

[<Back](#)[Print](#)

August 2007

Downtown Update

The Latest News about Downtown Mobile

In This Issue

[Development News](#)

[Annual Meeting Energizes Crowd](#)

[Business Beautifies Block](#)

[Sign of the Times](#)

[Alliance Umbrellas Available](#)

[Downtown Living Tour Announced](#)

[BayFest Tickets On Sale at the Alliance Office](#)

[Downtown Doings](#)

Quick Links

[Downtown Alliance Web Site](#)

[Business and Development](#)

[Explore Downtown](#)

[Downtown Real Estate](#)

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Dear Carol,

Downtown is "hot" these days, and we're not just talking about the weather! New restaurants are opening, a new hotel is underway and one of our largest, long-vacant buildings will soon undergo a major renovation. It's an exciting time to be a part of the revitalization of the heart of our city. As Carlos Parkman of the Centre for the Living Arts says in our new video, "There's no stopping downtown now!"

Development News



The downtown landscape is changing yet again as ground was broken earlier this month for downtown Mobile's newest hotel. About 75 people, including elected officials, business owners and community leaders, attended the groundbreaking

ceremony earlier this month for the **Hampton Inn and Suites Downtown**, which will be a stunning addition to the Royal Street corridor.

The \$15-million, 7-story hotel will feature 150 rooms with balconies offering beautiful views of downtown and Mobile Bay. Guests will also be able to take a dip in a heated pool set in a landscaped outdoor courtyard. During the groundbreaking, hotel owner Hugh Edmonds declared the new Hampton Inn would be open for business in only 14 months. The contractor was well on the way the very next

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day.

More development news:

- **Kress Building** - now under contract, the prospective purchaser plans to occupy the Conti and St. Emanuel wings of the building. The Royal and Dauphin Street wings (about 29,000 square feet) are available for sale or long term lease. Call Burton Clark at 251-476-7600 for more information.
- **Gayfers Building** - Island Investments of Orange Beach purchased the building from the Mobile County School system earlier this month and is planning on converting the former department store into office space and condominiums.

[Find Out More](#)

Annual Meeting Energizes Crowd

"Power of Vision" Draws Hundreds of Supporters

There was no shortage of vision at the Annual Meeting of the Downtown Mobile Alliance and Downtown Mobile District Management Corporation earlier this week. Almost 500 people attended the sold-out event at the Battle House Hotel that



featured Senator Richard Shelby as keynote speaker. Mayor Sam Jones welcomed the crowd and Alliance President Lee Moncrief emceed the event. Alabama's senior senator challenged the crowd to continue the redevelopment efforts and pledged to do everything he could to maintain the momentum.

The meeting opened with a dynamic video by Airwind Productions that captured the energy and promise of downtown and ended with the Main Street Awards ceremony that honored many of the folks who have worked so hard to revitalize our neighborhood.

The Main Street Mobile Award winners for 2007 are:

- **Bienville Award** - Ann Bedsole
- **Outstanding Individual** - Janetta Whitt-Mitchell
- **Downtown Innovation** - Tilmon Brown, Lyons, Pipes & Cook, Lafayette Plaza Hotel
- **Leadership Achievement** - Ben May Main Library, Chris Barraza, Bob Williams

- **President's Awards** - Royal Scam, Market at 219, Hurricane Brewery, Subway, Cafe Royal, Samurai J, David Naman, Demented Needle, Victorian Lace, Bob and Buffy Donlon, Pete and Renea Burns, Guesnard House, Mattress Factory Lofts, Bacchus, Alabama Power, Community Foundation of South Alabama, Helix Properties, Bishop Portier House, Chesser Gallery, Pro Legal Copies, IPC Industries, Kangal and Associates, Busaba's, River City Granite, Woodlands Bank, Hancock Bank, Museum of Mobile, Chris Baker, Candice Christakos, Mack and Celia Lewis, Dandi Dolbear, Noell Broughton, Leon and Barbara Raue
- **Ron Blount** also received a special award of appreciation for his service to the Alliance and his dedication to the RSA Battle House project.

Many thanks to our generous sponsors that helped make the event possible: **Airwind Creative, Alabama State Port Authority, Armbrecht Jackson, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama, Cummings and Associates, EnergySouth, Lyons, Pipes & Cook, Northrop Grumman, Regions, Roberts Brothers, TAG, Wachovia, and Volkert & Associates.**

Business Beautifies Block

Lyons, Pipes & Cook Adds Colorful Plantings



Though downtown Mobile is considered by many to be one of the loveliest cities along the coast, our urban landscape is one component that could use some improvement. The city's Parks Department does a very good job of keeping our downtown parks

and hanging baskets lush and green, but some businesses have decided to tackle their own street level beautification projects.

As the Battle House Hotel was nearing completion, the folks next door at Lyons, Pipes and Cook began forming a landscape plan for the parking lot and sidewalks along Royal Street. LPC business manager David Constantine coordinated with the Battle House to compliment their plant materials. He installed several new planters in front of the LPC building and added maples, holly and annuals to beds in front of the parking lot.

Constantine researched planters and found a source for vinyl

containers that look like concrete, can be painted and are very reasonably priced. LPC will change out the plant material five times a year. To facilitate watering, Constantine recommends installing an outside, lockable spigot for buildings undergoing renovation. The neighbors in the block to the north are now planning on installing similar planters. Constantine says the reaction from folks walking past the LPC building is remarkable. He adds, "Not a single day goes by that someone doesn't compliment us on the flowers."

Source for planters

Sign of the Times

A great sign has always communicated more than the name of a business. Sometimes it reflects the goods sold, the actual nature of the business, even the personality of the owner.



Take a look at photos of downtown Mobile from decades past, when the streets and sidewalks were bustling with activity. The storefront and business signs were bold, perhaps even tacky by today's standards, but they signaled a healthy, vibrant retail and business community.

Each month we feature one of downtown's most creative and appealing signs. This month it's a downtown retail institution. **A & M Peanut Shop** has been selling tasty treats on Dauphin Street for 60 years. Even if this sign had no text at all, you'd still know exactly what you'd find inside. It's a classic...just like the chocolate covered peanuts in the case.

Alliance Umbrellas Available



With the extreme temperatures we've been having, afternoon showers offer a welcome respite from the heat, but it's not much fun to be caught out on the sidewalk without an umbrella. To

help keep our downtown folks dry on such days, the Downtown Mobile Alliance now has umbrellas for sale. The large, sturdy umbrellas will easily cover two pedestrians until the skies clear. The cost is \$20.00 and the umbrellas are available at our office at 261 Dauphin Street.

Downtown Living Tour Announced

If the thought of walking to work, church and shopping sounds appealing, you might want to consider becoming one of Mobile's new urban pioneers. The Downtown Mobile Alliance is sponsoring a Downtown Living Tour October 20th to introduce residential opportunities to the



general public. From chic loft units to renovated historic shotgun homes, visitors will be able to tour the wide range of downtown living options.

Details are still being finalized, but check our website for more information in the coming weeks. In the meantime, mark your calendar for October 20th! We will need help from the community for this event in the following areas:

- Sponsorship
- Planning Committee
- Volunteers the day of the event

If you'd like to get involved in this exciting downtown project, please contact Althea Kingsmill at akingsmill@downtownmobile.org.

Downtown Mobile Alliance

BayFest Tickets On Sale at the Alliance Office



BayFest will celebrate its 13th anniversary on October 5, 6 and 7, 2007 with an anticipated 200,000 guests

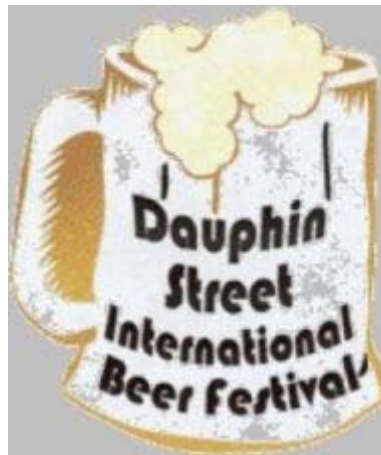
who will make merry on the streets of downtown Mobile, Alabama for three days and nights to the strains of more than 125 live musical acts on multiple stages. BayFest organizers are still booking bands for the event, but the line up so far is shaping up to be one of the best yet: LeAnn Rimes, Alice in Chains, Boyz II Men and Brian McKnight.

Tickets will be available at the Downtown Mobile Alliance office at 261 Dauphin Street for \$35 for the three day pass.

For more BayFest information...

Downtown Doings

Some upcoming events in downtown Mobile



Mobile Bay's Tenth Annual International Beer Festival.

August 25, 6:00 - 9:00

p.m. Think Globally and Drink Locally - For the tenth year running, both local and visiting beer connoisseurs will descend upon downtown taverns and restaurants to sample over 50 different microbrews and imports from all over the world. The moda! electronic trolley will be on hand to help carry participants from one side of the entertainment district to

the other, for free. The festivities take place in Downtown Mobile. For more information call 251-208-7443.

On Display: On Seeing... Through Friday, Aug 31, 2007.

Four exhibitions, including Common Threads and Nature's Souls by Julia V. Bacy, as well as Art Reaches Tomorrow, work by students in a summer art program for at-risk youth. Mobile Arts Council (318 Dauphin St.) Through Fri, Aug 31. Mon - Fri, 9 AM - 5 PM. Free. Contact: 251-432-9796. www.mobilearts.org

CAPTIVE PASSAGE: THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE

TRADE AND THE MAKING OF THE AMERICAS, Through

September 3. The Museum of Mobile (111 S. Royal St.) Mon - Sat, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Sun, 1 - 5 p.m. Adults/ \$5; senior

citizens/ \$4; students/ \$3; children under six/ free; groups and active military/ \$1 off admission category. First Sunday of each month/ free. Contact: 251-208-7569.

Reptiles: The Beautiful and the Deadly, through September 23 at the Gulf Coast Exploreum. Come face to face with LIVE reptiles from around the world in this interactive zoological exhibit. Deadly snakes, colorful lizards, bizarre turtles, alligators and crocodiles are exhibited in naturalistic habitats. Participate in hands-on demonstrations and learn about these amazing creatures. For more information, call 251-208-6873.

Classic Film Series at the Saenger, Sunday, August 19th. 3:00 p.m. *The Magnificent Seven* will be shown on the big screen in Mobile's historic Saenger Theatre. Adults \$6.00, children/seniors \$3.00. Tickets sold at the door. www.saengermobile.com.

Hurricane on the Bayou: IMAX Film and Simulator, Through October 4. The Gulf Coast Exploreum's new IMAX film carries audiences on a journey deep into the soul-stirring of Louisiana--before, during and after the unprecedented devastation of Hurricane Katrina. Also, step inside a category 1 hurricane in the hurricane simulator. For more information, call 251-208-6873.

Pictures at an Exhibition Saturday, Sep 08, 2007. Berlioz: Roman Carnival Overture; Korngold: Violin Concerto (soloist Pip Clarke); Mussorgsky: Pictures at an Exhibition. Mobile Symphony Orchestra; conductor: Scott Speck. 8 PM. Saenger Theatre (6 S. Joachim St.) Shuttle service will be available from the Eastern Shore and West Mobile. \$15 - \$60. Sneak preview (open dress rehearsal); 2 PM; Contact: Tickets: 251- 432-7080; info: 251-432-2010. www.mobilesymphony.org

Life is But a Dream: Contemporary Figurative Photography - through Sunday, Oct 07, 2007. The photographs in this exhibition explore how photography, a medium that is a fusion between science and art, is behaving now. It is still a powerfully telling medium due in part to its seductive believability. The clarity with which photography can record a moment lends a bit of journalism to every photograph. This subtext of "truth" in photographs and the way it folds itself into our personal experience and visual culture in general is the subject of this exhibition. Space 301 Off Centre, 6 South Joachim Street. www.space301.com

The Short Films of Roger Beebe: Documents, Experiments & Wisecracks - Tuesday, September 18, 7 p.m. Bernheim Hall, Ben May Main Library, 701 Government Street. 251-208-7097.

Readers and Writers: Daniel Wallace - Thursday, August 23, 7 p.m. Daniel Wallace, author of *Big Fish*, which was made into a major motion picture by Tim Burton, will discuss his career and his latest novel, *Mr Sebastian and the Negro Magician*. Reception and book signing. Ben May Main Library, 701 Government Street. 251- 208-7097.

Friends of the Library Table of Contents annual fundraiser, Thursday, September 20, Battle House Hotel. Dinner followed by a presentation from **Juan Williams**, author and political analyst. 251-208-7097.

[For a complete list of events...](#)

The Downtown Mobile Alliance is a non-profit partnership between the Downtown Mobile District Management Corporation and Main Street Mobile, Inc., whose purpose is to create more exposure for downtown redevelopment efforts, both within the downtown community and throughout the city at large.

Sincerely,

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Downtown Mobile Alliance

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