grand opening celebration, Wal-Mart donated cash and computers totaling over \$19,500.00 to various area organizations. Among the organizations receiving donations were: ARC of Tuscaloosa, Boy Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs of Tuscaloosa, Girl Scouts, UCP of Tuscaloosa, United Way and a variety of local schools.

Mack Ogren Named Chairman of Character First Coalition



Mack Ogren has been elected as Chairman of the Mayor's Character Coalition which has the overall responsibility for the Character First Program in

Tuscaloosa. Ogren assumes the leadership responsibilities of former Chairman, Douglas McElvy.



O'Reilly Auto Parts Opens Northport Location

O'Reilly Auto Parts has officially opened its new location at 2491 McFarland Boulevard in Northport. **Mayor Harvey Fretwell**, along with Regional Manager **Ken Cope**, District Manager **Bo Waldrop**, and Store Manager **Bruce Winters**, cut the ribbon at the opening. Following the ribbon cutting, the company presented a donation to the Community Intensive Treatment For Youth, represented by **Shari Augins**.

Character First provides businesses and industries, educational institutions, and governmental organizations with unique training and practical applications based on good character qualities. "We are very excited about Mack taking this important leadership role", stated **Jerry Lake**, Executive Director of Tuscaloosa's Character Coalition. "His personal commitment and enthusiasm will provide momentum to sustain and expand the program."

Mack Ogren has a distinguished record in the business and civic community. For 15 years, he served as a partner in the CPA firm of Jessup, Palmer & Associates. Subsequently, he served as Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at Randall Publishing Company. In January, 2003, he was appointed Executive Director of the JH Ranch Ministries organization. He has held numerous leadership roles in The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama, Tuscaloosa Exchange Club, FOCUS ON Senior Citizens, and the YMCA.

Cold Stone Creamery Opens

Cold Stone Creamery has opened its first Tuscaloosa location at 1130 University Boulevard on "The Strip". **Mayor Al DuPont** officially cut the ribbon to open the new facility.

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(“Riverwalk” continued from page 9)

And within the area of the downtown linkage to the riverfront, mixed-use, residential and recreational land use opportunities were considered.

The final distance of the entire Tuscaloosa Riverwalk greenway stretches a length of over 13 miles. To the south side of the Black Warrior River, the master plan is divided into multiple vicinities moving upstream from areas west of downtown Tuscaloosa toward the Holt area. North of the river, the greenway trail begins at the Mary Ann Phelps Center and travels south and westward paralleling the Black Warrior and North Rivers, terminating at the city limits of Northport.

Throughout the proposed master plan, unique features are designed to enhance the diversity of the community and the riverfront through a multi-use environment. Among the many exciting features proposed are multiple pedestrian experiences, entertainment space including an amphitheater, an expanded farmer’s market area, mixed-use commercial development opportunities, urban greenspace, and a host of other elements.

“With the adoption and implementation of this exciting riverfront plan and its mix of opportunities, transformation of Tuscaloosa into an even greater community to live, work, play and raise a family can and will be a reality. The proposed plan is visionary yet practical, focused yet flexible – and it is possible if we all work together,” emphasized Chamber President Johnnie Aycock.

Tuscaloosa Riverwalk Points South

Downtown

- Multi-use environment
- 24-hour activity
- Multiple pedestrian experiences
- New connections to Riverwalk
- Performance space
- Urban greenspace
- New, dispersed areas for CityFest
- Proposed Farmers' Market facility
- Greenway linkages
- Hotels and Convention Center
- Regatta and boating venue

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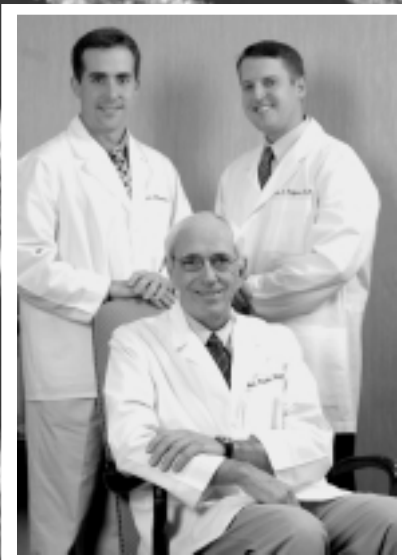
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Airport Task Force Recommends New Directions For Development

Following a six month review, The Chamber's Airport Development Task Force has made its report and recommendations to the Mayor and Tuscaloosa City Council. The task force was established in cooperation and contract with the City Council following a December, 2001 study by Wilbur Smith Associates focused on air cargo development for the Tuscaloosa Municipal Airport.

The Wilbur Smith study addressed the Tuscaloosa market's potential for air cargo services along with the potential for non-air cargo uses of the Tuscaloosa Municipal Airport. Following the receipt of this report, the City Council requested The Chamber to compete follow up review and identify specific development and implementation opportunities, define specific and potential users and uses, and define any physical, management and marketing needs for the airport.

The task force's recommendations submitted are divided into two basic areas – physical improvement needs and marketing and development opportunities. In summary, the report concludes that to increase identified and desired usage of the Tuscaloosa Municipal Airport, two primary steps will have to be implemented and achieved: 1) full time marketing and recruitment initiatives promoting TCL to potential air cargo, freight, corporate and other identified customers; and 2) improvements to TCL's facilities and infrastructure to create a more business-oriented, "customer friendly airport.

The report goes on to conclude that the future development of the Tuscaloosa Municipal Airport lies in the ability of the Tuscaloosa area community, both public and private sectors, to leverage the existing and growing regional



market. Industrially, corporately and demographically, Tuscaloosa has the size and level of potential air cargo and other usage to make TCL viable and profitable facility. However, the report emphasizes, users and service providers need to see the Tuscaloosa Municipal Airport and the Tuscaloosa public and private sectors as willing, viable, economic partners.

Among the some of the key recommendations presented to the Mayor and City Council for their consideration and action were:

- Upgrading and enhancement of physical facilities, including installation of radar, extension of control tower operating hours, location and maintenance of a fire/crash station, conversion of existing passenger terminal, or portions, to air cargo operations, enhancement of lighting systems, and runway extension.
- Establishment of an autonomous airport authority with expanded full-time management for development, marketing and recruitment.

- Use of available "greenfield" space and other sites for optional uses, such as air cargo facilities, aircraft related manufacturing and maintenance facilities.

- Expanded and alternative uses for the airport including recruitment of flight schools; expanded corporate, military and private uses; and increased community awareness related to the airport through appropriate recreational activities at the airport.

"Concerns were expressed throughout this process that the Tuscaloosa Municipal Airport is not being utilized efficiently and at best use currently resulting in potential loss of revenue to the City of Tuscaloosa and surrounding areas," according to Chamber President **Johnnie Aycock**. "Potential does exist for more effective and profitable uses of the airport, which is one of our community's most valuable resources."

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Members of the Airport Development Study Task Force were: **Ed Barnes**, Alabama Power Company; **Robert Deason**, Tuscaloosa Airport Group (TAG); **Bryan Finison**, Tidwell DeWitt; **Joe Robinson** and **David Griffin**, Tuscaloosa Department of Transportation; **Mark Gurganus**, Gulf States Paper Corporation; **Dr. Charles Haynes**, University of Alabama College of Engineering; **Buddy Moman**, retired businessman; **Mark Powell**, Tuscaloosa Airport Control Tower; **John Presley** and **Jim Cockrell**, JVC America; **Darrell Watkins**, All Pro Inc.; and **Johnnie Aycock**, The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama.

In addition, special appreciation and acknowledgement is extended to

Dr. Robert Morgan and **Dr. Giles D'Souza** of The University of Alabama College of Commerce and their team of graduate students – **Edwin Moss**, **Dusti Newman**, **Lea Konjevic**, **Morgan Robinson**, **Jennifer White**, and **Jason Courson**.

This team of outstanding students provided invaluable research and development of the marketing and management recommendations.

For a complete copy of the Airport Development Study, contact **Johnnie Aycock** at The Chamber at 391-0559. A small cost for reproduction of the report will be required.

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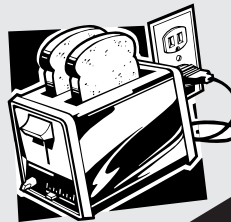
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