



Downtown Details

News from the Downtown Mobile Alliance

February 2009

In This Issue

Development Buzz

Retail Happenings

Crescent Theater a Hot Ticket

Two New Trails Downtown

Art Classes Offered

Events

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

Dear Carol,

Few downtowns the size of Mobile's have the opportunity to welcome hundreds of thousands of guests for a single event, but then again, who else can claim to be the original Mardi Gras in North America? Yes, Carnival season is fully upon us, and though traffic and parking are a bit more difficult, finding an empty seat in a restaurant is more of a challenge and the party volume is turned up a couple of notches, this is our opportunity to show the world what a fabulous community we have.



So laissez le bon temps rouler...Ash Wednesday will be here before we know it!

Development Buzz



The influence of the Retirement Systems of Alabama, led by Dr. David Bronner, may soon be even greater in Downtown Mobile. The Federal Bankruptcy Court last week approved the purchase of the **AmSouth Building** to RSA, with the sale expected to be completed in the next week or so. With an almost \$300-million investment in Downtown already, few have as big a stake in our success, or the wherewithal to make it happen.

In other development news:

- After a massive, multi-million dollar renovation of not one, but two long-vacant buildings, **Hargrove and Associates** is now operating out of new offices at 24 S. Royal Street. The industrial strength balcony is



certain to get a workout as parades pass by, but inside the beautifully renovated space, 200 employees are working hard to keep the engineering firm at the top of its game. Photo courtesy Kim Pearson.

- **Willis of Alabama** has expanded its offices at the Riverview Office Tower. The insurance broker recently bought out HRH and is bringing those West Mobile employees to its Downtown office. When renovations are complete next month, Willis will have about 50 employees and will fill the 8th floor of the tower.
- The renovation of the **Spear-Barter House** in Fort Conde Village, the largest project to date in the historic village, is now complete and the space is for lease by Peebles & Cameron.
- **Whitney Bank's** new drive up facility on Water Street is now open. The lovely, Douglas Kearly-designed building is a nice addition to an area of Downtown urban planners recently designated as "Gateway Commercial."



Retail Happenings

Shopping, Dining and Entertainment News



I recently had a chance to attend a webinar on "Destination Retailing," with tips for fostering the kind of shopping experience that draws customers from beyond traditional boundaries. It's all about creating consumer insistence, a sense of "I *must* shop there...no place else will do."

This kind of demand can be created through niche retailing: devoting an entire store to a single type of product. For instance, *Let It Rain* is a small store in Astoria, Oregon (a city that gets almost as much rain as Mobile) that specializes in umbrellas and rain gear. Apparently no one visits Astoria without stopping there, and many people go to Astoria just because the store *is* there. Alternately, retailers can take a line of goods and explode it to dominate the market. A great example of that technique is right here in Downtown. Naman's Department Store is the largest dealer of Kangol hats in the state. If you were looking for a Kangol hat, wouldn't it make sense to stop at Naman's? If you'd like more tips, or would like to attend a future webinar in our office, email me at chunter@downtownmobile.org.

In other retail news:

- **Michael's Downtown Cafe** on Conception Street, with it's picnic bench seating, chalkboard menu and green checked tablecloths, has quickly become a popular lunch spot. And now, for fans of chef Michael Ivy's more formal cuisine, the restaurant is open on Friday and Saturday evenings. The menu features fresh, local food prepared with an inventive touch, and gives the growing Downtown dining crowd yet another option. Be sure to bring your favorite bottle wine!
- The new restaurant in the lobby of the Holiday Inn is the place to be this Mardi Gras season. **Lafayette** boasts a New Orleans trained chef who specializes in Gulf Coast favorites.

Upcoming Live Music in Downtown:

- **The Soul Kitchen:**

- The Velcro Pygmies - Friday, Feb. 20 at 11:00 pm
- U.S. - Saturday, Feb. 21 at 11:00 pm
- Triple 40 - Sunday, Feb. 22 at 1:00 pm
- Super Funk Fantasy - Sunday, Feb. 22 at 11:00 pm
- The Molly Ringwalds - Monday, Feb. 23 at 10:00 pm
- Triple 40 - Monday, Feb. 24 all day
- Hamlin - Friday, March 6 at 11:00 pm
- Wiles - Saturday, March 7 at 11:00 pm
- Zoogma with opening act Subject Matter - Friday, March 13 at 11:00 pm
- Pat Green with opening acts Randy Houser and Cowboy Troy - Saturday, March 14 at 8:30 pm
- The North Mississippi Allstars with opening act Hill Country Revue - Saturday, March 21 at 10:00 pm

- **The Blind Mule:**

- Amos and the Shoe with Johnny Appleeyes and Just Call Me John - Friday, Feb. 20 at 8:00 pm
- Benefit for Neese Family with Nightblind Grayson and Moirai - Saturday, Feb. 21 at 8:00 pm
- Bloody 98 - Sunday, Feb. 22 at 8:00 pm
- Chance Fisher and TBA - Friday, Feb. 27 at 8:00 pm
- Holding Mercury (as featured on 92 ZEW) and The Port Wine Stain - Saturday, Feb. 28 at 8:00 pm
- Dinner and Music feat. El Cantador - Friday, March 6 at 8:00 pm
- Southpaw Bandits and TBA - Saturday, March 7 at 8:00 pm
- Wojo and Ward sketch comedy - Saturday, March 7 at 8:00 pm (early show)
- 3D Body Art Show with music from Dylan Sneed and TBA - Friday, March 13 at 8:00 pm
- Psyche-pop from your 33 Black Angels and The Mathematicians - Saturday, March 14 at 8:00 pm
- The debut of Eraser Eyes and Seduction Bomb - Saturday, March 21 at 10:00 pm
- For Fans of Zoogma: The Great Big No - Friday, March 27 at 8:00 pm
- Trees Leave and Chris McFarland - Saturday, March 28 at 8:00 pm

Crescent Theater a Hot Ticket



The **Crescent Theater** has been open only 3 1/2 months, but it is already setting records. Based on tracking information by an independent, on-line organization, the art-house film venue on Dauphin Street is out-pacing all other similar theaters in the Southeast.

The Crescent will be starting a film series for children on Saturday afternoons, beginning with *Mary Poppins* March 9th. Show time is at 2:00 p.m. It is also adding a Wednesday afternoon matinee for those who would like to see the current feature at an earlier time. The matinee also has a 2:00 p.m. show time.

The Crescent Theater website has details on the current film as well as upcoming features. You can also sign up for the email newsletters that will keep you in the loop with screening updates.

[Crescent Theater Schedule](#)

Two New Trails Connect Downtown



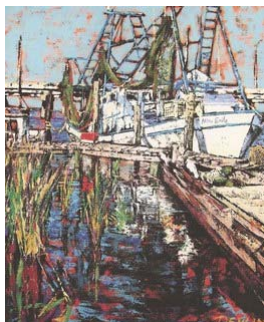
One of Downtown's newest attractions is also its largest, at least in terms of geography. The **African-American Heritage Trail** connects almost a dozen points of interest spread throughout Downtown. From the Creole Fire House on Dearborn Street to the Roger Williams Drug Store at 607 Dauphin Street to the former Slave Market site at St. Louis and Royal Streets, the trail tells an engaging story of the significant contributions made by African Americans throughout Mobile's history.

And for a trail that takes us in a completely different direction, try the new **Spa Trail** created by the folks who brought us the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail. From traditional warm stone massages to caviar facials, the RTJ Spa Trail features five spas across Alabama offering innovative treatments in exquisite settings. As part of the new Spa Trail, an annual RTJ Spa Trail Card was created to offer discounts on spa services, hotel rooms, dining and retail shopping. The \$40 card is good at all five spas, including the newest one at the Battle House Hotel.



[Spa at the Battle House](#)

Bring Out Your Inner Artist at Space 301!



The Centre for the Living Arts is offering studio art classes for all ages and skill levels starting March 28. With weekly studio classes in Painting, Clay, Drawing, Printmaking, Jewelry Making, Bookbinding, Figure Drawing, and Quiltmaking, Space 301 continues to challenge the minds and spark the imaginations of visitors. There are even Saturday workshops specifically for children, such as Acrylics, Bookarts and Collage, and Color and Light Painting.

How about a class in Oil Painting for beginners? Students will learn techniques of perspective, color mixing, and using paint mediums and implement these skills in the creations of your personal works of art. You can bring photographs that you would like to turn into paintings!

What about a Wire-Wrapped Glass Jewelry class? During a six-week period, students will design and create a wide variety of glass jewelry. You will make one of a kind jewelry that will make your friends jealous!

Registration ends on March 22 for weekly classes, 8 days prior to class date for workshops. Call 251-208-5652 or visit [Space 301](#) for more information, including a complete schedule and pricing.

Don't miss out on this unique and fun-filled experience in Downtown Mobile!

Popular Historic Preservation Class Offered Again



If you're interested in Port City history or architecture or both, you'll want to sign up for the Mobile Historic Development Commission's **Preservation Leadership Class**. In addition to learning about historic preservation, you'll get a tour of a building undergoing restoration and have dinner with some of the "late greats" of Mobile in the city's oldest cemetery.

Classes begin Tuesday, March 3 and are held on consecutive Tuesdays through April 7, from 5:30 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. at the City Archives at 457 Church Street. Last year's class filled with more than 75 participants from across the city. The Preservation Leadership classes cover history and architectural styles in Mobile, the ultimate insider's guide to the Architectural Review Board, two tours and a guest speaker.

The cost of the class is \$50 and the deadline for registering is March 20. To register or for more

information, contact MHDC at 251-208-7281.

[Mobile Historic Development Commission](#)

Downtown Doings

Some Upcoming Events



Glass Unexpected, Space 301

Now through Sunday, March 8

Come see innovative artists that have used the common material of glass in exciting and innovative ways. You will come away with a new appreciation for the unexpected beauty and versatility of glass. Featuring both established artists and very young artists that are new to glass as a medium, Glass Unexpected will be sure to intrigue and captivate your

attention. For a complete listing of featured artists, please visit the website.

[Space 301](#)

Grand Canyon Adventure: River at Risk - IMAX Film

Gulf Coast Exploreum Science Center: Now through June 7



This stunning IMAX film takes audiences on an exhilarating river-rafting adventure down the Colorado River, lead by a team of explorers who are committed to bringing awareness to global water issues. Floating down the river, audiences will learn about the challenges and opportunities that exist for conserving and restoring the the Colorado River watershed. For more information including educational resources and a film trailer, please visit www.grandcanyonadventurefilm.com

Our Neighbors in Space, Hearin Chandler Virtual Journeys Digital Theater Gulf Coast Exploreum Science Center: Now through June 7, 2009

[Gulf Coast Exploreum](#)



Pirates!, Museum of Mobile

Now through July 4, 2009

This exhibition, made possible by the Museum of Arts & Sciences in Daytona Beach, provides an historic account of some of the more famous Pirates of Florida's East Coast. Found on display are artifacts, including coins, bullion, ingots and tools recovered from shipwrecks off of the East Coast of Florida. Grab your cutlass, don an eye-patch, hoist the Jolly Roger, and climb aboard as we set sail for a glimpse of the characters that charged local waters with their intrigue and exploits. No passports are necessary, only a desire for adventure. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for students and free for kids under 6.

[Museum of Mobile](#)

Winter Wednesdays at Bellingsrath Gardens

February 25, 10:30 a.m.- In Full Bloom

Winter is never bleak at Bellingsrath Gardens and Home! See the newest



book created by the Montrose Garden Club featuring gardens in Mobile and Baldwin Counties. Proceeds go to care for historic oak trees in Montrose, Alabama.

Admission is free for members and \$11 for non members.

[Bellingrath Gardens](#)



Government Street Presbyterian Church Thursday Lunch Forums

All Forums begin at Noon

February 26 - Chris Barraza, Project Manager, Mobile Bay Young Professionals

March 5 - Andy Anderson, Director of Mobile Opera

March 12 - Scott Speck, Music Director of the Mobile Symphony

March 19 - Teressa Ramsey, Director of Interfaith Hospitality Network/Family Promise

March 26 - Jimmy Lyons, Director of the Alabama State Port Authority

[Government Street Presbyterian Church](#)

Mobile Mystery Dinner - Dr. Schmuck's Final Wash

February 28, 7:00 p.m., Mobile Carnival Museum

Looking for something different to do? Come to a fun-filled evening of murder, mayhem and mystery, presented by Mobile's own murder mystery dinner group. For \$55 per person, you get a tour of the museum; an unlimited wine bar before and during your meal, a full-course catered meal from the Pillars Restaurant and over two hours of whodunit! Openings fill up fast and reservations are required. Please call 251-479-3212 to make a reservation.

[Mobile Mystery Dinners](#)

Downtown Tour: Photographs by Michael Mastro, Art from Dunbar Middle School, and Art by students of Zack DePolo

Mobile Arts Council

March 2 - 27. Reception on March 13 at 6:00 p.m.

[Mobile Arts Council](#)

Mobile Boat Show, Mobile Convention Center

Showtimes: Thursday, March 5th - 12 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Friday, March 6th - 12 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Saturday, March 7th - 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Sunday, March 8th - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Admission: \$6 for adults; \$3 for children ages 6-12

[Mobile Civic Center](#)



20th Annual American Cancer Society's Chili Cook-Off,



Bienville Square

March 7 from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m.

Join thousands of chili fans for this annual event that pits professional and backyard chefs in a competition for highly prized bragging rights. 251-344-9856 for more information.

***Dracula*, Mobile Civic Center Theater**

Presented by the Mobile Ballet

March 7 and 8, 7:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. respectively

[Dracula](#)



***Reflections of Lent*, Government Street Presbyterian Church**

March 8 at 11:00 a.m.

Concert featuring sanctuary choir with Mobile Community Chorus, orchestral ensemble & hand bell choir

[Government Street Presbyterian Church](#)

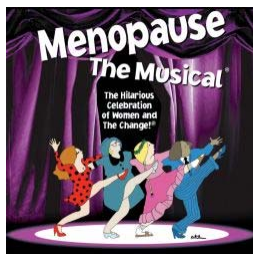
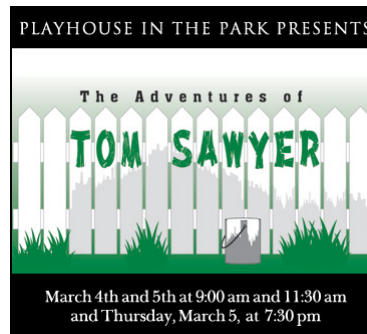
***Tom Sawyer*, Saenger Theatre**

March 5 at 7:30 p.m.

Enjoy this production of the Mark Twain classic by some of Mobile's most talented performers.

Presented by Playhouse-in-the-Park.

[Playhouse-in-the-Park](#)



***Menopause the Musical*, Mobile Civic Center Theater**

March 11, 12 and 13 at 7:30 p.m.

[Mobile Civic Center](#)

***Mind, Body & Soul*, Cathedral Square Gallery**

Open studio each Sunday in March from 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Artwalk March 13 from 5:30 to 8:30

Benefiting the local Daughters of the Nile Naiad 109 General Fund.

[Cathedral Square Gallery](#)

LoDa ArtWalk, Cathedral Square Arts District

March 13 from 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.

Tour galleries and Downtown retailers for an evening of entertainment. Stop by the Mobile Arts Council at 318 Dauphin for a map of participants.

[Neighborhood & Community Services](#)

March 14:

8th Annual Luck of the Irish: 5k Run at 8:00 am

Irish Stew Cook Off at 11:00 am

Parade at 2:00 p.m.

All located in Bienville Square and presented by the Mobile Exchange Club

[Luck of the Irish](#)

Lord of the Rings St. Patrick's Day Pops Concert

Saenger Theatre

March 14 at 8:00 p.m.

March 15 at 2:30 p.m.

Presented by the Mobile Symphony Orchestra

[Saenger Theatre](#)

**Azalea Bloom Out!, Bellingrath Gardens and Home**

March 14-29 (dates may vary depending on weather)

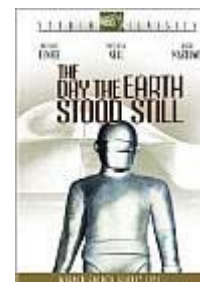
Enjoy the blooms or more than 250,000 vibrant azaleas in an explosion of color throughout the 65 acres of Bellingrath Gardens.

[Bellingrath Gardens](#)

Sunday Matinees @ Ben May: The Day the Earth Stood Still,
Bernheim Hall

March 15 at 1:30 p.m.

[Mobile Public Library](#)





DAR Annual Spring Garden Party, Richards DAR House Museum

March 15 from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Delectable hors d'oeuvres, desserts, cash wine bar, DOOR PRIZES and hat contest! Music for your pleasure.

Come join in on the fun and wear your favorite hat! Tickets are \$10.

[Richard's DAR House](#)

St. Patrick's Day Parade, the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

March 17 at 11:00 a.m.

Presented by the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick

Lunch with Julia Reed -

***Author of The House on First Street: My New Orleans Story,
The Athelstan Club***

March 19 at Noon

Presented by the Friends of the Library

[Mobile Public Library](#)



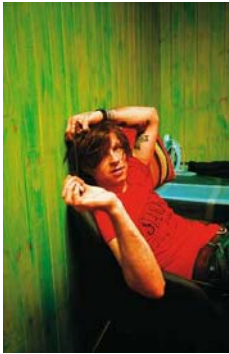
Film: Random Lunacy: Videos from the Road Less Traveled, Bernheim Hall

2008-2009 Southern Circuit of Independent Filmmakers

March 19 at 7:00 p.m.

Presented by the Mobile Arts Council and the Mobile Public Library

[Mobile Arts Council](#)



The Cardinals featuring Ryan Adams, Saenger Theatre

March 19 at 8:00 p.m.

With his backing band, The Cardinals, Ryan Adams has found great success and acclaim through both singing and songwriting. He has produced and contributed albums for artists such as Willie Nelson, the Wallflowers and the Counting Crows. On his last tour for the foreseeable future, Adams has chosen Mobile as his second to last stop. Don't miss out! Tickets range are \$36.50, \$27.75 or \$19.50 (plus service charge).

[Saenger Theatre](#)

Mobile Historic Homes Tour

March 20 and 21 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Visit architecturally significant private homes and sacred spaces in select historic districts. One day ticket \$12 for HMPS members, \$15 for non-members. Two day ticket \$20 for HMPS members, \$25 for non-members. For more information or to order tickets, please call 251-432-6161.

[Historic Mobile Preservation](#)

***The Clean Up Woman*, Saenger Theatre**
 March 22 at 4:00 p.m.

[Saenger Theatre](#)



***Ani Difranco*, Saenger Theatre**
 March 24 at 7:30 p.m.

[Saenger Theatre](#)

***Workshop: Thursday Art Club*, Ben May Main Library**

March 26 at 4:00 p.m. for ages 7 and up.

Presented by the Mobile Museum of Art and the Mobile Public Library

[Mobile Public Library](#)

Mobile Opera Presents: Susannah

Mobile Civic Center Theater

March 26 and 28 at 7:30 p.m.

Composed by Carlisle Floyd and directed by Michael Ehrman, *Susannah* is a moving story that is brought to life by music that sounds both folksy and familiar while sounding stirring and powerful. Filled with an insightful mixture of human frailties, the story of *Susannah* was transported by Floyd from the biblical setting in *Susannah and the Elders* to a small mountain town in the Carolinas. Call 251-432-6772 to purchase tickets.

[Mobile Opera](#)



***Spring Concert*, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception**

March 27 at 8:15 p.m.

Presented by Musica Sacra Choir and Chamber Orchestra



***32nd Annual Azalea Trail Run*, streets of Downtown**

March 28 at 8:00 a.m.

[Azalea Trail Run](#)

End your promotion with a kick -- consider a postscript to reinforce one of the key product or service benefits.

Sincerely,

Carol Hunter
Downtown Mobile Alliance

[Forward email](#)

 **SafeUnsubscribe®**

This email was sent to chunter@downtownmobile.org by chunter@downtownmobile.org.
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Email Marketing by



Downtown Mobile Alliance | 261 Dauphin Street | P.O. Box 112 | Mobile | AL | 36601