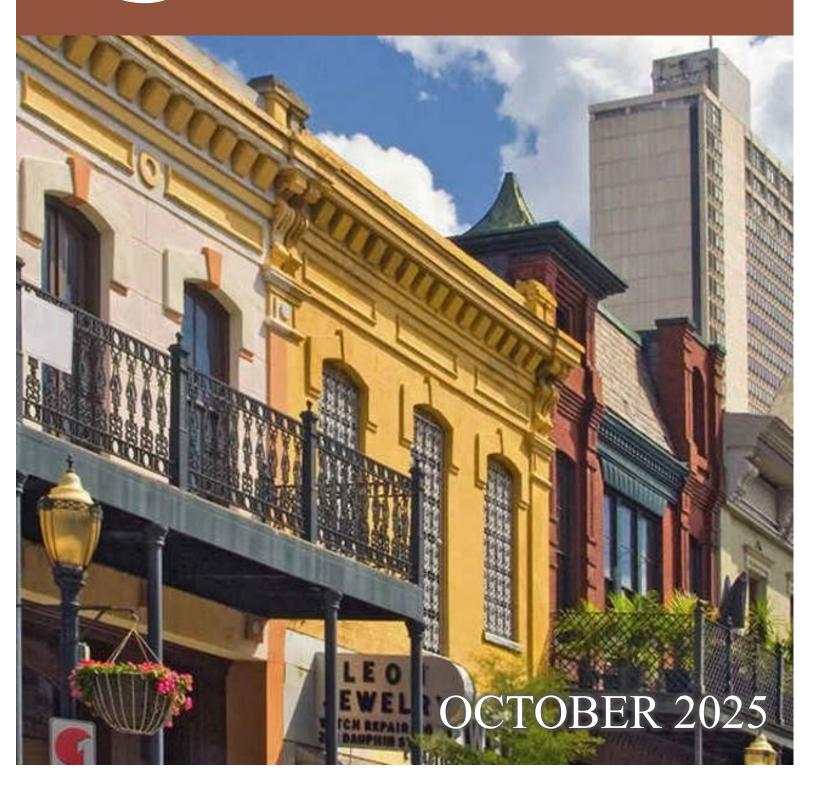
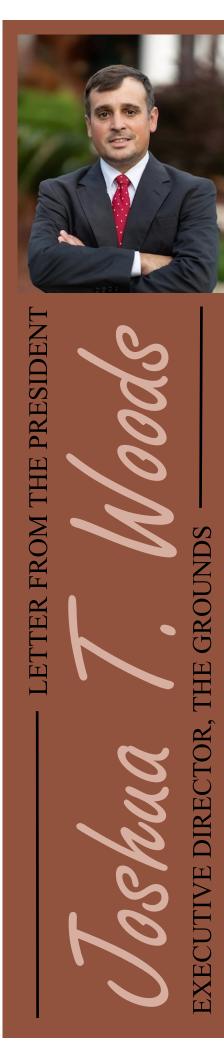
THE CORNER

A SOUTHWEST MOBILE COUNTY CHAMBER PUBLICATION





CHAMPIONING

INSPIRING DDNDFCC

The Power of Giving Back: A Stronger Community, A Stronger Business

As we transition into the final quarter of the year, it's a natural time to reflect on where we've been—and where we're going—not only as individuals and businesses but as a community.

One of the most impactful things we can do in our community is also one of the simplest: give back.

Giving back takes many forms. It might be volunteering your time with a local nonprofit. It could be writing a check to support a cause that touches your heart. Maybe it's something as easy as sharing a local fundraiser on social media. Every action, no matter how small, sends a powerful message: we're in this together.

When businesses engage with their communities beyond transactions, something incredible happens. Trust builds. Relationships deepen. Loyalty grows. And those businesses—your businesses—become more than storefronts or service providers. You become partners in progress, anchors of stability, and leaders in compassion.

Here at the Chamber, we believe in leading by example. That's why we're proud to once again host our Annual Alabama vs. Auburn Food Drive—a spirited, friendly competition with a serious mission: fighting food insecurity right here at home.

We're kicking things off at our upcoming Monthly Business Luncheon on Wednesday, October 1st, and we're asking all of our Chamber partners and representatives to bring non-perishable food donations to the event. Whether you wear crimson or orange, your donation will make a difference.

This isn't just a football rivalry—it's a chance for your business to show heart and commitment to our community. Every can, box, or bag of food you bring helps the chamber provide support to local elementary school families who are facing hard times. And when customers see your business getting involved, they remember. In fact, studies consistently show that consumers are more likely to support businesses that actively give back to their communities.

So I challenge you: don't sit on the sidelines. Get involved. Rally your staff to collect donations. Post about the food drive on your social media. Offer an incentive to customers who contribute. You'll not only be helping those in need—you'll be reinforcing your place as a business that cares, which is always good for your bottom line.

Giving back is good for the soul. It's good for the community. And yes, it's good for business.

Let's come together—Alabama and Auburn fans alike—and show what we can do when we unite for a common cause. I look forward to seeing many of you, and your donations, at the luncheon on October 1st.

Together, let's make a difference.

Josh Woods

SWMCC Board President

Cover Photos: Visit Mobile

THE SOUTHWEST MOBILE COUNTY CHAMBER'S

EVENT CALENDAR

OCTOBER 2025

1

Monthly Business Luncheon

Time: 11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Location: John C. Williams Auditorium

Speaker: Fred Rendfrey, Downtown Mobile Alliance

Caterer: Woodyard Catering

21

Coffee with the Chamber

Our monthly Coffee with the Chamber is a great opportunity to network with other business leaders and representatives. This event is open for both current SWMCC partners as well as prospective partners.

1

Alabama vs. Auburn Food Drive Kick-Off

Help us kick off our Annual Food Drive by bringing a donation to the October Business Luncheon!

You can see a list of needed items online at: www.swmcchamber.com

31

Gun Giveaway Tickets

Our Annual Guns & Gear Giveaway Tickets are on sale through October 31st. There are only 200 available so be sure to purchase yours online or from a Board Member today! Proceeds from this fundraiser support our TALL Scholarship Program.

16

Boss's Day

Join us in taking the opportunity to recognize and appreciate the hard work, guidance, and leadership of our local supervisors, managers, and administrators!

31

November Luncheon Preregistration Deadline

The deadline to purchase an online ticket for the November Luncheon is October 31st at 5:00 pm.

No tickets will be sold at the door.

20

CAP Meeting

Time: 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm

Location: John C. Williams Auditorium

SMIA hosts a Community Advisory Panel (CAP) Meeting each month. The objective is to provide citizens the opportunity for an open dialogue with industry, to help citizens better understand industry, and to help local industry understand community concerns. **SAVE THE DATE**

What: Tillman's Corner Christmas Parade

When: Saturday, December 6th

For those interested in participating, please email info@swmcchamber.com for an application.





Romilee Broussard

Agency Owner

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- allstate.com/rbroussard1

NETWORK//G OCTOBER 1ST, 2025

SPEAKER:



Fred Rendfrey has served as the president and CEO of the Downtown Mobile Alliance since May 2024. He joined the Alliance in 2007 as economic development director and focused on redevelopment through marketing, advocacy and improving the user experience.

Fred honed his leadership skills by participating both in The Alabama Leadership Initiative, a brief, two-day program for emerging leaders hosted by Leadership Alabama and in the International Downtown Association's inaugural Emerging Leader Fellowship Program.

He is a member of the International Council of Shopping Centers, the Urban Land Institute, and the Congress for New Urbanism.

Fred received a BA in economics from Millsaps College and a MS in economic development from the University of Southern Mississippi. Prior to joining the DMA Fred served as the executive director of the Pearl Chamber of Commerce in Pearl, MS. Fred can be reached at (251) 459-8706 or fred@downtownmobile.org.



DOWNTOWN MOBILE ALLIANCE

OCTOBER LUNCHEON SPONSOR



WWW.MOBILESO.COM 510 S ROYAL ST, MOBILE, AL 36603

The Mobile County Sheriff's Office is the second largest in the state, with a staff of over 600 serving more than 400,000 citizens across an area of some 1,200 square miles.

The Sheriff's Office serves through four divisions: administrative services, field operations, support services, and correction. Our correction division, which operates the Mobile Metro Jail, has an average daily population of some 1500. In order to best fight crime while saving taxpayers millions of dollars, the Sheriff's Office also administers a 325-bed minimum security barracks that houses prisoners who are put to work in order to earn their keep.

The fight against crime requires constant updates of technology, from text-based citizen reporting methods to Smart Policing. This concept utilizes crime analysis in order to identify trends and crime "hot spots" in order to best allocate resources.

All of these services are overseen from the office's administration building, located near Metro Jail at 510 South Royal Street in downtown Mobile. The office's infrastructure, technology and workforce are all designed with future expansion and responsiveness in mind.



BUSINESS OF THE MONTH



The Chamber is proud to recognize Bellingrath Gardens and Home as our Business of the Month for September 2025! A treasured jewel of the Gulf Coast, Bellingrath has long been a source of inspiration, beauty, and hospitality for residents and visitors alike.

Founded in 1932 by Walter and Bessie Bellingrath, the 65-acre public garden and historic home in Theodore, Alabama has blossomed into one of the region's most iconic destinations. With its year-round floral displays, majestic live oaks, and timeless Southern charm, Bellingrath continues to provide unforgettable experiences for families, school groups, tourists, and garden enthusiasts from across the nation.

This year, Bellingrath has not only continued its tradition of excellence in horticulture and preservation but also expanded its community outreach through educational programming, local partnerships, and seasonal events such as the Fall Outdoor Cascading Chrysanthemums and the much-anticipated Magic Christmas in Lights.

The Chamber recognizes Bellingrath's commitment to environmental stewardship, cultural preservation, and economic impact. As a top attraction in our area, the gardens support local tourism and provide jobs, all while offering a peaceful and enriching experience to thousands each year.

We extend our congratulations to the entire Bellingrath team for their dedication, vision, and continued investment in our community. Your work helps make this region a more vibrant and beautiful place to live, work, and visit.

BECOME A PARTNER

Joining the SouthWest Mobile County Chamber means becoming part of a close-knit, family-like community where businesses support each other's growth. Unlike traditional memberships, the Chamber refers to its members as "partners," emphasizing collaboration and mutual success. As a partner, you'll have access to valuable resources, networking events, and business development opportunities that help you thrive in the local market. The Chamber's dedication to fostering relationships and providing support ensures that your business is never alone in its journey.

With a strong focus on local prosperity, the Chamber advocates for a business-friendly environment and contributes to the region's economic growth. By joining, you're not only gaining visibility through marketing and event opportunities but also participating in initiatives that benefit the entire SouthWest Mobile County community. Become a partner today and experience the power of collaboration and connection that can take your business to new heights.



BUSINESS ADVANTAGE SPONSORS

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Gold

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Silver

Alabama Power
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Proshield Pest Control
The Grounds

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Mobile Memorial Gardens Funeral Home
New Horizons Credit Union
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RoofLab
The Shoulder of the Central Gulf Coast



As we move into the final stretch of the year, I find myself reflecting deeply—not only on what we've accomplished, but on where we're heading. Each fall, there's a natural shift in pace. The urgency of finishing strong takes hold, but so too does a different kind of energy—the kind that stirs long-range thinking. It's the time of year when we pause to ask ourselves: What did we set out to do? What have we learned along the way? And what must come next to ensure that our work continues to matter?

Over the past few months, these questions have become central to the conversations we're having across our organization. Not just in leadership meetings or boardrooms, but across teams, in project reviews, and in moments of informal reflection. Because planning for the future shouldn't be a top-down process—it should emerge from the lived experiences of those doing the work and those most impacted by it.

As we begin shaping our strategic vision for 2026, it's clear that we're at a pivotal moment. Our current strategic framework, which has guided us through 2025, laid a strong foundation. It helped us clarify our mission, strengthen our programs, and expand our reach. We've seen growth in ways that were both planned and unexpected. We've responded to challenges with agility and have built systems that are more resilient than ever before. We've also, frankly, faced some tough lessons—about capacity, sustainability, and the limits of ambition without infrastructure to support it. Those lessons are not setbacks; they are signals. They're telling us that if we want to lead with purpose into the next chapter, we have to be deliberate, courageous, and honest with ourselves.

The world around us continues to evolve. Needs have changed. Expectations are higher. Resources are tighter. And yet, there is more possibility than ever before—if we are willing to evolve with intention. Strategic planning, to me, isn't just about putting goals on paper. It's about aligning who we are with what the moment requires. It's about revisiting our values and testing our assumptions. It's about thinking beyond operational metrics and asking: what legacy are we building, and who are we building it for?

We've begun to gather input—formally and informally—from across our community. Staff have shared thoughtful reflections about internal processes and what it would take to truly create a culture of innovation and wellbeing. Community partners have spoken about the importance of long-term collaboration, not just transactional relationships. Board members have raised critical questions about growth: not just whether we can do more, but whether we should, and what doing "more" really means. And those we serve—through feedback, stories, and candid conversations—continue to remind us that impact isn't just measured in numbers. It's measured in trust, in transformation, and in whether people feel seen and supported at every step.

Based on these early insights, we're seeing three central themes emerge that will likely shape our path to 2026. First, a deepening commitment to sustainability—not just financial, but human sustainability. We need to build an organization where people can grow without burning out, where systems support excellence rather than depend on individual heroics, and where long-term thinking is embedded in our day-to-day choices. Second, a renewed focus on equity—not as a side initiative, but as a guiding principle across every program, partnership, and internal policy. We know that equitable outcomes don't happen by default—they happen through intentional design and consistent accountability. Third, a commitment to meaningful, measurable impact. We want to ensure that every effort we invest leads to outcomes we can stand behind, and that our work continues to move the needle in the areas that matter most.

This isn't just about setting ambitious goals—it's about building the capacity, clarity, and culture to achieve them. We'll be entering a more formal planning process in early 2026, but the work starts now—with curiosity, humility, and a willingness to listen. Whether you're a team member, partner, donor, volunteer, or community member, I invite you to be part of this process. Your insights are essential. Your experiences matter. What challenges do you see on the horizon? What opportunities are we not yet seizing? What values should remain at the center no matter how much the world around us changes?

The path ahead won't be without complexity. But I believe this organization is ready—not just to respond to what's next, but to help shape it. With thoughtful planning, honest dialogue, and a shared commitment to the mission that brought us here in the first place, we can move into 2026 with confidence, clarity, and renewed purpose.

Thank you for walking this journey with us. I'm excited for what lies ahead, and I'm grateful—truly—for all that you bring to this work.

Tina Poiroux

Executive Director

SouthWest Mobile County Chamber of Commerce

LEARNING LEADERSHIP

STUDENT PROGRAMS

EMPOWERING SUCCESS

STAR STUDENTS

Each month, the SouthWest Mobile County Chamber of Commerce recognizes students from local elementary schools for their dedication to learning. This Program would not be possible without our Star Student Sponsors. Congratulations to the following students who were recognized on Wednesday, September 3rd, 2025:

- Khloe O'Boyle from Bright Academy sponsored by Payroll Vault
- Carter Weeks from Cottage Hill Christian Academy sponsored by Brian Lancaster, State Farm
- Ella Rose Shirley from Hollinger's Island Elementary sponsored by Evonik Corporation
- Meadowlake Elementary sponsored by Pilot
- Bryce Williams from Nan Gray Davis Elementary sponsored by BLP Mobile Paint
- Echo Little John from Pearl Haskew Elementary sponsored by Roberts Brothers The Sessions Team
- Ansley Haley from W.C. Griggs Elementary sponsored by Alabama Power





HANKINS SPOTLIGHT

We're excited to kick off the school year by recognizing Brock Westry-Frye, a 7th-grade student, as our September High Achiever of the Month at Hankins Middle School!

Brock was nominated by his Science teacher, Mrs. Colvell, who had glowing praise for his dedication, attitude, and love for learning. Here's what she had to say:

"Brock has been a wonderful student so far this school year. He has perfect attendance and always comes in his complete uniform without being reminded. In class, he pays attention and participates, asking and answering questions regularly. He genuinely seems to enjoy learning. He even shared some facts with me about a fungus he had learned about before—information I hadn't heard myself! He is respectful both in class and in the halls and has been a real joy to have in class so far this year. He seems to really embody the Hank Way every day."

Brock's enthusiasm for learning, respectful behavior, and strong work ethic make him a role model for his peers and a shining example of what it means to be a Hankins High Achiever.

We would like to extend our deepest appreciation to The Grounds whose generous support has made the Hankins High Achiever Award possible. Their commitment to education and local youth ensures that we can continue to recognize the hard work and accomplishments of our students, fostering an environment where excellence is celebrated and encouraged.

As we look to the future, we are excited to continue honoring bright and motivated students through this award, and we look forward to seeing many more students at Hankins Middle School recognized for their dedication, passion, and contributions to their school and community.

THE REAL ESTATE CORNER



The Mobile County Commission announced last month that work will soon begin on transforming the area between Mobile Government Plaza and the County Government Annex into the new Mobile Government Plaza Pocket Park. Construction plans will reportedly create an appealing space for outdoor lunches, breaks, meetings and small community events. Key features shall include a new circular fountain as the focal point; upgraded landscaping and greenspace; new benches, lighting and flagpoles; paver replacement for improved walkability; and security cameras. Almost 1,000 people work in Government Plaza alone, and the Downtown Mobile Alliance estimates nearly 20,000 workers across the downtown area. Funded by the American Rescue Plan Act, the \$1.4-million project was implemented to create a safer, greener and more inviting outdoor space downtown. Work is expected to be wrapped up by February 2026. WAS Design, Inc. provided design services, and the construction contract was awarded to J. Payne Organization, Inc.

The Alabama Housing Finance Authority has selected four affordable housing developments in Mobile for awards, marking the first time in the state's history that these many city-backed projects have been awarded in a single funding

cycle. The awards will help bring 218 new affordable housing units with more than \$81.7 million in total investment. These include Hurtel Crossing (56 units), Maryvale Village (56 units for local seniors), Fred Marshall Court (50 units) and Providence Park (56 units). Apart from Providence Park, which is being funded through the American Rescue Plan Act allocation, financial contributions will come from Housing and Urban Development Disaster Recovery allocations awarded by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs.

John M. Delchamps, associate broker with Merrill P. Thomas Co. Inc., has announced the lease of an 800-square-foot office suite to locally owned Total Mobility Physical Therapy found at 3925 Springhill Avenue in West Mobile. The office is within walking distance of Langan Park and near the intersection of Old Shell Road and McGregor Avenue. Richard Lyon, founder of Total Mobility Physical Therapy, combines his clinical expertise and business knowledge to offer personalized, one-on-one care to patients in his hometown.

Mike Reid, director of brokerage at Merrill P. Thomas Co. Inc., reported on a September lease of Suite G, a 225-square-foot office space found at 762 Downtowner Loop West in Mobile, to a new local business called Hairadicator Electrolysis. The landlord for the property is Triple S Properties, LLC. The company is run by David Hardee, a seasoned electrologist with more than 40 years of experience in the industry. Trained by leading experts, Hardee brings knowledge and ability to the Gulf Coast region.

For questions or news tips about local real estate, please email ron@hflend.com or call/text 251-219-8914.









- SOUTHWEST MOBILE COUNTY CHAMBER

FIRST RESPONDER SPOTLIGHT

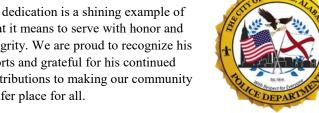
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE



Please join us in congratulating Officer Anthony Burkhart of the Mobile Police Department on being named Officer of the Month!

Officer Burkhart's unwavering commitment to public safety, his professionalism, and his outstanding service to the citizens of Mobile truly set him apart. Whether responding to critical incidents or lending a helping hand in everyday community matters, Officer Burkhart consistently goes above and beyond the call of duty.

His dedication is a shining example of what it means to serve with honor and integrity. We are proud to recognize his efforts and grateful for his continued contributions to making our community a safer place for all.



We are proud to recognize Deputy Ryan Turner of the Mobile County Sheriff's Office as Deputy of the Month!

Deputy Turner exemplifies the highest standards of law enforcement through his dedication, service, and unwavering commitment to the safety and well-being of our community. His professionalism, strong

> work ethic, and consistent efforts to go the extra mile have not gone unnoticed.



Whether responding to calls, assisting citizens, or supporting his fellow deputies, Deputy Turner leads by example and truly embodies the mission of "TEAM SHERIFF." His contributions continue to make a positive and lasting impact across Mobile County.



SPONSORED BY

The SouthWest Mobile County Chamber of Commerce would like to thank Century Bank for sponsoring our Officer of the Month and Deputy of the Month Programs. We so appreciate their willingness to continuously recognize such outstanding members of our community.

"Century Bank is a proud member of the communities we serve. Our involvement in extracurricular activities, fund raisers, organizations and other local events is a priority for directors, officers and employees of Century Bank."



INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT



Evonik's presence in Theodore, particularly near Tillman's Corner, plays a vital role in

shaping the region's industrial identity and long-term economic growth. As one of the largest specialty chemical manufacturers in North America, Evonik's Mobile site is a key contributor to global supply chains while remaining deeply rooted in the local economy. The facility supports high-performance industries including aerospace, automotive, agriculture, renewable energy, and animal nutrition. Products made locally—such as amino acids for livestock feed, structural foams for aircraft, and coating additives for wind turbines—highlight the site's strategic importance in both innovation and manufacturing excellence.

More than just a major employer, Evonik has helped catalyze industrial development in the greater Tillman's Corner area by attracting skilled labor, fostering supplier networks, and promoting sustainable practices. Their continued investment in local operations, including multimillion-dollar expansions, signals confidence in the area's infrastructure and workforce. These projects not only create jobs but also ensure the region remains competitive in advanced manufacturing. Evonik's collaboration with technical schools and community colleges helps train the next generation of chemical operators and technicians, reinforcing a local talent pipeline that supports long-term industry growth.





Chris Black

 $support@integrityit.us \ | \ (251) \ 206\text{-}7138$



AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

If you attended the Chamber's September Business Luncheon, you may have noticed a group of sharply dressed students in red blazers welcoming guests, helping with check-in, and engaging in conversations with local professionals. These impressive young leaders are members of the Theodore High School Ambassador Program, and they are quickly becoming a vibrant and valuable part of the Chamber community.

The Ambassador Program is comprised of junior and senior students at Theodore High School who have been selected through a competitive process based on leadership potential, academic standing, and a demonstrated interest in community involvement. These students serve as official representatives of Theodore High at public events, and their bright red blazers symbolize their role as visible leaders both on campus and in the wider community.

By attending monthly Luncheons and Coffees, the student ambassadors are given unique opportunities to observe, learn from, and engage with local business and civic leaders. For many, it is their first experience participating in professional networking environments. The program emphasizes skills like communication, teamwork, professionalism, and public service — all essential qualities for success in any career path.

This partnership between Theodore High School and the Chamber is a shining example of what's possible when education and the business community work hand-in-hand. It allows students to connect what they're learning in school to real-world applications, and it introduces them to a range of industries and professionals they might not otherwise encounter.

The presence of the ambassadors also offers Chamber members a chance to give back — simply by offering a kind word, sharing a piece of advice, or providing encouragement to these students as they prepare for life beyond high school. Many ambassadors have already expressed how much they value the conversations and connections they've had at Chamber events.

As the school year continues, you can expect to see the red blazers at more Chamber gatherings. We encourage partners to take a moment to introduce themselves, share a bit about their work, and help foster the next generation of local leaders. The impact of a five -minute conversation could last a lifetime for a student just beginning their professional journey.





The Chamber would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who made the Third Annual Sporting Clay Shoot a tremendous success. Held at the beautiful Taylor Creek Sporting Clays, this event brought together business leaders, community members, and outdoor enthusiasts for a day of fun, networking, and friendly competition — all in support of the TALL Scholarship Program and SouthWest Mobile County Chamber of Commerce Foundation.

We are especially grateful to the participants who came out and took part in the shoot. Whether you were a seasoned marksman or trying it for the first time, your energy and enthusiasm helped create an exciting and welcoming atmosphere. Your presence made this event more than just a competition — it was a true community gathering.

A huge thank you also goes to the incredible volunteers who helped the day run smoothly from start to finish. From early morning setup to scorekeeping, hospitality, and clean-up, your hard work behind the scenes did not go unnoticed. Events like these simply wouldn't happen without your dedication and support.

We also want to sincerely thank our sponsors. Your generous contributions helped make this event possible and continue to fuel the programs, services, and connections that the Chamber provides to our local business community year-round. Your partnership means so much to us and to the future of our region's growth.

We are also deeply appreciative of the team at Taylor Creek Sporting Clays for hosting us once again at their exceptional facility. Their professionalism and hospitality provided the perfect backdrop for a safe and enjoyable experience for all.

The continued success of the Sporting Clay Shoot is a testament to the power of community and collaboration. We are proud of what we accomplished together and are already looking forward to making next year's event even better. Thank you again to everyone who participated, volunteered, or supported the event in any way. We couldn't have done it without you.



WELCOME TO THE CHAMBER: NEW PARTNERS



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lance.heisler8@yahoo.com



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www.rooflab.com

28740 US Hwy 98 Ste 9

Daphne, AL 36526



Southeast Nonprofit Housing

(251) 533-0520

ndeabler@senph.org

515 Springhill Plaza Court

Mobile, AL 36608



Chamber and Community Center Staff

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Hope Driskell hdriskell@swmcchamber.com

Event Coordinator

Jillian Baxter jbaxter@swmcchamber.com

Event Specialists

Calvin Dickerson and Catherine Hartsock

For Rental Information call the Tillman's Corner Community Center at (251) 666-2488.













JOIN THE

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