

Salute to
Pell City,
Riverside &
St. Clair County



# COMMERCE





UPDATE
February 2016
SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO

THE DAILY HOME

#### **Woods Surfside Marina**

### 'Our customers have made us what we are today'

By BUDDY ROBERTS Special Projects Editor

"I never throw anything away," Jerry Woods said, sorting through a pile of old newspaper clippings he'd produced from a desk drawer.

"Here's when we got our first sales award. And here's a picture from when the lake levels were really down." Each keepsake took its place in a neat stack as he continued his search for one specific photograph.

"Here it is," he said, displaying a page from a 2006 issue of The Daily Home. The photo he indicated depicted a group of people standing in front of the office at Woods Surfside Marina. "This was from the ribbon-cutting when we opened."

In the 10 years since Woods and his wife Diana

bought the marina from John and Grace Thomas, who had owned it for the previous quarter-century, the Cropwell business has become one of the top pontoon boat dealers in the country. According to the couple, they're proud to have built on what was already estab-

"The marina had changed hands several times before we got it," Jerry said, returning to his desk drawer for a yellowing map of indeterminate age. He pointed to a spot on Logan Martin Lake labeled 'Myree Marina.'

tunate to have built a great business here."
A native of Cedartown, Georgia, Jerry's work for H.J. Heinz required frequent travel, and he was seeking

That's what it was called then, and we've been for-

work that would allow him to come off the road. "We knew John and Grace because we'd bought a couple of boats from them over the years," he said. "It was on New Year's Eve of 2005 that I heard they were selling the marina.

"I had to fly to Salt Lake City, but I called back here that Wednesday to inquire about it. They told me it had already sold, but if anything happened and it didn't work out, they'd let me know. On Friday, I got the call to come down and talk, so I flew back and we did."

Over that weekend, the Woods decided to buy the

business. That Monday, "we sat down with Don Perry and Richard Knight at Metro Bank. We took possession on March 3, 2006." "We owe a lot to Metro Bank," Diana said. "They

have really been great to us. They believed in us, and

neither of us ever looked back."

At that time, Woods Surfside was a dealer for Starcraft Marine. "That first year, our sales tripled and took us into the top 10 dealers in the U.S. for Starcraft," Jerry said.

Eventually, the marina began dealing exclusively in

Bennington pontoons.

"Tim Payne has been with Bennington since it was founded, and he'd been calling on us for about four years. We were happy selling Starcraft, but he finally convinced us to buy a load of boats from him, and we sold them in a week."

Now, Woods is the top Bennington dealer in Alabama and eighth among the 326 Bennington deal-



Photos by Buddy Roberts/The Daily Home

Tim Payne, regional manager for Bennington Marine, presented Jerry Woods with awards recognizing the marina as the company's top dealer in Alabama and eighth nationally. "They have been tremendous partners," Payne said. "They represent our company well, and you don't just buy a boat from them. You become part of their family."

ers in the country.

"Bennington is the best-built pontoon in the U.S.," Jerry said. "It carries the best warranty of any made, and one of every five pontoons sold in the U.S. is a Bennington."

"We were pleasantly surprised when we found out we were a top 10 dealer for the 2015 model year," Diana said. "There are some big dealers, and we're little compared to some of them."

The marina is also a platinum-level Mercury Service dealer and a Yamaha Gold 5-Star Service dealer. Woods is among the founders of the Logan Martin LakeFest and Boat Show, which benefits several charitable causes in St. Clair County, and it supports school lunch programs in Pell City elementary schools, Pell City High School athletics, the Drug Abuse Resistance Education program, and Pell City's animal shelter. Christmas parade and veterans' home.

"It's truly our customers and employees who have made us what we are today," Jerry said. "We treat them like family."

"One of our favorite quotes is, 'You enter here as strangers, and you leave as friends,'" Diana said "Service is the secret to our success, which isn't really a secret. It's just treating people the way we would want to be treated. That's the rule we play by."





On Page 6A of A Salute to Government & Industry,

the name of Sylacauga City Councilman Tom Roberts

For the Record

was misspelled in a photo caption.

Above: "We love dogs, kids and boats, but not necessarily in that order," Jerry Woods said as he stands with Diana Woods, Mark Hildebrandt, Jaime Robinson, Chris Purcell, Zach Simpkins, and Aaron Ray beside the 2016 Bennington 2575 RSB.

Left: Jerry and Diana Woods have operated the Cropwell marina since March 6, 2006.



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One Pages 8-9B of A Salute to Health and Education,
Pell City Board of Education member Joseph Sawyer was
incorrectly identified in an article and photo caption.

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#### **Food Outlet**

## Neighborhood store knows customers by name

By DAVID ATCHISON Home staff writer

Store manager Tina Ailor said the Food Outlet in Pell City is a neighborhood grocery store where employees know many of their customers by name.

"We watched their kids grow up and become shoppers," Ailor said, adding that many of their customers frequent the store two-three times a week. "We try to emphasize how much we appreciate them. Without them, we wouldn't have a store.'

Food Outlet in Pell City is one of five stores scattered throughout east Alabama. The local grocery store opened in 2001, and will celebrate its 15th anniversary in May.

Ailor joined Food Outlet in 1985. "I started out with them as a

cashier," she said.

And even though she is now a manager at the Food Outlet in Pell City, customers may see her sacking groceries, stocking shelves or wrapping

"I'm not afraid to get dirty," she

Food Outlet is a business that has supported local nonprofit organizations and schools.

At the front of the store, sacking and carrying groceries for customers were members of the Pell City High School track team, trying to raise money for the sports program.

Ailor said track members were bagging groceries for tips.
"We do a lot with the schools and

churches," she said. "Our customers are pretty generous. She said they have had students

from a variety of programs working for "tips" for their individual programs, like members of the Pell City High School Marching Band of Gold.

"A lot of schools just don't have the money," Ailor said, adding that some parents do not have a lot of resources to absorb extra-curriculum activities for their children.

"These programs give students a well-rounded high school experience,"

Ailor said it all started with the Duran Junior High School Toys for

"That was the first group," she said. "The kids are well-behaved."

Ailor said students also walk away with something new, about how to help and treat people with respect.

T've had some of the students come back and work for me, because they liked it," she said.

Food Outlet also provided a place where the late "Peanut Bill" Seales could sit and sell his peanuts. 'He became a real close friend,"

Ailor said. "In fact, he would call me his girlfriend. I remembered when he met my husband. He said, 'oh, no, I'm in trouble now' ... He was a joy to all my workers and all my customers. He was a true inspiration.

Food Outlet continues to thrive because of the personal attention employees provide to their customers.

We have great meats and produces," Ailor said.

Butchers actually cut meat to order at Food Outlet.

"We cut everything here," Ailor said. "That's a dying profession, culinary meats.

She said T. J. Elrod oversees the meat department and Carol Middlebrooks is the store's produce manager.

Ailor said most of their employees are from Pell City or the surrounding areas. The store has about 33 employees and everyone knows each other. 'Most of the employees are born

and raised here or moved here ... It's like your second family here," Ailor said. "A lot of times you're at work more than you are at home. I am everyone's mother, even those who are older than me." Ailor said 50s-60s music is piped

in on the store's sound system, and it is not uncommon to see Ms. Pat, a cashier, singing along with the music at the checkout.

'Our customers love it," she said. "We want our customers to come down here and enjoy themselves and have a good shopping experience."

The prices at Food Outlet are also



Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

Tina Ailor is the manager for the Food Outlet in Pell City.

extremely reasonable. Groceries are cost, plus 10 percent.

Ailor said they cannot carry everything, but they try to keep a variety of grocery items on the shelves.

She said if they don't have something

in stock, customers only need to ask.

'If we don't have it, we'll try and get

it for them," Ailor said. Food Outlet is open 7:30 a.m.-9 p.m., Mondays-Saturdays and closed

on Sundays.



The store has a large, well-kept produce section.



Butchers cut all the meats at the Food Outlet store in Pell City.

Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

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Buddy Roberts/The Daily Home

Executive assistant Kelsey DeLong and executive director Lisa Gaither work to carry out the chamber's mission to "continually improve the quality of life in our community and develop economic prosperity by facilitating business success.

## **Pell City Chamber looks forward to year of activity**

By BUDDY ROBERTS **Special Projects Editor** 

The Greater Pell City Chamber of Commerce begins 2016 with a slate of special events beginning in the spring and continuing through the end of

"Pell City is the Gateway to Logan Martin Lake, but it is the gateway to much, much more," said Lisa Gaither, who has served as the chamber's executive director since August 2014.

Among the events on the chamber's schedule this year is an Alabama Student Angler Bass Fishing Association tournament, walking tours through Pell City, the annual Block Party, the Toughman Alabama competition and the Logan Martin Blues and BBQ Bash.

ASABFA Tournament

The fishing tournament for high school students is scheduled for April 8-9 at Lakeside Landing. The chamber will play host to the event for the first time, and Gaither said she expects to attend an earlier tournament to observe how it is carried out.

More than 200 boats, each manned by two anglers and an adult captain, will launch during the event.

**Walking Tours** 

Organized through the Alabama Tourism Department, the tours are planned for 10 a.m.-2 p.m. every Saturday in April, beginning April 2, in Pell City's downtown district. Members of the local theater group, the Pell City Players, will conduct

the free tours.
"They will be identifying various places of interest, so these tours are for anyone who has an

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interest in learning about history," Gaither said. "It won't be an in-depth history lesson, but it will hit the high points.'

Hometown Block Party

"We definitely are hosting the block party," Gaither said, noting that chamber officials met last week to begin making arrangements for the event. "We want it to be about our downtown merchants and keeping it local.'

The annual event is scheduled for 3-10 p.m. Saturday, June 4, on and around Cogswell Avenue, featuring a host of vendors, food and live entertainment. Last year's event included an automobile show, "and we got a lot of good response to it. We hope to include it again this year.'

Toughman Alabama

The half-triathlon – set this year for Saturday, Aug. 13 – has "been a big event for us the past two years," Gaither said. "It brings in a lot of money to our restaurants and hotels."

Last year, the inaugural Logan Martin Blues and BBQ Bash were held the same day as the Toughman Alabama competition, but both events will be held separately this year.

"The Blues and BBQ Bash was a fun event," Gaither said. "I had a great time, but it was very taxing on our law-enforcement officers who helped us so much with traffic and safety. They had to be there early for the start of the triathlon and stay late until the Blues and BBQ Bash ended, so we learned some lessons from that.'

The date of the Blues and BBQ Bash has not yet been scheduled.

**Business Awards Dinner** 

"We didn't have an awards dinner last year, but I chamber.com.

would love to see it return again this year," Gaither

said. "We're planning to make it happen." No date has been set, but chamber officials are considering one toward the end of 2016.

Pell City Christmas Parade

The annual event will proceed along Cogswell Avenue after dark on Thursday, Dec. 8, with one significant change.

There will be zero horses this year," Gaither said, adding that the decision was made by the parade's organization committee.

Lunch & Learn

Besides the special events, the chamber sponsors quarterly Lunch & Learn seminars at the Pell City Center for Education and the Performing Arts. Scheduled for noon-1 p.m. April 21, July 21 and Oct. 20, the meetings are catered by Chick-fil-A, at a cost of \$12 for chamber members and \$15 for

Programs will highlight how qualities such as good character and integrity can be implemented into and add value to day-to-day business opera-

'We hope such programs will help bring a sense of unity to the community," Gaither said. "Local middle and high school students are learning in their classrooms about core values, which are also encouraged by local churches and ministerial associations, so there's certainly room for them to be developed in a business setting. That way, we're all on the same sheet of music."

For more information about chamber events and acitivites, call 205-338-3377 or visit www.pellcity-

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Jeff Buttram is a salesman at B&B Auto Sales in Odenville.

#### **B& B Auto**

# **Built on 'doing the** customer right'

By GARY HANNER

Looking for a great deal in used cars, then look no further than B&B Auto Sales in Odenville.

Frank Sweatt is the owner of B&B, and they have been in business in Odenville for the past six years. Before moving the business to Odenville, B&B had been in Birmingham since 1981. "My dad started the business and owned it for 35 years," Sweatt said.

"Then I took it over. He still works part time here."

Sweatt said the reason he moved out of the Birmingham area was it was just

time to make a change. 'Birmingham is Birmingham, and this area of St. Clair County is really

All of the vehicles at B&B are used vehicles, and they all get run through a shop to search for any problems. B&B has a total of six employees from salesmen to a mechanic to a clean-up guy.

"All of our vehicles come with a warranty if the customer wants it," Sweatt said. "From what I can tell, there appears to be more people buying used vehicles than new vehicles. Used cars are a popular item today.'

Sweatt said he has vehicles on his lot priced from \$3,000 to \$18,000. "It varies," he said. "We have cars, trucks, SUV's - everything. You name

Sweatt said his goal is not to fall in the stereotypical role of being a car salesman. He believes that through the years, some car salesmen have gotten

"I build everything on doing the customer right," he said. "I don't want to fall into that category that a lot of people fall into. We try to back up every-

thing we sell, and we're pretty happy with the way it's going so far."

customers do finance with them.

B&B Auto Sales is at 11277 U.S. 411, Odenville, AL 35120. Visit them on their website at bbautosalesinc.net or find them on Facebook. Call them at 205-629-6460.



B&B Auto Sales is in Odenville. From left are Jim Gurley, Frank Sweatt

and Jeff Buttram.





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#### **Johnny J. Smith & Son Construction**

# Three generations of quality work

By DAVID ATCHISON Home staff writer

The story is one of three generations for Johnny J. Smith & Son Construction, which bears the name of its original founder.

Smith brought with him his knowledge of construction and strong work ethic to build the local construction company in to what it is today. After retiring almost a decade ago, he left the family business in good hands with his son and grandson, Keith and Dalton.

The 79-years-old patriarch, who was born and raised in Pell City, began working with Harbert Construction Company in Birmingham in the 1950s. It was there that he learned the construction business inside and

Smith remembers the late Bill Harbert looking down into the ditch, where he was shoveling dirt. The construction boss pointed at him.

"He said aloud, 'He may be little, but he will outwork anybody here," Smith said.

Smith worked hard, advancing from a general laborer to the foreman of a construction crew.

"The Haynes Brothers got me that job with Harbert," he said.

Smith brought the knowledge he gained from Harbert Construction back to Pell City, where he eventually opened his own construction company.

Smith said he started out with just a backhoe, mostly installing septic tanks and field lines, but he never passed up a job. His hard work eventually led to what Johnny J. Smith & Son Construction is today.

The company no longer installs septic tanks or field lines, but specializes in preparing sites for construction. The company also clears lots and does grading work. It also does a lot of riprap work around Logan Martin Lake.

Actually, Smith said, 75-percent of the work Johnny J. Smith & Son Construction does is contract work for Alabama Power Company.

He said he is proud of the copmany's reputation of doing

the job right. They (customers) know

when they call, they will get the job done right the first time,' Smith said. Smith's son Keith, 52, started

working with his dad when he was just a youngster. "This is all I have ever done,"

Keith said. "I started working with my dad when I was 14-years-old.

He said the company owes everything to his dad.

"If it wasn't for him, we wouldn't be here today," Keith

He said their company does a lot of grading work for new home sites, and clear vacant lots.

"We work with a lot of local contractors," Keith said, although the majority of their work is with Alabama Power Company. Keith said his son, Dalton,

who began working with his dad at the age of 15, continues to work for the family business. "He loves it," Keith said. "He's

21 now and runs a crew. He does all my power company work and my grading work, too.'

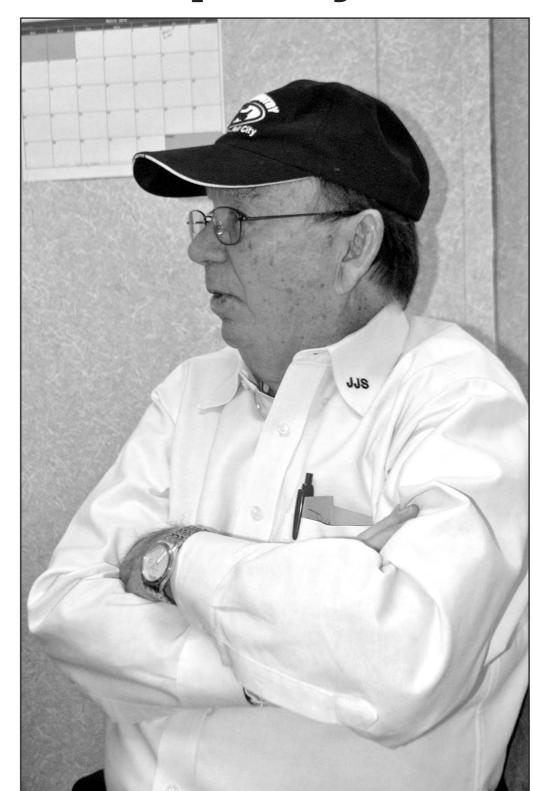
Keith said Johnny J. Smith & Son Construction also sells landscaping materials and has different-sized rocks, including decorative landscaping rock. The construction company also sells shredded clean top soil.

We have three different types of mulch, and we deliver," he added.

He said their company will sell landscaping material by the bulk, starting with pickup truck bed-sized loads.

Keith said they will also look

"Sometimes those small jobs turn into big jobs," he said. "We'll go out and look at anything.



David Atchison/The Daily Home

Johnny J. Smith started his construction company in 1963. The business was later incorporated in 1978, and it's still thriving.



Keith Smith has taken charge of Johnny J. Smith & Son Construction since his father retired almost a decade ago. His son Dalton is now following in his footsteps.



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David Atchison/The Daily Home After more than 50 years in business, Johnny J. Smith and Son Construction is still a thriving Pell City operation.

# Experience, artistry matter

Home staff writer

While the main reason for opening their shop was for security and safety, Metal Works has expanded its business to include so much more.

Robert and Vinetta Blow have been in Odenville for the past seven years. When they first started, they made window guards, handrails, fencing and gates.

"Everything we do is made out of iron," Vinetta said, "Robert has been in this type business for about 40 years, so he has a lot of experience."

When Vinetta started working at the Odenville Library, librarian Betty Corley wanted Robert to design a

sign to go out front. It was LED, and they built the sign around it out of iron.

"When we did the sign for the library, it opened up a whole new world," Vinetta said. "We have now made signs for city hall, street signs, signs for the senior center, police department, various churches throughout the town, and the Welcome to Odenville sign at the corner of U.S. 411 and Alabama Street. Now, we are a distributor for LED signs. We also did all the street signs for Aradon Farms off U.S. 174.' She added that the goal of the company is to continue

to provide safety and security while moving into doing more decorative items.

"Items like garden furniture, garden art, arbors, crosses, etc.," Vinetta said. "I'm an artist and I want to make art. We did a little prayer garden at Pinson First Baptist Church that included benches. When we told the Presbyterian church here about the benches, they wanted us to do a couple of benches for their prayer garden. We are actually about to do some work for the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Pell City. We have done a lot of work in Pell City down around the lake.' Metal Works did all the fencing work for the St. Clair

County Horse Arena. They have also installed several air conditioning cages to keep people from stealing the units and/or the copper. When asked how he got into the metal business,

Robert said a friend's dad got him interested in it. Vinetta said her husband is a jack-of-all trades and has

done just about everything. "I've been in construction all my life," Robert said.

Vinetta said when they first moved to Odenville in 2006, they were city people.

"The folks of this town took us in and adopted us," she said. "We have very good relationships with the mayor and city council and churches, just because of all the work we have done for them." Metal Works is located at 1050 Blair Farms Road in

Odenville, directly in front of the St. Clair County Horse Arena. Contact Metal Works at 205-629-7331.



Gary Hanner/The Daily Home

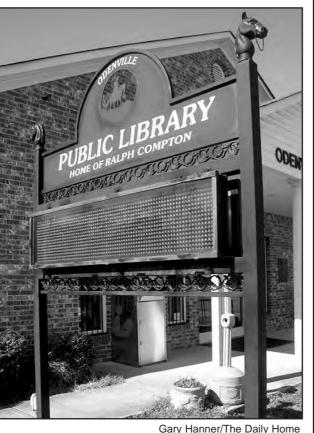
Vinetta Blow designs a cross with a tree, both made out of metal.



Metal Works is located directly in front of the St. Clair County Horse Arena. They did all the fenc-

ing for the horse arena.





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Metal Works makes custom signs like these produced for Odenville United Methodist Church and the Odenville Public Library.



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#### **Pell City Heating and Cooling**

## Doing what's best for the customer

By DAVID ATCHISON Home staff writer

Pell City Heating and Cooling has been a mainstay in Pell City and the surrounding areas for more than 60 years, changing ownership throughout the years.

Susan Deese, the office manager for Pell City Heating and Cooling, said her brother, Jason Fendley, became the owner of the business 10 years ago, but Finley has worked with Pell City Heating and Cooling for much longer.

"Jason started working here when he was 17 years old, right out of high school," Deese said.

Fendley recalls walking into Pell City Heating and Cooling 25 years ago.

"Actually my dad made me come

here and get a job," he said. Fendley said his father was friends

with Babe Kilgroe, the former owner of Pell City Heating and Cooling. At the time, the 41-year-old business

owner would have never dreamed he would eventually own Pell City Heating and Cooling.

"It best all yearled out" he said

"It has all worked out," he said.

Fendley, who was born and raised in Pell City, has now been in the heating and air business for almost 25 years. He started out as a helper and learned the heating and cooling business from the ground up.

Today, Fendley works closely with his brother Billy Fendley when estimating residential and commercial heating and air jobs for the family-run business.

"Silly heads up the installation and has three installers," said Deese. He came on board the family business three years ago after the former secretary and receptionists retired.

"Sugar keeps it all together organizations."

"Susan keeps it all together, organized," said Jeremy Hale, a service technician for the business.

Pell City Heating and Cooling is a certified Trane dealer.

"It's the only company we will put our name on," Hale said. "They are topof-the-line."

Pell City Heating and Cooling will service other makes or models of central heating and cooling units.

"We design units for our customers' needs," Hale said. "Jason and Billy do all the custom ductwork and design for all new units."

Hale said much of Pell City Heating and Cooling's work is scheduled maintenance work on heating and air units.

"Customers normally see us twice a year, in the spring and fall," he said.

He said it is vital that the customers have routine maintenance on their heating and air units.

"It's important," Hale said. "A lot of time when we check, we can prevent breakdowns."

He said it cost about \$164 for the spring/ summer inspections.

Hale said Pell City Heating and Cooling covers all of St. Clair and Talladega counties, working on jobs along the I-20 corridor from Irondale to Oxford.

"We pride ourselves on customer satisfaction," Deese said.

Fendley agreed.

"We try to do it the right way," he said. "If someone has a problem, we will try and make it right."

Pell City Heating and Cooling is open Mondays-Fridays, but when people call after hours, an emergency number is provided on the company's voice mail.

Deese said all a customer has to do is call the emergency number if the office is closed.

"We don't charge any overtime, if we work on Saturday or Sunday," she said.

Hale said Pell City Heating and Cooling has a good core group of heating and air technicians.

"We work well together," he said. "We have all known each other for a long time."

Fendley said his 10 employees are all from the Pell City area, and all have years of experience in the heating and air business.

"We have a lot of knowledge here," Fendley said.

He said Pell City Heating and Cooling does plenty of new construction, both residential and commercial, but a lot of their business is repeat business, maintenance and the replacement of old units for customers.

"We try to do what's best for the customer," Fendley said. "Sometimes that means a new unit."

For your heating and cooling needs, call Pell City Heating and Cooling at 205-338-2820.



David Atchison/The Daily Home

Pell City Heating & Cooling is a family-owned and operated business. Susan Deese and Billy Fendley work alongside their brother Jason. In all, it has 10 employees on the roster.



David Atchison/The Daily Home

Jeremy Hale is one of the service technicians for Pell City Heating and Cooling.

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David Atchison/The Daily Home

Jason Fendley is the owner of Pell City Heating and Cooling.



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#### **Angler Recycling LLC**

# Striving to be part of the community

By GARY HANNER Home staff writer

Angler Recycling LLC has existed in

Odenville for the past eight years. Co-owned by Patrick Daniel and man-

aged by supervisor Joseph Saunier, Angler strives to be a positive fixture in the city of Daniel began his career in the metal

industry as a teenager, following in the foot-

steps of his father, who is also in the scrap Saunier said Angler purchases both fer-

rous and non-ferrous scrap metal from both

car or on the back of a trailer.

the public and commercial businesses. 'Non-ferrous includes metals such as aluminum, copper, brass and stainless. Generally speaking, with the exception of stainless, a magnet will not stick to non-ferrous metals,' Saunier said. "People can bring their scrap metal to Angler Recycling in a pickup truck,

Saunier said one person came in recently with metal box springs strapped to the top of the car and a washing machine in the trunk.

"Everyone drives across our scales to be weighed in," Saunier said. "Outside indicators allow the public to know their weight and trust the accuracy of their payment received. "We process it, bundle it and then

Angler has always been well-received in the area.

"We do a lot of community sponsorships for sports organizations, schools and churches," he said. "It is important for us that we be a part of the community in both Odenville and Springville."

Saunier said the goal of the company is to sustain a long-term business, therefore establishing great relationships with people within the company.

"We want to provide this type of service to not only this community but surrounding communities as well," he said. "We are one of very few scrap metal businesses here in St. Clair County. We have sustained our business despite the downturn of the economy, especially as it affects the scrap industry."

Angler Recycling continues to accept

metal from the public.

About a year ago, Saunier said it had about 35,000 pounds worth of scrap vehicles on the yard. "Now, we are processing vehicles as they

come in and shipping them out quicker,' Saunier said. "Less volume has enabled us to have quicker turn around and processing time. Although the economy is down, we are fortunate to still be in operation and have the funds necessary to continue our commu-Furthermore, Saunier said it is import-

ant to Daniel and himself that Angler is a

Christian-based company. "God has blessed us by giving us the busi-

ness," Saunier said. "We want to be here for Coe Allen is the bookkeeper while Jodie

Pardue is the scale operator/weigh master. Both have been with the company for two

"Jodie and I both love our jobs," Allen said. "You do not get better employers than Joseph and Patrick.

Angler Recycling is at 15226, U.S. 411, Odenville, AL 35120. It is open Mondays through Fridays, 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m., closed for lunch from 12-12:30 p.m., and on Saturday sfrom 7:30 a.m.-noon. The company can be contacted at 205-629-2200.

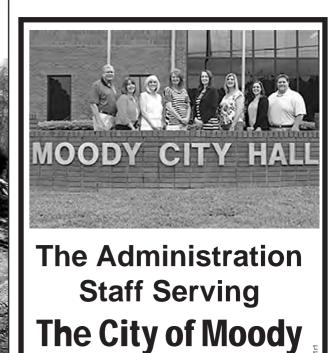
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Angler Recycling is at 15226 U.S. 411 in Odenville. Above, aluminum cans are crushed and loaded into a trailer. At left, old vehicles are crushed into a small compact box.





**Daily** 

**Pell City Chamber of Commerce** 

## Welcoming new members and officers

By DAVID ATCHISON Home Staff Writer

St. Clair County District Court Judge Alan Furr administered the oath of office to the new Pell City Chamber of Commerce board members and officers during the chamber's annual meeting at Celebrations.

The new officers included Ed Brasher, president; Larry Daugherty, president-elect; and Dana Jacks, vice president. Will Hardwick, who is the new treasurer, was unable to attend the meeting and was sworn in later.

"I look forward to being your president this year," Brasher said.

New board members included Bob Osborn, Pam Argo, Nancy Gerety, Jeremy Gossett and Brandon

The outgoing officers were Sarah Brazzolotto, Bernard White, Amy Strickland and David Sawyer. They were publicly thanked for their service on behalf of the chamber board and staff.

Lisa Gaither, the chamber's executive director, thanked everyone for their attendance. She highlighted many of the chamber's accomplishments during 2015 and talked about the organization's plans for the upcoming year.

"We have a lot of exciting things planned," she Gaither said she has met and talked with Brasher

about the upcoming year. She said the new president wants to be more interactive with the commu-

nity, the business community. Gaither also introduced the new part-time executive assistant for the chamber, Kelsey Delong.

Gaither spoke about many of the events and programs the chamber participated in or helped organize last year, including the St. Clair County Job Expo, which saw more than 400 participants. Gaither said 60 people were hired on the spot at the expo, and more than 200 employees were placed

She said the chamber worked closely with the Pell City Board of Education to institute "Core Values" soft skills development in city schools, which will allow students an opportunity to fill local business and industrial jobs after graduating from high school, as well as helping the local business and industrial community to meet its employment needs.

"If there are any businesses in the area that need some specialized training, we want to know,' Gaither said. "We're here to help our local busi-

New Pell City Chamber of Commerce officers are, from left, Larry Daugherty, president-elect; Dana Jacks, vice-president, and Ed Brasher, president. Not pictured is Will Hardwick, treasurer.



Tucker Webb/The Daily Home New Pell City Chamber of Commerce board members are, from left, Bob Osborn, Pam Argo, Nancy Gerety, Jeremy Gossett and Brandon Turner.

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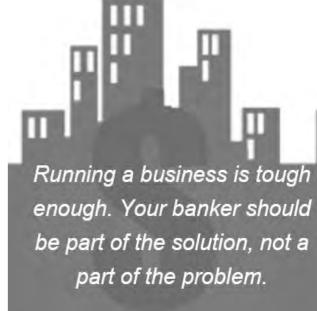
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#### **Good Game Company**

# **Constructing a legacy after 60 years**

By DAVID ATCHISON Home staff writer

It started out as a small lawnmower repair shop in 1955, and 60 years later, Goodgame Company has become a well-known construction company with sales exceeding \$35 million annually.

Jason Goodgame said the success of the company was due to the willingness of his father, Adrick Goodgame,

to change and adapt to the times and market conditions.
"We had to change," Adrick said. "If you don't make changes, it's hard to stay in business."

The company transitioned from a welding repair shop into a support operation for the local timber and farming industries.

"As the 1980s rolled in, we changed to meet the needs of the steel industry," Jason said.

The following decade, the company transitioned into the general contracting business and continued to grow. "Goodgame Company went from having 10 to 15

employees to having 30 employees overnight," Jason said. The company began contract work for local indus-

tries, and in 2000, the company shifted gears to the automotive industry when Honda Manufacturing of Alabama came to Lincoln. "The growth of the auto industry in Alabama fueled

growth of Goodgame Company's construction business," Jason said. From 2000-2007, Jason said, the company grew from

30 employees to more than 130. Currently, Goodgame Company has about 90 employ-

Jason said under his father's leadership, the company

has flourished into one of the leading construction companies in the Southeast. And the success of the company hasn't gone unno-

In recognition of the company's 60th anniversary, Gov. Robert Bentley's office presented it with a flag that

was flown over the Alabama State Capitol. The company was also recognized through a resolution adopted by the Alabama House of Representative. "The significant contributions of Goodgame

Company, Inc., are a tremendous source of credit to Pell City and the entire State of Alabama," the resolution said. "It is truly a privilege to recognize the Goodgame Company's legacy in its 60th anniversary year."

Goodgame Company, Inc. is a family run and oper-In 2010, Jason and his sister, Janna Goodgame

Masters, joined their father and mother, Connie, as part owners of the company.



Goodgame Company received special recognition from Gov. Robert Bentley's office and was also presented with an Alabama House of Representative Resolution. The company is celebrating its 60th anniversary. From left are Jason Goodgame; Rep. Randy Wood, (R-Anniston); Adrick Goodgame; Connie Goodgame; and Janna Goodgame Masters.



David Atchison/The Daily Home

Goodgame Company held a special 60th anniversary celebration at the company's head-





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**Metro Bank** 

# Built on customer service'

"We don't

necessarily

want to be the

biggest bank,

just the best."

JASON DOROUGH

CEO/President, Metro Bank

By DAVID ATCHISON Home staff writer

Don Perry stopped in front of the teller and talked to one of Metro Bank's customers before heading to the office with the large window where he can oversee the lobby of the bank.

"You retire, you get a smaller office," he said.

His successor, Jason Dorough, will take up the mantle not only in duties but also in his personable approach to

Perry officially retired as Metro Bank's chief executive officer at the end of 2015, but you wouldn't know it. He remains as the bank's chairman of the board of directors and is still an active part of the community bank.

"I think I am working about as much as before I retired," he said. "The weather is not so good for golfing right now."

All kidding aside, the 66-year-old

loves what he does and plans to remain

at the Metro Bank as long as he can. "I want people to see me, and know I'm still here and not gone," he said.

Perry explained that the board chairman does not have to be a full-

er, but it helps to be," he said. Perry has a wealth of knowledge, working 45 years in the banking industry. Twenty-three of those years were served along U.S. 231 at the main Metro Bank office in Pell City. He was appointed the bank's president and CEO in 2005.

Metro Bank has grown and prospered since he arrived as a senior loan officer in 1992.

When Perry started working for Metro Bank, it had \$35 million in assets. Today the bank boasts \$677 million in

Perry has seen a lot of changes in community banking since he started as a teller while attending college 45 years ago, working his way up

through the ranks in the banking industry. He said technology is the source of most of the changes seen in

"It took a while before our little community bank grasped it," he said. "I got in banking when everything was all manual. It's made a huge dif "He doesn't even have to be a bank- ference. People can do their banking

without ever coming in."

Perry said there are new challenges for small community banks.

"The tough part today is all the regulations," he said. "It is tougher to operate and do the things for customers that they are used to having.' Perry said he and his

wife Jane plan to take some trips and see the country. As board chairman, he still serves on various committees and boards for the bank, so he will have a presence.

"The biggest thing I will miss is seeing the people," he said. "I stay out in the lobby a lot and speak to people as they come

Perry knows many of Metro Banks customers by name, some just by

"I want them to know me," he said. "Someone walks in the door and wants to see me, they see me."

Dorough, who was named the new CEO and President for Metro Bank, also enjoys meeting and talking to

omers when they enter the bank.

Dorough served with both Perry and with Metro Bank's founder, the late Ray Cox.

"You couldn't work for two better people," he said.

Dorough, 45, started at Metro Bank after graduating from college. It was the same year Perry arrived at the bank. He was promoted as the chief financial officer for the bank in 2005. He was appointed as the bank's president in April 2014, before being named the president and CEO on

Dorough, who grew up in Pell City and graduated from Pell City High School in 1988, is a University of Alabama graduate who majored in finance. He later graduated from Alabama Banking School in 1997. He and his wife Cara have two children, Bryant, 7, and Grace, 5.

Dorough will oversee 168 Metro Bank employees in Pell City, Ragland, Lincoln, Heflin, Ashville, Southside

and Moody.

"We have a great staff, top to bottom," he said. "This bank was built on customer service and community involvement, and that's not going to change ... We don't necessarily "It's important to our customers," to be the biggest bank, just the best."



David Atchison/The Daily Home

David Atchison/The Daily Home

Don Perry retired from his full-time position as chief executive officer of Metro Bank but remains as the chairman of the board of directors.



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Jason Dorough was recently named Metro Bank's CEO and president.

#### **Pell City Business Professional Women**

# Raising funds and showing fashion



By DAVID ATCHISON Home Staff Writer

Those who attended the Pell City Business Professional Women's 15th annual fashion show got to hear firsthand how important the annual event is to the young women of the community.

"This could not have been a bigger blessing," said Bradi McSweeney, who received a BPW scholarship that helped her complete her college degree at Jacksonville State University. The event has raised thousands

of dollars for scholarships, which are awarded to young women pursuing college degrees. "I've seen firsthand the impact

said. "I am the first member of my family to graduate from college." The 2007 graduate of Victory Christian School talked about receiving a BPW scholarship when

she needed it the most.

of these scholarships," McSweeney

McSweeney had transferred from Jefferson State Community

University to complete her fouryear degree. During her first year at JSU, her father suffered a heart-attack, putting a financial strain on her family. She wasn't sure how she was going to afford college, even though she worked a full-time job while going to school. "It could not have been a bigger

College to Jacksonville State

blessing," she said. McSweeney said her father has

tinued her educational pursuits,

eventually graduating from JSU

since fully recovered, and she con-

in 2012 with a degree in human resource management. "I would have had to take a semester off," she said. "And once

you take a semester off, it's hard to get back into the flow of school." Pell City BPW treasurer Karen Bain said this is the only fundrais-

to raise money for scholarships. "We give what we raise," she

ing event the organization employs

Scholarship amounts depend on how much money is raised.

Generally, individual scholarships have ranged from \$300-\$750.

The 2015 fashion show included a meal prepared by the Moody High School's Cullinard School. WVTM Meteorologist Harmony Mendoza was the master of ceremonies, and attendees were able to enjoy a fashion show with local models and local merchandise while enjoying lunch.

Anyone who wishes to donate to the BPW scholarship fund are encouraged to call Karen Bain with Fields/Gossett Realty at 205-884-2300 or Teresa Carden at Lakeside Hospice at 205-884-1111.

"Ī was so grateful to receive a scholarship," said Melissa Jacks Moore, a 2006 Pell City High School graduate, who earned her four-year degree from the University of Alabama in Birmingham. Moore works for JBS Mental Health Authority and is pursuing a master's degree in counseling from JSU. "Thank you so much for what you have done."



Photos by TuckerWebb/The Daily Home

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the year for the city's business community. The event is a fundraising effort to allow BPW to grant scholarship funds ranging from \$300-\$750. In 2015, it included a lunch prepared by the Moody High School Cullinard School and entertaiment provided by the Pell City High School jazz band, as members of the organization modeled the latest in fashion styles.

The Pell City Business and Professional Women's annual fashion show is always a highlight of









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