

The Daily Home

presents

The POWER issue

20

**SOME OF THE
MOST DEDICATED
& ACCOMPLISHED
BUSINESS LEADERS IN
OUR COVERAGE AREA.**

The **POWER** issue

20

A note from Robert Jackson, The Daily Home's Publisher

Talladega and St. Clair counties are fortunate to have many key leaders who strive to move the needle forward on any dial that points to excellence. Each of those included in this Power 20 publication exemplifies outstanding leadership in his or her respective industry.

Each business, organization and institution represented in our Power 20 list impacts Talladega and St. Clair in a significant economic sense. Whether each leader's staff includes hundreds or a handful, he or she leads by demonstrating hard work and the ability to make wise choices. Each is interested in motivating staff members to work in efficient and effective ways, and each believes in creating opportunities and offering a helping hand to the community.

No matter the hardships each leader has overcome, no matter how long each leader has prepared for his or her career, and no matter how many years each leader has worked, all lead by example and experience.

The Daily Home is happy to share the stories and ideas of individuals who work to improve their industries and who contribute in so many ways to improve the lives of the people of Talladega and St. Clair counties.

The Daily Home

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Editor's Note

Watch a football game, or take in a school play, or listen to a church choir. Sooner or later, the best of the best will begin to set themselves apart. They rise a little higher. Shine a little brighter. The intangibles are undeniable.

When you span the scope of the economic landscape of east central Alabama, a similar phenomenon takes place. This publication seeks to highlight 20 of those standouts.

When you read these inaugural Power 20 profiles of area business leaders, you will notice that some common themes begin to emerge.

Hard work. Drive for excellence. Love of community. Professional pride. Personal humility.

But it's not just what's in them; it's how it comes out. Their level of civic involvement consistently shows that these executives are invested beyond their daily 9-to-5 jobs, and that their leadership extends beyond the bounds of their employment.

We hope you enjoy learning about them as much as we did. When Talladega and St. Clair counties point to their best of the best, these are some of the people the spotlight tends to find.

-Anthony Cook

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Alabama Power

VP focuses on environmental stewardship, economic development

By Buddy Roberts



Tony Smoke

“My role has many different facets,” he said. “From the operational oversight of 130 employees working in local business offices located across a 12-county region of east Alabama planning from Oneonta to Dadeville to Pell City to the state line, serving as the face of the organization in the community and working alongside elected officials, economic development councils and two- and four-year universities to create a thriving employable region suitable for commercial and industrial growth, I take pride in the many hats I am afforded to wear on a daily basis.”

At the end of the day, though, Smoke says

he has one primary goal. “I work fervently to ensure that our customers are provided excellent customer service and reliable electrical service.”

Previously serving as area manager and commercial & industrial marketing manager for Alabama Power’s Birmingham Division, he was named Eastern Division vice president in July. During his more than 30 years with the utility provider, he has been responsible for energy efficiency initiatives, engineering, construction and maintenance.

Two of the company’s priorities that are important to Smoke are environmental stewardship and economic development. He refers to the former as “a core value” of Alabama Power, which serves more than 1.4 million homes, businesses and industries across the state.

“We are committed to operating our facilities in an environmentally responsible manner and protecting the natural resources that make Alabama beautiful,” he said. “We do this in east Alabama by leading and supporting activities such as river clean-ups all along the Coosa and Tallapoosa river systems and natural habitat preservation.”

Economic development has been significant to Alabama Power since the company’s inception, according to Smoke. “We take pride in our commitment to the growth and development of the region. Our employees play an active role in engaging economic development initiatives in the region and the state and working to attract new

businesses, while also keeping existing businesses profitable.”

But there’s still work to be done, he added.

“We would like to help facilitate and grow our communities by partnering with local municipalities, educational leaders and the business community to help initiate change. Most recently, we have partnered with the Anniston Army Depot to help them meet their goals around green energy and embraced innovative technology to add ease of doing business with us, while also adapting to changing customer needs.”

Active with such civic and benefit organizations as the YMCA, March of Dimes, American Red Cross and the Hispanic Interest Coalition Association, Smoke was appointed last month to the Alabama Institute of the Deaf and Blind Foundation’s board of directors. He says he is proud of how Alabama Power and its employees invest in local communities.

“Alabama Power, from its earliest days, was developed for the service of Alabama, and that is just as true today,” he said. “We provide reliable and affordable energy, an essential part of people’s lives, but we do more than sell a product. We are here to elevate Alabama. Alabama Power employees are your neighbors. You see us at the ball fields, in the schools and in churches. We have a real stake in our communities’ well-being.”

“We do more than sell a product,” Smoke said. “We are here to elevate Alabama.”

AIDB

AIDB president reflects Talladega institution's limitless impact

By Laci Braswell



John Mascia

Dr. John Mascia has witnessed many life-changing moments during his tenure at the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind.

"It is our job to provide our consumers with the best quality of life possible," the institution's president said.

A New York native, Mascia said that accepting a position at AIDB was "a sign from above. I was torn between uprooting my family and taking the position in Alabama. My heart kept coming back to the people I had met at a previous trip to AIDB. I made the decision just hours before I had to, and I haven't looked back since."

AIDB's 17th president holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in audiology and speech pathology from Hofstra University in New York and has a doctorate in audiology from the Pennsylvania College of Optometry's School of Audiology. Mascia received his certificate of clinical competence in audiology from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and is a licensed audiologist.

He and his wife Nancy have three children, Chris, Katie, and Annie.

In 2005, he joined AIDB as executive director of E.H. Gentry Technical Facility.

Four year later, he was promoted to the role of vice president of adult programs.

Mascia assumed the role as AIDB president in 2013.

"AIDB is the most comprehensive, education, rehabilitation and service program in the world," he said. "We serve individuals from age zero until death."

The institute serves more than 22,500 infants, toddlers, children, adults and seniors who are deaf, blind, deafblind and multi-disabled.

According to Mascia, the institution has significantly grown since its inception in 1858.

"AIDB was founded by Dr. Joseph Henry Johnson, who wanted to provide care and education to his deaf brother and friend. It began by serving an audience of two, but has become so much more in so little time."

AIDB's residential campuses in Talladega include the Alabama School for the Deaf, Alabama

School for the Blind, Helen Keller School of Alabama and E.H. Gentry. The institute also provides many employment opportunities at the Alabama Industries for the Blind.

Mascia added that although many of AIDB's consumers consider Talladega home, its impact spans far more than just a municipality.

"We have continued to help improve the lives of individuals all across the state and Southeast."

AIDB's eight regional centers include Birmingham, Dothan, Huntsville, Mobile, Montgomery, Talladega, Tuscaloosa and Tuscumbia

Mascia said the institution also provides many employment opportunities. "AIDB employs approximately 1200 staff members in Talladega and in return has helped the city economically."

The AIDB president added that he is excited to expand on the institutions STEAM programs and its future new facilities.

"We are looking forward to growing our STEAM curriculum and the completion of our two newest buildings the Joe Tom Armbruster Agricultural Center and the new student medical center."

Mascia also stressed that its new slogan and logo accurately depicts what the institution stands for.

"AIDB. Deaf. Blind. Limitless summarizes our core values," Mascia said. "It is our goal that our students and clients feel that they can achieve anything they set their mind to. We want to do all that we can to help make that possible."

"We have continued to help improve the lives of individuals all across the state and Southeast," Mascia said.

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Blue Bell

Being part of the Sylacauga community is important to Blue Bell

By Denise Sinclair



Kevin Wood

Blue Bell Creameries has been a big part of the Sylacauga community since 1996, when the purveyor of frozen treats purchased the old Flav-O-Rich production facility.

Kevin Wood, the operation's general manager, believes Blue Bell's presence in the community is important.

"We support local schools, other events and

charities," he said. "We also have employees active in several organizations, including the local credit unions, Industrial Development Board, South Talladega County Personnel Association, Rotary Club, Library Foundation Board, Chamber of Commerce and City Council."

In addition, the company sponsors the Blue Bell Public Story Hour at B.B. Comer Memorial Library and it sponsors library extension programs to Head Start, Drew Court Development Center and Moving 4Forward Public Pre-Kindergarten.

According to former B.B. Comer Library director Dr. Shirley Spears, Blue Bell's donation has made a difference in the children's program. The program includes providing new books for children to take home; e-books for youngsters to download from the library website; prizes and incentives to use as rewards for reading; and craft supplies for take-home learning activities.

Blue Bell helped finance Sylacauga's Central Park, which has since become known as Blue Bell Park.

Some of the other causes supported by Blue Bell include Relay for Life, March of Dimes, Juvenile Diabetes and Halloween Trunk or Treat.

Blue Bell was started in 1907 when a few farmers in Brenham, Texas, set up the Brenham Creamery with an initial investment of \$2,200. In 1911, the creamery began making and selling two gallons of ice cream a day, made with a hand-cranked wooden freezer.

In 1919, E.F. Kruse decided not to be a school superintendent and instead took over the struggling creamery, working for a while without a salary. The company soon showed a profit.

Kruse changed the business' name to Blue Bell Creameries, after his favorite wildflower, the blue bell. Generations later, the Kruse family still manages the company.

Today, the Sylacauga plant produces half gallons, pints, 3-ounce cups and gallons of the company's many flavors, including sherbert, light and no-sugar-added varieties.

The company, according to Wood, hopes to continue to increase its production and the products and flavors that are available.

The local plant is staffed by 240 employees, part of more than 2,500 company-wide. Blue Bell is distributed in 19 states.

*"We support local schools, other events and charities," Wood said.
"We also have employees active in several organizations."*

Central Alabama Community College

CACC president believes education changes generations of lives

By Buddy Roberts



Susan Burrow

As president of Central Alabama Community College (CACC), Susan Burrow says she's often asked if she's based in Alexander City, where the two-year college's main campus is located.

"I usually say, 'I sleep in Alex City, yes,'" she said with a laugh on a recent morning while she was in Sylacauga for a meeting with school system officials. "And my office is there, too, but I don't spend a lot of time in it."

Burrow's role as the college's chief officer requires considerable travel across the seven-county, 4,000-square-foot area served by CACC.

"It's a vast area," she said, "from Lincoln,

Munford and a part of Oxford in north Talladega County to Columbiana and I-65 in south Shelby County to close to I-85 in Tallassee. That takes in Coosa County, Tallapoosa County and Elmore County, part of Clay County and part of Autauga County."

Talladega County is home to CACC's two satellite campuses, in Talladega and Childersburg. The college was created in 1989, when Alexander City State Junior College and Nunnelle State Technical College consolidated.

"Whether students come to us for on-campus or online classes, for academic transfer, career tech certification or adult education, we provide opportunities and a path for them," said Burrow, who has been part of the Alabama Community College System for 31 years.

"I started out, oddly enough, as a finance major, but I needed to be more interactive with people in a service-related field, so I found my way into health care." She completed undergraduate studies at the University of North Alabama and did graduate and post-graduate work at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, where she received family nurse practitioner certification, later earning a Ph.D. in higher education leadership at the University of Mississippi.

It was while teaching nursing courses at Northwest State Technical College – which eventually became Bevil State Community College – that she was able to see firsthand how two-year colleges can change people's lives.

"Community colleges see predominantly first-

generation college students. It's still the best part of my job to see students go across the stage during graduation ceremonies who once thought it would never be possible for them. Education changes generations of lives."

In Burrow's view, education is all about opportunities.

"You hear people say education is the great equalizer," she said. "Really, education is the great foundation for opportunity. The true equalization is found in the motivation of the individuals who seek that opportunity. My role as president involves seeking the resources and means to provide educational opportunities that improve the lives of the citizens we serve."

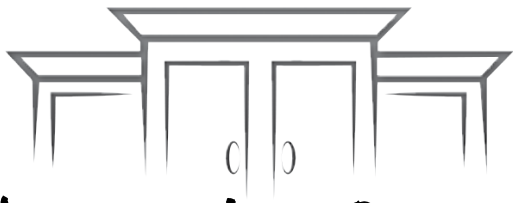
Burrow added that the role of CACC extends beyond its classrooms.

"We are an economic engine in the communities we're in. We are a consumer of infrastructure and utilities, we are an employer and we bring a lot of traffic to the area. We provide a culture and a climate that promotes education and economic development and that understands the relationship between the two. We recognize how important it is to develop a qualified and ready workforce."

CACC and institutions like it are referred to as community colleges for a reason, she said.

"We truly are community colleges. We are based in communities. Each community has its own distinct personality, and we embrace, appreciate and celebrate that."

"Education is the great foundation for opportunity," Burrow said. "The true equalization is found in the motivation of the individuals who seek that opportunity."



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Citizens Baptist Medical Center

Citizens Baptist administrator: 'We are doing something right'

By Adrinece Beard



Doug Brewer

Doug Brewer maximizes patient safety, satisfaction and volume at Citizens Baptist Medical Center, demonstrating more than 10 years of healthcare executive leadership experience.

Brewer earned a bachelor's degree in finance from the University of Central Oklahoma and a master's degree in business administration from Kutztown University in Pennsylvania. He served as COO of Atlanta Medical Center before directing key departments such as the cardiovascular service line at Brookwood Baptist

Medical Center in Birmingham. He is vice chair and an executive board member of the Brain Injury Association of America's National Board of Directors.

Today, he serves as CEO of Citizens Baptist in Talladega, originally known as Citizens Hospital, which was founded by community leaders in 1925 and is among the best hospitals affiliated with the Brookwood Baptist Health network in avoiding healthcare-associated infections.

Like other top-ranked hospitals, CBMC is also up to date with technology using Epic, one of the most popular electronic medical records system in the United States, and generators that can supply up to six days of electricity in case of a power outage.

With as many as 300 births every year, 100 emergency visits and six patients in the intensive care unit every day, CBMC provides 125 licensed beds, employment to more than 350 professionals and a wide range of services.

Brewer said the hospital works diligently to medically discharge half of its patients by noon each day before the rooms are cleaned or to transport persons to a different facility where they are better served. In the past, for example, patients in need of open-heart and neurological surgeries were helicoptered to Birmingham.

At 9:30 each morning, Brewer and his team of health care professionals "huddle" for a meeting

that opens with prayer and ends with an effective agenda to ensure that quality care and safety standards are met. The professionals discuss their concerns before grouping each into one of three levels. Level one is top priority and demands immediate attention, but a minor issue like an unplaced ceiling tile is ranked at level two and must be resolved within the next two days. Nevertheless, issues at level three must not go unresolved longer than a week.

In 2016, CBMC was named to the HomeCare Elite list of the top performing Medicare-certified home health facilities and agencies in the nation, marking five years of recognition for the hospital in providing patients and the community with superior care. This spring, the hospital was congratulated with an A grade from the Leapfrog Group after voluntarily submitting their safety, quality and efficiency to an assessment based on national performance measures.

More recently, in July and August, the hospital's ratings for 10 domains including physician communication, nurse communication, cleanliness and safety improved as a result of randomized patient satisfaction surveys. Brewer said the ratings jumped from the bottom five to the top 10 percentile in the country.

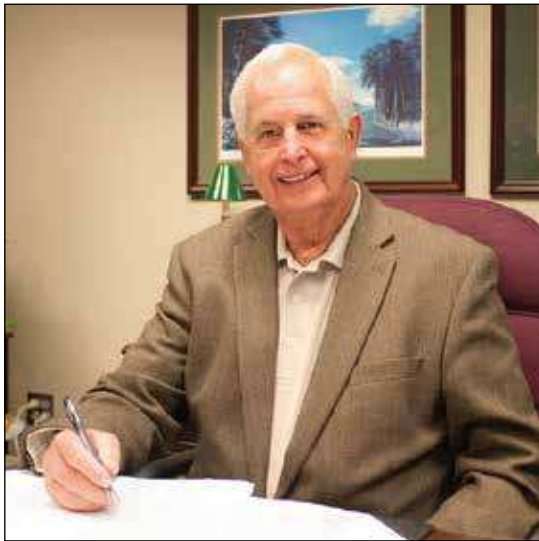
"We went from worst to first," Brewer said. "We never have been able to do it before, but I guess we are doing something right."

With as many as 300 births every year, 100 emergency visits and six patients in the intensive care unit every day, Citizens Baptist provides 125 licensed hospital beds, employment to more than 350 professionals and a wide range of services.

Coosa Valley Electric

Utility manager takes pride in community relationships

By Laci Braswell



Leland Fuller

Leland Fuller says he's proud of the relationship the Coosa Valley Electric Cooperative has with its consumers.

"Our consumers are what keep us going," the utility provider's general manager said. "They put so much back into the cooperative, it's important that CVEC properly serves their needs."

The cooperative serves as many as 17,000 consumers and has provided electrical power to customers in its six-county region for decades. Its

customer base includes Talladega, St. Clair, Clay, Shelby, Calhoun and Etowah counties.

According to Fuller, electric cooperatives were founded in 1935 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to provide electricity to rural America.

"There are approximately 1,000 electric cooperatives across the nation, and CVEC is one of 22 in the state," he said.

Fuller noted that CVEC serves rural communities in many ways.

In the 1990s, the cooperative expanded into the propane business and now owns a subsidiary, Coosa Valley Propane Inc. It serves approximately 3,500 consumers in its six-county territory.

The company has additionally partnered with the Talladega County Economic Development Authority (TCEDA) to develop industrial parks, build speculative buildings and recruit industry to the area. The buildings are financed by federal loans, PowerSouth, TCEDA and CVEC.

Multiple businesses are inside the CVEC Industrial Park, including Kasai Industries, Scot Industries, Allen Architectural Metals, NewSouth Express, Buffalo Rock and StyleCrest.

According to Fuller, more than 1,200 jobs have been created by the companies that have located in the industrial park.

Fuller added that the company is also proud to keep its rates and quality of service in line with its

other competitors. "Although rates can fluctuate throughout the year due to weather, our prices are close to other power companies in the area."

In the future, CVEC plans to make the cooperative even more user-friendly.

"I have a background in computer science, and I believe keeping up with the latest technology is important to our consumers," Fuller said, noting that CVEC offers a SmartPay system, through which customers can monitor their power usage.

"With SmartPay, customers are able to monitor their power daily. It helps cover costs and can also save customers' money. This is very helpful to our customers who get paid on a weekly basis, especially."

According to Fuller, CVEC soon hopes to have its own app for use on mobile devices. "We want to keep providing our customers with the best service we can, and to continue to grow our partnership with the Talladega Economic Development Authority."

Fuller is a Talladega native and a graduate of Winterboro High School.

He received his bachelor's degree from Jacksonville State University in accounting and economics. He served as CVEC's chief financial officer for 24 years, and has been general manager for the last decade.

"I believe keeping up with the latest technology is important to our consumers," Fuller said.

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Coosa Valley Medical Center

Hospital CEO promotes quality health care for Sylacauga

By Denise Sinclair



Glenn Sisk

Glenn Sisk, CEO of Coosa Valley Medical Center, knows how important hospitals and health care are to small communities like Sylacauga.

He has been in health care since 1980, when he was a sophomore in high school.

During Sisk's 16-year tenure as Coosa Valley's CEO, he has continually worked to ensure his community has the best hospital and health care possible, from expanding facilities and services to bringing doctors to Sylacauga.

He negotiated the sale from Baptist Health

System, returning Coosa Valley to the hospital's independent health care authority oversight in August 2004. Then there was the completion of a \$54.4 million bond issue for the facility in September 2005. He helped plan and complete a \$29 million inpatient replacement facility in June 2007, the same year the hospital received its highest-ever patient satisfaction scores.

New services added under Sisk's leadership include a fully accredited sleep disorders center, the latest in CT scanner technology, digital mammography, an interventional pain service, a hospice agency, a geriatric psychiatry unit, a cardiac catheterization laboratory and medical detox services.

Sisk said he counts it as a "privilege to come to CVMC every day," adding that the hospital's more than 700 employees make it the largest employer in the city.

CVMC has 35 active physicians and more than 100 courtesy and consulting physicians. Some 60 volunteers serve the hospital through its auxiliary service.

Sisk said he enjoys surrounding himself with good people. "I have an extraordinary good board and I am surrounded by more than 650 people who exceed expectations," he said.

"We can make decision more quickly as an independent hospital and serve our community. We are going to continue to focus on health care for our citizens. We have added services since separating from Baptist Health Care System such as the sleep clinic, cardiac lab, senior behavioral

unit, hospice and detox service known as New Vision."

Since Sisk arrived, the hospital has gone from 500 employees to adding more than 160. "We take our responsibility to be part of the community by growing services. We are recruiting additional medical staff. This is the cornerstone of success for our continued growth. That plan to do this is being worked on for 2018-2024. We are evaluating the number of physicians necessary for our region. These include primary care and specialists," he said.

Vanessa Green, CVMC's chief business development officer, said the hospital has received numerous awards under Sisk's leadership. One of the major awards the hospital has received is being recognized in 2015 by the Joint Commission of Hospitals for being a top performer in health care.

The hospital has put together Plan 2020 representing 75 years of service to the community by CVMC. To continue its long-standing tradition of compassionate delivery, three key pillars will guide the hospital's decision-making, Sisk said. These pillars are "commitment to our patients and community, strategic growth and partnerships, and practice of sound stewardship," he said.

The continued economic impact in the community is key, Sisk explained. The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis listed the total economic impact of the hospital as \$129,750,000. The total income generated by CVMC is \$44,482,000.

"I have an extraordinary good board, and I am surrounded by more than 650 people who exceed expectations," Sisk said.

First Bank of Alabama

‘Be effectively efficient’ is bank president’s motto

By Kelli Tipton



Chad Jones

As president and CEO of First Bank of Alabama, Chad Jones says he strives to lead by example while overseeing all operations of the \$550 million community bank. It is his responsibility to establish objectives, strategies and policies for the bank, ensure its future financial growth, and maintain the bank’s position as a strong financial partner in the communities it serves.

He attributes his success in banking to a “can

do” attitude, and his banking career to pure happenstance. In 1996, while seeking a degree in marketing and business management at Troy University, he worked at Troy Country Club and often played golf there. One day, he played with Gary Guthrie, president of Troy Bank and Trust.

“On the fifth tee box, he asked me what I planned to do after I graduated. I said, ‘Mr. Guthrie, one day I hope to have a real job, just like you.’ He told me to come see him on Monday, and I did, and that was the beginning of my banking career.”

He began by delivering mail from the bank to the post office. Within a short time, he was performing nightly updates on the computer. As his knowledge and experience increased, his responsibilities increased, and soon he was closing the bank every evening.

“Once it got into me, I began to understand what banking was and is. My calling and passion is to help people, and banking is about helping people,” he said. “When you help people realize their dreams and realities, to help someone get into a new home or improve the one they have or start a new business, it’s fulfilling to be able to see that type of satisfaction on their faces. And you always look for opportunities to build a strong

community by helping families improve their lives. A good, strong financial partner is going to build a strong community.”

Founded in 1848, First Bank of Alabama is the state’s oldest bank. With six locations in Talladega, Lincoln, Munford and Wedowee, it gives back to the communities it serves through sponsorships and corporate donations to many local boards and organizations.

The bank sponsors five local high schools and is committed to teaching students about money matters, Jones said. It also offers continuing education opportunities to its employees that allow them to keep up with changes in the banking industry. “This helps to ensure employee longevity. Some of our employees have been here 20 or 30 years or more.”

Jones finds leadership rewarding and always looks for opportunities to improve his leadership skills. “My job is to be a leader. I am like a head coach on a football team. I make sure I have the right people in the right places at the right time doing the right things. My motto is, ‘Be effectively efficient.’ Efficient is doing the thing right. Effective is doing the right thing.”

“My calling and passion is to help people, and banking is about helping people,” Jones said.

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Goodgame Company

Goodgame pays his dues in the family business

By David Atchison



Jason Goodgame

Jason Goodgame, 41, grew up working in his family's business, which has grown and prospered during the past half-century in Pell City.

Goodgame now serves as the vice president of Goodgame Company Inc. and works directly for the founder and president, his father, Adrick Goodgame.

"You can't start at the top," Goodgame said. "You have to start at the bottom and work your way up. People don't understand that today."

Goodgame remembers as a kid he would clean

up the shop. He learned how to weld at an early age and would do various jobs for his dad to earn pocket money. "A lot of times I would come in and work on Saturdays," he said.

Goodgame graduated from Pell City High School in 1994 and headed to Auburn University, where he majored in business. That's where he met his future wife, Amy, who was also from Pell City. The couple has two children, Blakeley, 13, and Briley, 10.

While attending college, Goodgame worked for a construction company in Anniston through a cooperative program at Auburn. He eventually oversaw the construction of a church in Rome, Ga., for the company.

Goodgame graduated from Auburn University in 1999. "After graduating, I came back to work," he said.

It wasn't that easy.

He had to go through an interview process with the president of Goodgame Company, his father, before being hired.

"I was the guy in the ditch with a shovel," Goodgame said. "Well, I didn't actually work in a ditch, but I was a laborer."

His first job was a laborer on the construction site at the now Cropwell Commons development on Alabama 34.

He eventually was promoted to the position he now holds in the family business. His mother, Connie, is the company's treasurer, and his sister,

Janna, serves as the company secretary.

"We all do what we have to do to keep the company going," he said, crediting the company's long-term success to his father. "He's never been afraid to change."

He said Goodgame Company has gone through four or five huge transitions throughout the years, adapting to the times. The company started as a welding shop. Now welding is just a small part of the business.

Today the company has around 95 employees and does more commercial construction jobs, most within a 60-mile radius. Goodgame Company employees have a reputation as devoted workers who often stay with the company for years.

At a recent company picnic, company officials presented awards to one employee with 20 years of service, one employee with 15 of service and six employees who were celebrating their 10th year with the company.

Goodgame has been active in community activities and nonprofit organizations, helping improve the quality of life in Pell City.

In the past, he has served as the president of the Pell City Chamber of Commerce and he participated in the Pell City and St. Clair County Leadership programs. He is also a member of the St. Clair County Auburn University Alumni Association.

"You can't start at the top," Goodgame believes. "You have to start at the bottom and work your way up."

Honda Manufacturing

Honda Manufacturing president appreciates community relationships

By Laura Gaddy



Jeff Tomko

Jeff Tomko began his career three decades ago on a team tasked with helping Honda Motor Co. establish itself in North America, so it is fitting that he now serves as the president of Honda Manufacturing of Alabama.

Its Lincoln plant employs 4,500 people and it is the only facility that builds the Odyssey minivan, Pilot SUV, Ridgeline pickup truck and the V-6 engines that are housed in those vehicles. It is also Honda's largest "light truck production source," and it can churn out more than 34,000 vehicles and engines each year.

In Lincoln and in Alabama, Tomoko said, Honda Manufacturing has found a partner.

"Since the very first day that Honda announced it would build a plant in Lincoln, the people of Alabama and this community have certainly embraced our company as a welcome neighbor. We have been very fortunate to have established strong relationships and partnerships with local officials, as well as with a number of organizations in the area through our Community Partners charitable giving program."

Tomko's introduction to Honda Manufacturing came in 1987 after he graduated from Bowling Green State University, where he majored in purchasing, materials, production and operations management. In 2005, he was promoted to assistant vice president of Honda of America Manufacturing.

In 2007 he became vice president and plant manager of Honda Transmission of America Manufacturing in Russells Point, Ohio, where the plant doubled in size under his watch. Four years later, he became president and plant manager of Honda's first auto plant in America, eventually moving to Alabama to become senior vice president of operations of Honda Manufacturing of Alabama, for which he was named president in 2014.

Tomko serves on the board of the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama, and he described community partnerships as an essential component of the work Honda is doing in Lincoln.

"We are engaged with so many different community partnerships, it is difficult to pick just one and expand on it," he said. "Honda's fundamental belief is that we want to be a company that society and our community want to exist."

He wrote that the company partners with churches, food banks and schools, adding that Honda employees sit on several boards, including those of the Birmingham Civil Rights Development and the McWane Science Center.

Tomko also pointed to ways in which the community supports Honda, primarily through its workforce. Honda employees are drawn to Lincoln from a five-county area that includes Talladega, St. Clair, Calhoun, Etowah and Jefferson counties. In these communities, he said, Honda Manufacturing of Alabama has found the skilled workforce it needs.

"Alabama is a progressive state that continues to grow and attract strong companies in a diversified field of automotive, biomedical, and several key industries, and Lincoln is obviously a part of that. Lincoln, Talladega County and the surrounding counties have developed strong technical skills programs at local schools and community colleges."

Tomko lives in Birmingham with his wife Laura. Together they have twin sons, Andrew and Austin, both of whom are students at Auburn University.

"Since the very first day that Honda announced it would build a plant in Lincoln, the people of Alabama and this community have certainly embraced our company as a welcome neighbor," Tomko said.

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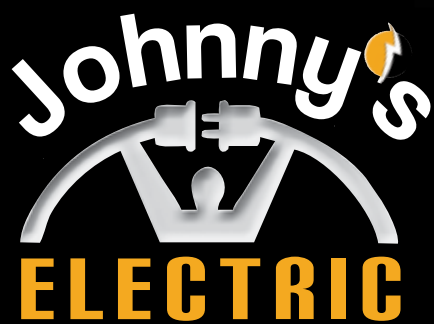
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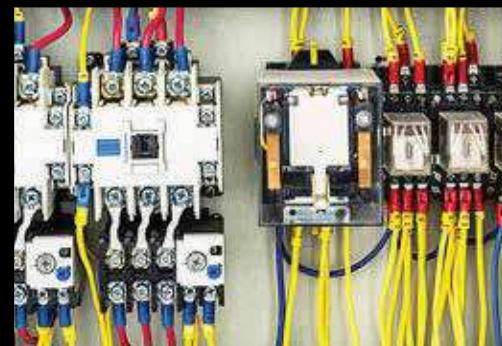
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Jefferson State Community College

Jeff State associate dean: “Our role in the community is vital”

By Buddy Roberts



Nicholas Kin

Nicholas Kin enjoys serving as associate dean of Jefferson State Community College because he feels like he makes a difference every day.

“I love it,” the Ohio native said in his office at the two-year college’s Pell City campus.

Always interested in science and math, Kin holds an undergraduate degree in chemistry and biology from Bowling Green University and a Ph.D. in immunology from Ohio State University,

completing post-doctorate work at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, where he served as an assistant professor in the microbiology department before joining the faculty at Jefferson State.

“I started out in the biology faculty, then I was faculty chair, then division chair, and now associate dean,” he said. In that role, he functions as campus director, overseeing scheduling, staffing, enrollment, financial aid, student clubs and other operations.

“Our goal is to provide quality educational opportunities for our students, whether it’s to go to a four-year college or to increase their hourly wage,” he said. “Our role in the community is vital. We provide affordable, accessible education opportunities and strive to meet the workforce development needs of the community.”

As a two-year school, according to Kin, “we still fight the perception of a junior college, that the quality of education here is inferior, but all of our classes are guaranteed to transfer to any four-year college or university in the state. We are accredited by the same organization they are, and local students can stay here, benefit from our smaller class size and get their basic courses out of the way, for 25 percent of the cost of going right to

a four-year school. The value we offer for quality education is tremendous.”

There is much that he says he’s proud of at the Pell City campus, such as its dual enrollment programs with local high schools; its theater program partnership with the Center for Education and Performing Arts, which has helped start several local high school drama clubs; its registered nursing program, which has a 100 percent employment placement rate; its iron worker training program, which allows students to earn level I ironworking certification in one semester; its Blazing to Biomedical Careers program with UAB, which places students in medical research programs; and its new 8,000-square-foot nursing and Allied Health wing, which opened earlier this month.

“We haven’t gone without at this campus,” he said. Besides his duties at Jefferson State, Kin serves as a member of the National Institute of General Medical Sciences’ Training Workforce Development and Diversity Review Subcommittee, for which he participates in site visits of other colleges. “I get to see the best of the best and come back to Jeff State and see how we can implement those things here.”

“I feel like I make a difference every day,” Kin said. “As a first-generation college student myself, I have a passion for helping students who have a background similar to mine.”

McSweeney Automotive

McSweeney Automotive owner feels privileged to carry on family business

By Buddy Roberts



Michael McSweeney

When Michael McSweeney talks about carrying on the family business his father started in 1979, he frequently uses the word “privilege.”

“Not many people get to have the privilege to work alongside their dad and their brother and their wife all at the same time and toward the same goal,” the owner of McSweeney Automotive said. “My brother Matt and I consider it a privilege to build on the foundation our dad created.”

McSweeney Automotive in Talladega is a Cadillac, GMC, Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep and Ram dealership, formerly owned by Bill Stanford. It is a division of McSweeney Holdings, which also includes Trussville-based SCA Performance (which produces such specialty vehicles as off-road trucks, shuttle buses and handicapped-accessible vehicles for GM and Ford), McSweeney Designs (another specialty vehicle purveyor) and the nonprofit McSweeney Foundation.

“My father started it all back in 1979 as Southern Comfort Conversions, so we’ve been working with dealerships for over 40 years,” McSweeney said. “When looking to grow the business, we looked at investing in dealerships, and we felt like this one would give us a great opportunity to be part of the Talladega community and grow into the Pell City area.”

In January, McSweeney Automotive will relocate its Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep and Ram sales to a new location in Pell City near the intersection of I-20 and Highway 231. “The Cadillac and GMC will remain here in Talladega. When we announced we were going to split into two, there was some talk that we would be leaving Talladega entirely, but that’s not the case. We will still be here, and we’re going to be as much a part of the community as we have been.”

Community involvement is important to McSweeney, which is why the McSweeney Foundation is his favorite part of the company. The foundation works with city schools to supplement child nutrition needs on weekends and after school and provides donations to families at Christmas.

“We recently met with Talladega City Schools to see what their unmet needs are so we can get involved with helping out where we can,” he said. “You don’t see many successful businesses that don’t also do a good job of being part of the community, and it’s a privilege to get to do that. And what’s cool is that overall, we’ve got about 120 employees, and I’d say 70 percent of them donate a portion of their paycheck to the foundation because they want to support the community, too.”

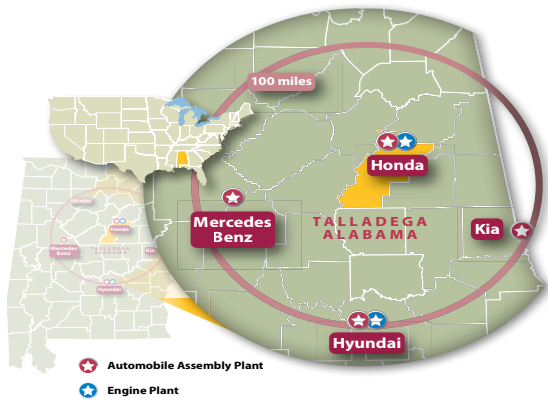
When asked to identify the most important lesson his father taught him, McSweeney said it’s an easy answer.

“Resilience. I think about it all the time. Resilience, how to be scrappy so you can survive tough times – that’s a lesson you can’t learn from textbooks or college. Dad taught us that, and that’s why our goal – my brother and I – is to one day pass this business off to our kids, too.”

*“You don’t see many successful businesses that don’t also do a good job of being part of the community,”
McSweeney said.*

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Metro Bank

Metro Bank president believes it's important to give back

By Gary Hanner



Jason Dorough

Jason Dorough has been with Metro Bank for a quarter century. He credits his hard work, dedication and training with helping prepare him for the position he holds today, the bank's president and CEO.

Dorough, 47, has lived in Pell City his entire life and is a 1988 graduate of Pell City High School. In 1992, he started with Metro Bank as a collector.

"Working at Metro Bank has been great for me," he said. "We have always had a great staff through the years, and have had great leadership that has taught me what I know today. Ray Cox and Don Perry were excellent presidents/CEOs."

When discussing how he developed his leadership abilities, Dorough was quick to point out that his father, Joe Dorough, had a big influence on him, as did Cox and Perry.

Metro Bank opened in Pell City on May 30, 1989, in a temporary modular unit with 10 employees. Today, it has branches in Ragland, Ashville, Moody, Lincoln, Heflin and Southside and two remote sites in Pell City. Currently, there are around 162 total employees at the branches and sites.

The bank's mission, he said, is to grow shareholder value through holding the highest standard of customer service by consistently exceeding expectations, building relationships and maintaining a strong and active presence in local communities.

Dorough said it is important for Metro Bank to be in Pell City and surrounding areas.

"We are a community bank, and we are here to serve our communities," he said. "We sponsor a lot of things, and it's important for us to give back to the communities that have been good to us. We've had a lot of success over the years, and it is because of our customers."

Dorough and his wife, Cara, have been married 11 years. They have two children, Bryant and Grace. He grew up in the Methodist Church in Pell City and today, he and his family are members at Church of the Highlands in Birmingham.

"We are a community bank, and we are here to serve our communities," Dorough said.

Piggly Wiggly

Baker Foods vice president is a proponent of building good relationships

By Buddy Roberts



Richard Baker

There was a time when Richard Baker thought he wanted to leave the family business.

But he couldn't.

"It gets in your blood," he said at his desk in Baker Foods Inc.'s corporate office in Pell City, recalling how he helped his father on weekends after Ronnie Baker bought his first Piggly Wiggly grocery store in Talladega in 1983. "When I was

16, I started bagging groceries and stocking, and I did that all the way through high school."

Then he left to attend college, "thinking I would get out of the grocery business. I stayed a year in engineering at Auburn before I realized business was in my blood and what I had a passion for. So I changed my major to business management."

Today, Baker serves as vice president of Baker Foods, which operates nine Piggly Wiggly stores, including two in Talladega, one in Lincoln and one in Childersburg.

"It's a real family-operated business," he said. "From 1990 until 2014, our corporate headquarters was in my father's basement. That was supposed to be temporary, but it was there for 24 years. Having the business in the family means everything. It's what I've always done and have known to do, and I want to see it carry on for future generations."

Baker believes the company's family mindset extends into the community.

"All of our stores are in small towns, so it's very important for us to be a strong member of those communities. We're one big family, and family is

supposed to look after family. People are going to shop where they feel comfortable, and we try to make people comfortable. We work hard to treat people the way we would like to be treated, because without our customers, we'd have no business."

He said he and his father are proud to be working in the tradition of small business owners who came before them.

"Small businesses are what this country was founded on. Neighbor helping neighbor and developing relationships. Through everything we have been through, with everything we have now and all the technology, it still comes back to relationships."

"People are going to shop where they feel comfortable, and we try to make people comfortable," Baker said.

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St. Clair County EDC

EDC director attributes local growth to participation and cooperation

By Buddy Roberts



Don Smith

It's been a decade since Don Smith arrived in St. Clair County as the new executive director of its Economic Development Council (EDC), but the welcome he and his family received is still fresh in his mind.

"I still remember going to Bowling's BBQ the first couple of weeks we were here," he said. "We had two small children, and (Probate Judge Mike) Bowling's wife told us if we ever needed a babysitter to let her know. She didn't know us from Adam, but it made us feel so welcome. That's why it's easy for me to talk about how welcoming

the county is. I still see it every day."

When friendly passing drivers wave at him while motoring along St. Clair backroads or he hears the stories of others who have relocated to the county because of it, Smith sees that welcoming attitude as key to economic growth.

"Because so many people are moving here, it's getting harder to find somebody who was born here," the Mobile native said. "We're all new here in one way or another. We're a county full of people who came here for all the right reasons, for better opportunities for their families. St. Clair County welcomes others by exploring new ideas and appreciating what we all have in common."

That's why, according to Smith, the more than 100 projects on which the EDC has worked since it was formed in 1999 have impacted the county by more than \$1 billion. "That does not include the more organic growth that has taken place. But EDC projects alone have resulted in 7,200 new jobs and \$200 million in new wages."

Smith is the EDC's third executive director, succeeding Ed Gardner Sr. and Ed Gardner Jr. "I started my career with the city of Auburn in 2003 as assistant director of economic development, and I learned a lot from a very aggressive economic development program there."

St. Clair's has been no less aggressive, and Smith attributes much of the EDC's success to a spirit of cooperation.

"When it was formed, the EDC was all of the cities and the County Commission deciding

to work together on one goal: economic development, which is the creation of jobs, wealth and quality of life for our citizens. It was all about participation, cooperation and the ability to do more than its individual parts. Our elected officials and business leaders have supported the idea of accomplishing great things by cooperating."

The spirit of cooperation extends to other counties, according to Smith. "Since I've been here, we've worked with Talladega, Etowah, Blount, Jefferson, Calhoun and Cleburne counties on various projects. When something happens that's good for Talladega or Calhoun counties, for example, it's good for us, too. When something happens that's good for us, it's also good for everybody else."

The area currently benefits from "cooperation between our K-12 schools, Jefferson State Community College's Pell City campus and our employers. There's been no time like right now when these three entities – which have historically been isolated – are working together for career possibilities for the citizens of St. Clair County.

"Our county has a growth rate of 30 percent per decade, going back to the 1960s. Our elected officials have been fiscally responsible and as proactive as possible in managing such tremendous growth. Every time I think we're at a peak, we continue to move forward and get even better."

"I'm a pretty optimistic person," Smith said. "I see clouds on the horizon sometimes, but I try to guide the ship where the sun's still shining and let the storms blow by."

St. Vincent St. Clair

SVSC administrator sees continued improvement in local medical services

By David Atchison



Lisa Nichols

Lisa Nichols says she loves being part of the team at St. Vincent's St Clair Hospital.

"I am very proud of what our associates do for the community," she said.

Nichols has served as administrator for St. Vincent's St. Clair for almost two years, since December of 2015. Since then, she has gotten to know the people of the community served by the medical center.

"I love Pell City," she said. "Everybody has been friendly and welcoming. I think it's a great place

to spend time, and it's growing here. Pell City has a lot to offer, and we're thrilled to be here and to provide care to our community."

Nichols, a registered nurse, has a wide range of experience in the medical profession. A native of Good Hope, she came to St. Vincent's St. Clair from St. Vincent's Blount in Oneonta, where she served as vice president of patient care and the chief nursing officer.

Nichols said she believes she got her work ethic from her parents, who are both in the medical field and who went back to school as adults to earn their degrees.

Her mother is a retired nurse, who worked in the psychiatric field. Her father is a biomedical technician.

As for Nichols, she received her associate of science degree in nursing from Gadsden State Community College, and her bachelor of science degree in health services and master's degree in health service administration from the University of St. Francis in Illinois.

In 2016, she was recognized as Alumni of the Year by the University of St. Francis' College of Business and Health Administration.

During her nursing career, Nichols worked in the Carraway Methodist Hospital Cardiac Intensive Care Unit for six years before accepting a job at St. Vincent's East in 2001, where she took on a management role in the hospital's cardiac care treatment unit.

In 2007, Nichols was named the chief nurse

at St. Vincent's Blount and served as the chief nursing officer at HealthSouth Lakeshore Rehabilitation Hospital in Birmingham before returning to St. Vincent's Health System in 2013.

Nichols served as the administrative director of surgical services for the St. Vincent's Ambulatory Healthcare Network prior to accepting her new role at St. Vincent's St. Clair.

Since Nichols has taken the reins at St. Vincent's St. Clair, services have been added and improved, with patient satisfaction ratings improving.

"We have had an 18 percent improvement in our patient satisfaction in the ED (emergency department)," she said.

St. Vincent's St. Clair also has inpatient satisfaction marks 14 percent above the national average and 15 percent above the state average, according to Nichols.

The hospital has also seen increased satisfaction in outpatient care. "We've seen a lot of improvement in scores there, too," Nichols said.

Nichols was recently appointed to the Central Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment, serving as a representative for St. Clair County in the regional workforce development effort, which also includes participation from Jefferson, Blount, Walker, Shelby and Chilton counties. The organization strives to improve workforce development within the six-county region.

"Pell City has a lot to offer, and we're thrilled to be here and to provide care to our community," Nichols said.



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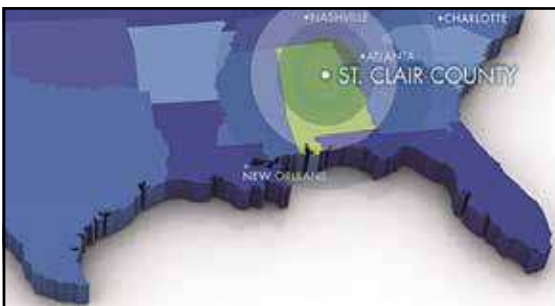
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Sylacauga Marble Company

Swindal family plans to take local product to new heights

By Denise Sinclair



Jake Swindal

Sylacauga white marble has a worldwide reputation, and Jake Swindal wants to keep it that way.

Through its ownership of Sylacauga Marble Quarry, Swindal's family is working to make Alabama white marble an international brand in construction and commercial projects.

Jake Swindal serves as executive vice president of operations and sales, and his father, brother and sister operate the quarry along with Masonry Arts

and AM3 processing facility in Bessemer.

Swindal said Alabama white marble is known in the stone business worldwide, but there has been very little demand for its use in large scale building projects. There hasn't been enough supply. His family is working to change that.

According to an article in Stone World magazine, the Swindal family hopes within five to 10 years, Sylacauga Marble Quarry would become internationally renowned for its quality, efficiency and beauty exemplified by Alabama white marble.

Alabama white marble has a heritage as a great construction material that was used in the interiors of the U.S. Supreme Court, the ceiling of the Lincoln Memorial and many other notable structures. The marble can also be found in hotels in New York and other cosmopolitan locations.

Swindal said that is the image the quarry wants back for its white marble.

The family purchased a 55-acre tract in Sylacauga, which, according to Swindal, has a reserve of 150 to 175 years of white marble.

Other published reports about marble in the Sylacauga area indicate the bed of stone runs about 32 miles long, a mile and a half wide and more than 600 feet deep.

Alabama white marble's history dates back to the 1800s. A physician named Dr. Edward Gantt discovered it while traveling through present-day Sylacauga with Gen. Andrew Jackson during the

war of 1812. Twenty years later, Gantt began to commercialize and mine the material, and in 1838 the first slabs were sold from the marble belt.

Famed sculptor Giuseppe Moretti once said, "...the white marble of Talladega County is the finest marble in the world, and it is here in unlimited quantity."

Swindal said there are only three architectural quarries in the U.S. – Sylacauga Marble Quarry and quarries in Vermont and Colorado.

The quarry today has only a skeleton crew work. He expects to increase the number of employees at the quarry in the future.

Swindal says he grew up in the construction business, learning about masonry arts and stone like white marble.

Today, he has developed a passion for the stone industry. "God made the marble, and it is beautiful. It runs in my blood now," he said.

He said marble can bring beauty, form and function to architectural concepts.

Swindal is a proponent of the annual Sylacauga Marble Festival, which he describes as great for the city and good for the industry.

"We donated more than 50 blocks of marble for the sculptors this past April. We love to support this festival. The sculptors attending love our stone. There have been some amazing pieces of art sculpted from our marble," Swindal said.

"God made the marble, and it is beautiful," Swindal said. "It runs in my blood now."

Talladega College

Celebrating Talladega College's 150 years of academic excellence

By Adrinece Beard



Dr. Billy Hawkins

This year marks the 150th anniversary of Talladega College, the country's oldest private historically black college and one of the top 20 liberal arts colleges in the nation.

Its current president, Dr. Billy Hawkins, says that the institution has been known for academic excellence throughout its storied history.

"We attract some of the best students around

the country. The students come here because our faculty and staff are focused on giving the best education possible," he said.

Prior to taking the helm at Talladega College, Hawkins worked as an educator for Lansing Michigan Public Schools Systems. With more than 35 years' experience in education, he holds a bachelor's degree in teacher education from Ferris State University, a master's degree in education administration from Central Michigan University and a Ph.D. from Michigan State University.

Chartered Talladega College in 1867, the historically black college was founded by William Savery and Thomas Warrant, two former slaves from Talladega, who convened with freedmen in Mobile. Supported by Wager Swaine, the general of the Freedmen's Bureau, Savery and Warrant developed the one-room schoolhouse – from salvaged materials of an abandoned carpentry shop – for the children of former slaves.

Today, the campus features 41 buildings, including Swaine Hall, a national historic site or the first building, eight residence halls. The four-year, co-educational college offers several academic programs within such divisions as business and administration, humanities and fine

arts, natural sciences and mathematics, and social sciences and education.

Talladega College is also known as the first institution in Alabama to accept students regardless of race or ethnicity, and it is home of the Amistad Murals by artist Hale Aspacio Woodruff.

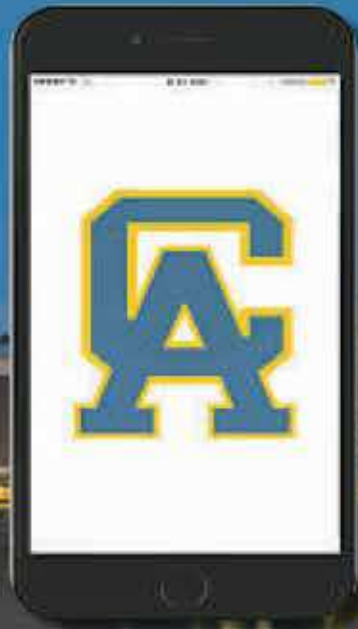
In addition, the college's Marching Tornadoes band performed in the presidential inaugural parade earlier this year. The five-year-old band of around 800 members raised more than \$620,000 through an online GoFundMe account, exceeding its goal of \$75,000, to participate in the Washington, D.C. event. The additional proceeds provided the band with uniforms, instruments and scholarships.

Since then, student enrollment increased by more than 22 percent for the 2017-18 academic year.

"Recruiting students is dynamic process," said Hawkins. "Our fall enrollment numbers are evidence our recruiting initiatives were effective and that the community, students and parents value Talladega College as a resource for viable career-building opportunities and educational excellence."

"We attract some of the best students around the country," Hawkins said.

"The students come here because our faculty and staff are focused on giving the best education possible."



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Talladega EDA

EDA director explains steps involved in economic development

By Chris Norwood



Calvin Miller

The Talladega County Economic Development Authority typically doesn't get a great deal of ink, and while the work of executive director Calvin Miller largely happens outside the public eye, it is absolutely essential to the economic growth and viability of the area.

In its 30 years of existence, it has been a major player in bringing thousands of jobs into the area. The recent announcement that Georgia-Pacific would be reopening its Talladega plant this past summer is the result of work and negotiation by Miller and by Talladega City Manager Patrick

Bryant. Miller was also instrumental in convincing Honda Manufacturing of Alabama to locate in Talladega County, creating a major economic engine for the area.

Miller describes the EDA as a nonprofit business organization that was established in 1989. He has served as executive director for all but the first year of the authority's existence.

Miller answers to a 12-member, self-perpetuating board whose members choose their own replacements after their terms end. Cleve Jacobs, Grant Lynch and Wayne King are the current chairman, vice chairman and treasurer, respectively.

In addition to funding from Talladega County and all of its municipalities, the authority also receives money from private companies such as Alabama Power, Coosa Valley Electrical Cooperative and the Talladega Super Speedway. All of these entities have an interest in economic growth in the area, and see their donations to EDA as business expenses, Miller explained.

The authority is charged with both developing possible industrial sites within the county and then marketing those sites to companies looking for new locations.

The first step involves not only cultivating industrial parks, such as the ones in Talladega's Police Jurisdiction on Alabama 77 North and in Childersburg, but also the creation of speculative buildings. One of the two speculative buildings in the Talladega Park is currently home to Cassai,

formerly M-Tek, which employs 552 people; another 375 work in the speculative building occupied by Fleetwood Metals in Sylacauga, with a major expansion on the way.

Marketing begins with a "web site with all our properties listed on it," Miller said. "But more likely, someone would go to the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama" first. "That's another organization that is privately funded by a lot of the same groups that fund us. But they are a larger entity that collects data from the entire state, from the state Department of Commerce. We're responsible for getting companies to locate here, so we want to keep familiar with whatever's going on around the state."

Most industries are looking for similar qualities in a new location, he said. Most important is a skilled pool of potential employees, followed by a flat building site close to an interstate with water, sewer, natural gas, electricity and fiber optics all readily available. Proximity to railroads is another big plus for many industries, although not for all.

In addition to advertising what is already here, Miller said EDA can also work closely with the power companies and local banks for no interest loans for up to five years, as well as the state's tax abatement program.

By law, education taxes cannot be abated, and even as the company is paying less property and sales tax, the company's employees are not exempt.

"We're responsible for getting companies to locate here, so we want to keep familiar with whatever's going on around the state," Miller said.

Town & Country Ford

Town & Country Ford owners plan rapid growth for Pell City dealership

By Gary Hanner



Bill Sain & Steve Watts

Bill Sain and Steve Watts started Town & Country Ford in Bessemer in 1998. For the past eight years, they have had a dealership in Pell City, which is expanding into a new building this month.

Sain, 72, was born in Memphis, Tennessee, and started in the auto sales business there in 1969.

“I sold Jerry Lee Lewis a vehicle while I was there,” he said.

Watts, 58, is a native of Montgomery and has lived in many different areas.

“Bill and I got together when we opened Vestavia Auto Sales about six years before we opened Town & Country,” he said. “When you start working for General Motors, GMAC and the background that I had, you learn a lot along the way. Bill had the retail piece that I did not have, and it’s made for a good partnership.”

Sain said when he and Watts started in Bessemer in 1998, they had 58 employees. Today, they have 158 employees working at the Bessemer location and 48 employees at the Pell City dealership.

“We’re not sure what the growth will be here in Pell City,” Sain said. “But we are planning on in about two to three years being at the same capacity as Bessemer. We want to grow this location faster than we did in Bessemer.”

By having a dealership in Pell City, it gives the partners locations on both sides of Birmingham.

“This is just a great opportunity here in Pell City,” Sain said. “I have two sons in the business, and Steve has one. All three are employed by Town & Country. One of them may come to this location in Pell City, we just don’t know. I know I will probably spend more time over here.”

When asked what the overall goal is, Sain said it is to compete with other dealerships and even compete with the Town & Country in Bessemer in the areas of sales and service.

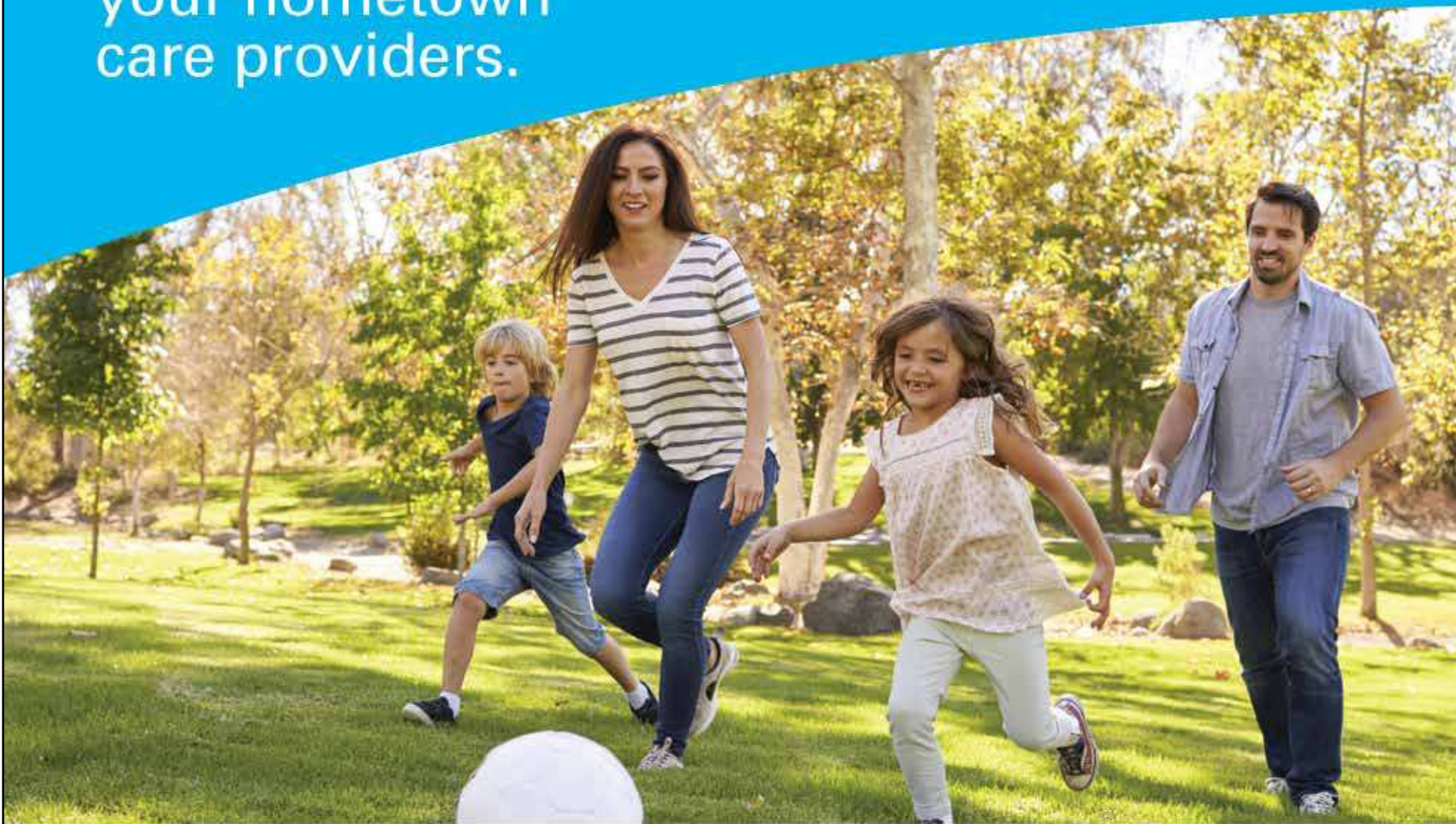
“We work for Ford Motor Company,” Sain said. “They’ve assigned us a market share we should meet, and it is to grow this market. We look forward to that and look forward to competing with surrounding dealers as far away as Anniston and Gadsden.”

When explaining how he developed his business leadership abilities, Sain said it all started in the pits.

“I learned a lot there, and then got into management,” he said. “I then became a used car manager, and then new car manager. It’s just so important to work in every department.”

“This is just a great opportunity here in Pell City,” Sain said.

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The Daily Home

Thank you for taking time
to read this special Power 20 publication.

In these days when positive focus too often finds itself in conflict with cynicism and negativity, Robert Jackson and Anthony Cook – The Daily Home’s publisher and editor – felt it was important to allow some of the area’s top leaders in business, industry, education and health care to remind us that good things are indeed still present and on the horizon.

The Daily Home staff thanks each of the individuals who graciously made time for us to interview them for these Power 20 profiles, and we thank the many advertisers whose support has made it possible for us to bring this inaugural special publication to you.

We’re already looking forward to bringing you more local stories of inspiration and excellence in next year’s Power 20 edition.

-Buddy Roberts, Special Projects Editor

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