



Downtown Details

News from the Downtown Mobile Alliance

June 2009

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Dear Carol,

For the past six months we've been optimistic (some would say naively) that Mobile would weather the current recession better than most communities. Last week Forbes



confirmed that view, by naming Mobile one of the "Best Cities in America for Recession Recovery." This designation is not much comfort if you have been laid off or your company is facing difficulties, but if we continue to embrace a diversified economy (health care, education, shipbuilding and aerospace) the worst may be behind us.

In the meantime, Downtown Mobile still offers the best free entertainment around (check out our event listings at the end of the newsletter)...and most of us don't have to spend much money on gas to get here!

Survey Results: Many thanks to the hundreds of you who took the time to participate in our survey of Downtown Mobile. The results are extremely helpful as we develop our plans for future projects. We'll be analyzing the results for several weeks (many of you responded in great detail!), but a thumbnail sketch reveals: many of you come Downtown primarily for arts and cultural events, you love the flowers, hate the parking, and while we have come a long way, much remains to be done. We are encouraged and re-energized by your suggestions and support.

Development Buzz



Much speculation still surrounds the Retirement Systems of Alabama's plans for the former AmSouth Building, including the meaning of its new name: the **GM Building**. We're told exciting renovation plans are still

being developed and hopefully Dr. David Bronner will reveal his vision when he addresses the annual meeting of the Downtown Mobile Alliance in September (see the related article below).

Meanwhile, major announcements continue to set a remarkable pace in Downtown Mobile. Birmingham hotel developer Mike Cowart, who finished the new Hampton Inn in record time, has announced his plans for the site of the American National Building at St. Joseph and St. Louis Streets. Once again in partnership with the Edmonds family, he'll be building an 81-room **Candlewood Suites Hotel**, designed for the extended stay business traveler. He plans to break ground in early August, and if experience is any indication, business travelers will be able to rest their weary heads well before the end of next year. The project will feature such energy saving innovations as a solar-heated saltwater pool and solar panels to help heat water used by hotel staff.

In other development news:

- The 350 block of Dauphin is getting to be quite the concentration of creative energy. Joining Hernandez-Calhoun International Design and the Story Company ad agency on that block is the office of **Wellborn Ideas**. Stacy Wellborn specializes in direct marketing campaigns and internet based marketing, and has already been involved in some great downtown campaigns.
- The Riverview Office Tower is now fully leased with the addition of **Alion Science and Technology**, a defense contractor. The office with 40 employees took the remaining space on the 9th floor.

Retail Happenings

Retail, Dining and Entertainment News

The corner of Dauphin and Joachim Streets is "hopping" with new activity these days, as **Hopjacks Pizza Kitchen and Tap Room** opens its doors. The food is fresh and fast, but the beers are astonishing...50 varieties on tap! If you can't decide, knowledgeable bartenders are on hand to make suggestions, or try a sample of several. While you're waiting, be sure to try the Belgian Fries cooked in duck fat (the calories are worth it).

In other retail news:

- The Chesser Gallery at 306 Dauphin Street is morphing yet again. Artist and book binder Wayne McNeil will be opening the **Paper Wasp** in the funky space next to Spot of Tea. The hand marbled papers and exquisitely bound journals confirm that paper arts are still alive and well in Mobile. Look for a grand opening in September.
- Candidate for the District 2 City Council seat Lakisha Dotson has opened her headquarters on Jackson Street in Downtown Mobile. We're encouraged when political candidates see value in locating downtown and hope others will follow. Perhaps next year we'll even see a candidate for the hotly contested governor's race with offices in the heart of our city.
- Long time downtown screen-printer, Inkworks, has announced an interesting niche service -- providing t-shirts for family reunions. The sister business is called **4reunionshirts.com** and offers custom designs with a quick turnaround.



- Virginia McKean at Weddings to Brag About is now marketing The **Courtyard on Dauphin** (formerly Gus's) for receptions and special events. The 3,000 square foot courtyard has been beautifully remodeled to include an arbor, fountain and fireplaces.

Some upcoming live entertainment:

- Soul Kitchen:
 - Galactic with Fuzebox Funk - Friday, June 19
 - The 17th Floor - Saturday, June 20
 - The Bailout Plan - Friday, June 25
 - Seven Mary Three - Saturday, June 26
 - Drivin' n' Cryin' - Sunday, June 27
 - Rehab - Friday, July 3
 - Thriving Ivory with Jesse James - Saturday, July 4
 - Zoogma - Friday, July 10
 - Wiles - Saturday, July 11
 - The Velcro Pygmies - Friday, July 17
 - Past Pluto - Saturday, July 18
- The Blind Mule:
 - Free the Hops Event - Thursday, June 18
 - Furrows and Glasgow - Friday, June 19
 - Southpaw Bandits, Big Shots (cd release)& Shifting Midnight - Saturday, June 20
 - A Bridge To Burn, Mandown and Born Empty (Nashville) - Friday, June 26
 - Renee Arozquesta, Spider and Octopus - Thursday, July 2
 - Blind Mule Artfest featuring Kristy Lee, Red Mouth, Catatonic 5 and Much More - Saturday, July 4
 - Abstract Artimus, Bolt and TBA - Friday, July 10
 - Shining Path and Finite Automata - Saturday, July 11
 - Jerky and A Bridge to Burn - Friday, July 17
 - Clint Niosi and TBA - Saturday, July 18
- Alabama Music Box:
 - Open Mic and The Bailout Plan - Thursday, June 18
 - Local Band Showcase (Open to anyone) - Friday, June 19
 - TKO Round 3, Indie/hip-hop dance party - Saturday, June 20
 - Double Dagger and Big Rock Candy Mountain - Sunday, June 21
 - Dirty South Tour with Cassovita, The Shotgun, Son of a Gun, Apathy Ensues - Tuesday, June 23
 - For the Fallen, Abacabb, Stray From the Path, When Amber Sleeps - Wednesday, June 24
 - It Is Getting Better, Mic Messengers, Jewish Josh - Thursday, June 25
 - 6 Pack Deep, Nester Makhno - Friday, June 26
 - Jenny Lewis (of Rilo Kiley and Postal Service) with Heatless Bastards - Saturday, June 27
 - The Starlight Mints, Amos and the Shoe and The Evangelicals (all ages) - Sunday, June 28
 - Dropdead Gorgeous, He Is Legend, Before Their Eyes and Then There Were None - Tuesday, June 30
 - Plain White T's - Wednesday, July 1
 - Mob Town Revival, A Bridge To Burn and Little Buddah - Thursday, July 2
 - Howlies, Mystic Path to Comic Relief and MC Trachotomy - Friday, July 3
 - I Wrestled A Bear Once, Handshake Murders, Architect and Sirens (all ages) - Monday, July 6
 - DJ Show - Wednesday, July 8
 - Sugar Glyder - Thursday, July 9
 - Super Nice Bros., Daikaiju, Deadly Fists of Kung-Fu and Nesie - Friday, July 10
 - Squirrlehouse, Charmed I'm Sure, My Name Is John Michael - Saturday, July 11

- Nik Flagstar and his Dirty Mandy Dogs and Botox Party - Tuesday, June 14
- Lions, Legendary Wings - Wednesday, June 15
- Do Androids Dream, Josephine Collective and News on the March - Thursday, June 16
- Eraser Eyes, Sarah June, P.D. Wilder, Anchors and Parachute Musical - Friday, June 17
- Serda's Coffee
 - Ivy Mike - Friday, June 19
 - The Upside - Saturday, June 20
 - Carey Dekle - Friday, June 26
 - Gregg Gells - Saturday, June 27
 - Alex Culbreth - Friday, July 3
 - Lil Greenwood - Friday, July 10
 - Frank Jellet - Saturday, July 11
 - Nick Gill - Friday, July 17
 - Elements of a Difference - Saturday, July 18

Tis the Season...

...the political season, that is. The elections for the mayor and city council of Mobile will be held on August 25th, with run-offs scheduled for October 6th, meaning the summer will be hot in more ways than one. This is an opportunity for citizens to choose their leadership...to make a change or support a popular incumbent. That critical decision shouldn't be made without information. To that end, the Alliance will be happy to publicize any municipal candidate's event that occurs within the Henry Aaron Loop. Our deadline for submitting information is the 14th of every month.



Additionally, we will be asking candidates in the all seven city council district races to provide answers to questions focused on Downtown Mobile issues and concerns. If you would like to submit a question for the candidates, please email it to Carol Hunter at chunter@downtownmobile.org. The deadline for submitting questions is July 8th.

Candidate Forum: The Old Dauphin Way District is hosting a District 2 Candidate Forum **tonight**, June 18th, at Grace Lutheran Church at 1356 Government Street at 7:00 p.m. Candidates for the seat are William Carroll, Lakisha Dotson and Jeffery Jones.

Upcoming events: Fred Richardson, District 1 incumbent, will be having a Re-Election Reception at Wintzell's Oyster House at 605 Dauphin Street on Friday, June 26th from 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Dr. David Bronner to Speak at Annual Meeting



Make plans now to attend the fourth annual Downtown Mobile District Management Corporation Annual Meeting, set for September 2, 2009 at the Battle House Hotel. Dr. David Bronner, CEO of the Retirement Systems of Alabama, will be the keynote speaker.

Although reservations for tables are not yet being taken yet, we are accepting sponsorships for the event. The \$1000 sponsorship includes a table for 10 and publicity in all advertising and printed materials. Already signed on are: the Alabama State Port Authority, AirWind Creative, The Battle House Hotel, Carnival Cruise Lines, Hand Arendall, Lyons, Pipes & Cook, Red Square Agency, Renaissance Riverview Hotel, John Toomey & Company, and Volkert & Associates.

Dr. Bronner never fails to delight, provoke and challenge us with his



comments and observations. You won't want to miss this event!

Independence Day Festivities Include Crew of the USS Independence

The Battleship Commission is dedicating the Fourth of July celebration to the two crews of the Mobile-built USS Independence. The 50-60 families will be guests of honor at Battleship Park on the Fourth, and the commanding officers tell us they are all looking forward to meeting the thousands who are expected to attend the event.



As has become tradition, the Mobile Symphonic Pops Band will entertain the crowd until the spectacular fireworks show after dark. The men and women of the Independence will be leaving us as soon as the ship is commissioned, so this is a wonderful opportunity to demonstrate support for them as they prepare for missions around the world.

Middle Bay Lighthouse Future Being Discussed



Though technically not in downtown, the Middle Bay lighthouse served as a beacon for ships entering our port for many years. Though it is no longer active, the lighthouse is one of Mobile's most treasured icons, and the Alabama Historical Commission is now considering its future. The Commission currently owns the lighthouse and is seeking public input on an independent proposal to move it from the Bay to Battleship Memorial Park.

The public forum will be held **Tuesday, June 23rd at 1:30 p.m. at the Magnolia Ballroom at Brookley Field (254 Old Bayfront Drive).**

[Directions to Magnolia Ballroom](#)

Alliance Enters the Age of Social Media

Recognizing the value of new marketing platforms, the Alliance now has a Facebook page and a new, more dynamic web site. After only a couple of months, we've attracted 400 fans on Facebook, some of whom are posting wonderful images, videos and comments about Downtown Mobile. If you're on Facebook, please sign up to become a fan. And be sure to visit the new web site and let us know what you think.

[Visit the new web site](#)

Downtown Doings

Some events around Downtown Mobile

Stand against MS

Lyons, Pipes & Cook, 2 N. Royal Street

Friday, June 19, 9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.



Join the Mobile Chapter of the Association of Legal Administrators on the sidewalk at 2 N. Royal Street for an old fashion lemonade stand to raise awareness and money to create a world free of Multiple Sclerosis. Last year the Association raised more than \$4000 for the effort, and with heat indexes topping 100 degrees, this year's stand should beat that, no sweat!

[Visit the Stand Against MS](#)

**Pirates!****Museum of Mobile**

Now through Saturday, July 18

This exhibition 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](http://www.museumofmobile.com)

The Girlfriend Experience**The Crescent Theater**

Now through Thursday, June 18

Shot in an artistic cinema verité style, the ups and downs of GFE's story line are less compelling than the very credible performance of award-winning adult film actress, Sasha Grey, as a determined young woman that has managed to achieve success as an upscale escort without any apparent loss of dignity, but clearly at the expense of her ability to feel anything deeply, be it with her clients or in her personal life. In an uncomplicated way, the film makes a provocative point about the more subtle costs of switching off aspects of our aliveness (i.e. our caring) to get ahead. Show times are at 6:00 p.m. (\$7) and 8:30 p.m. (\$9).

[The Crescent Theater](http://www.crescenttheater.com)

***Here Comes the Bride*****Cathedral Square Gallery**

Now through Tuesday, June 30

Featuring photographers: Michael Mastro, Leigh Holman, Jean-Marie Lee and Laura Worsham. Open Tuesday-Saturday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

[Cathedral Square Gallery](http://www.cathedral-square-gallery.com)

Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey present OVER THE TOP!**Mobile Civic Center**

Thursday June 18 - Sunday June 21



A wacky and whimsical circus spectacular where dogs fly, Asian Elephants skip, hop and groove and one courageous man stands eye to eye with a pack of powerful Bengal tigers. Circus celebrities help rev-up the motorcycle madness featuring one cycle on a high wire and seven speeding riders in a Globe of Steel. Extraordinary aerial acts fill the double-decker trapeze and Chinese acrobats propelling through the air. Showtimes: Thursday 7:00 p.m., Friday 7:00 p.m., Saturday 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., Sunday 1:30 p.m.



[Ringling Bros.](#)

Spring Watercolor Exhibition
Koch Galleries

Now through Tuesday, June 30

Featured artist Nancy Lippold; works by Louisa Swinborne, H. Goldschmidt, "Shiney" Moon, Bea Tucker, Betty Walker, Kathy Whiting, Frances Ashcraft and others. Also: Together Again: Fred Marchman and John Chamblin: 25 works in a variety of media. 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.



Imagillaboration: Collaborative Sculpture Project
Space 301

Now through Sunday, July 5

Conceived and organized by Florida Community College at Jacksonville sculpture professor Michael Cottrell, this project has been a collaboration on an immense scale. 106 professional artists from 26 states worked in small, regional groups to create a collection of three-dimensional works.

[Space 301](#)

Carry On: Celebrating Twenty Years of the Alabama Folk Arts Apprenticeship Program
Mobile Arts Council

Now through Friday, June 26th.

An exhibition of photographs of fifty master folk artists by Mark Gooch, examples of the artists' work, including baskets, musical instruments, pottery, quilts and furniture; from the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the Alabama Center for Traditional Culture.

[Mobile Arts Council](#)



Revolutionary Road
Mobile Public Library, Ben May Main Library

Thursday, June 18

In this portrait of an American marriage, Frank and April Wheeler seem to be a



perfect couple but struggle behind closed doors with their personal demons. Determined not to become victim of the homogenous suburbs of the 1950's, the two make the decision to move to Paris, but this change forces the cracks that had already formed to be realized. The film runs 119 minutes and is rated R for language and some sexual content and nudity. Admission is free. The film will begin at 7:00 p.m.

[Mobile Public Library](#)

One Night in Verona
Mobile Carnival Museum

Friday, June 19th

Authentic Italian dinner and live performances. Benefits the Mobile Carnival Theatre Company. Individual tickets are \$30 and for a couple \$50. Email mobilecarnivaltheatre@gmail.com for more information.



Anvil! The Story of Anvil
The Crescent Theater

Friday June 19 through Thursday June 25

"At 14, best friends Robb Reiner and Lips made a pact to rock together forever. Their band, Anvil, hailed as the 'demi-gods of Canadian metal,' influenced a musical generation that includes Metallica, Slayer and Anthrax, despite never hitting the big time. Following a calamitous European tour, Lips and Robb, now in their fifties, set off to record their 13th album in one last attempt to fulfill their boyhood dreams." Show times are 6 p.m. (\$7) and 8:30 p.m. (\$9).

[Crescent Theater](#)

Murder at the Fruitcake Inn
Mobile Carnival Museum

Saturday, June 20

Welcome to the Fruitcake Inn in the quaint little town of Fruitcake, Louisiana.

The Fruitcake Inn is home to some strange but lovable characters. Watch as some of the strangest residents come out of their rooms to try to help in this murder investigation but only lead to more confusion and laughter. If you can guess who did THIS one, you're quite the detective!!! Tickets are \$55 per person, which includes a tour of the museum, an unlimited wine bar, and a meal from The Pillars.

[Mobile Mystery Dinners](#)



These Are A Few of My Favorite Things
Mobile Public Library, Ben May Main Library
 Saturday, June 20



A collection of your favorite Broadway songs sung by the Port City Men's Chorus. Director: David Ayers. Show time is 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door.

[Port City Men's Chorus](#)

Jazz Jambalaya: Errol Gardner

Gulf City Lodge

Monday, June 22

Performers TBA; program developer: John Kennedy. MOJO (Mystic Order of the Jazz Obsessed) Monthly salute to jazz greats at 6:30 PM. Members/ \$7; nonmembers/ \$10 (includes a jambalaya dinner). Call 251.459.2298 for more information.

Seniors, Take Charge! Informed Health Decisions For An Independent Lifestyle
Mobile Public Library, Ben May Main Library

Tuesday, June 23

Presented by the University of South Alabama's Beverly Rossini (Outreach/Information Resources Librarian, Baugh Biomedical Library) and Paula Webb (Government Documents Librarian) at 6:30 p.m. Free, but registration required.

[Mobile Public Library](#)



From Pressed to Cut: A Look At 19th Century Glass in the Bellingrath Collection
Bellingrath Gardens and Home

Wednesday, June 24

Tour of the Bellingrath Home with Tom McGehee at 10:30 a.m. at the Bellingrath Gardens and Home. Members are free; nonmembers: adults \$11; children 5 to 12 \$6 (includes garden admission). Reservations requested.

[Bellingrath Gardens](#)

Shirley Caesar and The Caesar Kings

Saenger Theatre

Friday, June 26

With an exhaustive list of career credits, singer and Pastor Shirley Caesar tirelessly works in the name of Jesus Christ. She believes the Lord is trusting her to deliver the Word, and her efforts speak greatly to her faith and application of it. Her latest musical effort, Shirley

Caesar & Friends, is a collection of collaborations intended to bridge gaps. Tickets are beginning at \$20 and are on sale now.





Goodbye Solo
The Crescent Theater

Friday, June 26 through Thursday July 2

On the lonely roads of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, two men forge an improbable friendship that will change both of their lives forever. Solo is a Senegalese cab driver working to provide a better life for his young family. William is a tough Southern good ol' boy with a lifetime of regrets. Through this unlikely but unforgettable friendship, Goodbye Solo deftly explores the passing of a generation as well as the rapidly changing face of America. Show times are 6 p.m. (\$7) and 8:30 p.m. (\$9).

[The Crescent Theater](#)

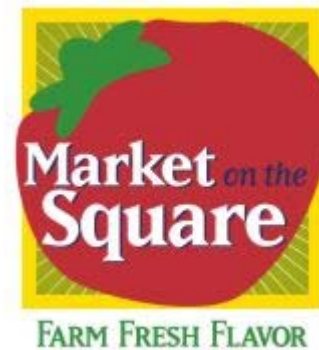
Market on the Square
Cathedral Square

Saturday, June 27

Saturday, July 4

Saturday, July 18

Locally grown produce, seafood, beef, honeys, breads, pastas, cheeses, plants, handcrafted goods for kitchen and home; live music; games and other activities. Presented by the City of Mobile's Neighborhood & Community Services. From 7:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.



[Neighborhood & Community Services](#)



52nd Annual AJM National Finals
Mobile Civic Center

Sunday, June 28

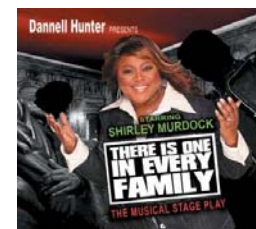
See the nation's top high school senior females compete in physical fitness, self-expression and talent at the 52nd AJM National Finals. Lindsey Brinton, AJM 2008, will return to pass the official gold medallion to America's Junior Miss 2009. More than \$150,000 in cash scholarships to be awarded. Begins at 7p.m.

[America's Junior Miss](#)

There's One In Every Family
Saenger Theatre

Sunday, June 28

Let the struggles of this family drama inspire you to become better a person. Your souls will be awakened as you are entertained by one of the best stage plays of the year. Be there as Shirley Murdock and the exuberantly talented



cast light up the stage like you never seen before. After all, There is one in every family. Showtime: 7:30 p.m.

[Saenger Theatre](#)



Cascading Mums
Bellingrath Gardens and Home
 Wednesday, July 8

Chuck Owens will share Bellingrath's secrets, as well as plants, with those interested in creating their own cascades. Will begin at 10:30 a.m. Members are free, Non-members: adults \$11 and children 5-12 \$6. This price includes garden admission. Reservations are requested.

[Bellingrath Gardens](#)

Romeo and Juliet

Mobile Theatre Guild

Thursday, July 9 through Sunday

A tragedy by William Shakespeare presented by the Mobile Carnival Theatre. Directed by Brent Murrill; Fight Choreographer Fulton Burns. General admission is \$15/student \$10. Contact 251.545.0447 for more information.

LoDa Artwalk

Cathedral Square Arts District

Friday, July 10

Exhibitions and entertainment will be presented in a variety of downtown galleries and other venues. The Artwalk is sponsored by the City of Mobile's Department of Neighborhood and Community Services. The Artwalk will continue every Second Friday of the month, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

[Neighborhood & Community Services](#)



The Night Sky Over Bellingrath

Bellingrath Gardens and Home

Friday, July 10

Bellingrath will host a special Astronomy program for families from 7 to 9 p.m. Astronomers from the Physics Department of the University of South Alabama will be on Bellingrath's Great Lawn to help families view the sky and learn more about what they see. Two telescopes will be available during the program. Guests are encouraged to bring their own telescopes, binoculars, blankets and/or chairs. Special discount admission: Adults \$5, Children \$1 and Members are admitted free. Reservations are requested. Weather permitting.

Discussion: What About Photography?**Cathedral Square Gallery**

Friday, July 10

A general discussion of photography, hosted by Michael Mastro, who says "we can talk about anything: photographic styles and techniques, equipment, digital manipulation, etc., and we can critique prints." Bring your lunch. Second & fourth Friday at noon.

[Michael Mastro](#)***Kid's Kruiise*****Bellingrath Gardens and Home**

Wednesday, July 15

Cruise on the Fowl River with guide Casi Callaway (Mobile Baykeeper); Touch Table from Dauphin Island Sea Lab; bag lunches available. 11 AM - 1 PM. Registration required. Members: adults/ \$16; children 5 - 12/ \$11; children under 5/ \$6; nonmembers: adults/ \$27; children 5 - 12/ \$17.50; children under 5/ \$6.

[Bellingrath Gardens](#)***Works by Faye Earnest and Todd Tillinghast*****Robertson Gallery**

Friday, July 17

Also featuring works by Keith Barthelmeus, Lisa Johnston, Meredith Keith, Caleb Morris, Brad Robertson, and David Trimmier. Open Tuesday through Saturday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

[Robertson Gallery](#)

Sincerely,

Carol Hunter
Downtown Mobile Alliance

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