By: Denise Curtis

You may notice something a little different about the Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce. We have a new look and a new focus on a specific set of core values that we hope will help all our members succeed.

Our team has been working with public relations agency, JJPR for nearly a year to listen to feedback from members and the community about what the Chamber represents and where it should be focusing its energy.

“Research played a major role in deciding the direction of the new brand. Our team conducted both primary and secondary research including interviewing key stakeholders from the Eastern Shore Community and analyzing more than 40 Chamber brands across the country,” said JJPR President Jennifer Jenkins.

Our new logo is the most visible change. After a lot of research, the wave and sun symbol were selected. “In our discussions with Chamber leadership and staff, the final brand was chosen because the Mobile Bay sunset is iconic of the area and represented all three cities for which the Eastern Shore Chamber provides a unifying voice for the business community,” said Jenkins. The wave is also symbolic of the chamber moving the business community forward.

A lot of thought also went into selecting the new color palette. Coastal colors were chosen to reflect the water and sun. The shades of blue and orange also stand for trust, intelligence, stability,
increased productivity, confidence, enthusiasm, excitement, wisdom and warmth.

“We felt we needed a fresh look. The Chamber had had essentially the same look for the last 20 years. But also, beyond the logo, we felt it was time to pin down our core values and refocus our role in support of business and community,” said Chamber Executive Director Heiko Einfeld.

That’s why the lead statement, “Promoting business while connecting communities,” will also be front and center, illustrating the two biggest elements of the chamber. It shows that the two elements aren’t mutually exclusive and reiterates the Chamber’s role unifying the Eastern Shore.

“We’ve gone through a real metamorphosis of change lately with the chamber and some of the things we’re seeing are a much more intense focus on things that directly benefit our members and we call those member values,” said Mecke.

The second core value is to build community relationships. It’s the Chamber’s goal to inform, educate and provide access to local leaders to ensure a business friendly environment.

“The Chamber works on any hot button business issues to bring them to the forefront of our elected officials and let them know what our membership is thinking about certain issues,” said Ed Hammele, Board Vice-Chairman of Governmental Affairs.

The Chamber also recognizes the growing role tourism plays in our local economy, filtering through our hotels, gas stations, restaurants and shops.

“The role of the Chamber is to help encourage and communicate with the outside world who we are, where we are and what we have to offer; it’s just a great place to be,” said Chuck Cuff, Board Vice-Chairman of Tourism.

The last of the core values is to advocate for workforce development. The Chamber is bridging relationships between businesses, training entities and the workforce.

“As a small business owner myself, I recognize...
that I’m only as good as the talent that I bring into my business. I can work 80 hours a week, but it doesn’t do me any good if I don’t have a great, strong, healthy culture within my business,” said Steve Carey, Board Vice-Chairman of Workforce Development.

Moving forward, the Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce hopes these new core values and initiatives will give our members amazing service and value. It’s more than a new look. It’s a new energy and focus on our members’ success.

“Our members and communities are what make us unique. They are the rock stars,” said Einfeld.

The new look and focus are both designed to make the Eastern Shore the best place to live, work, and cultivate business.

To hear more about the chamber’s new core values, click the image above to hear Heiko Einfeld’s podcast with Blue Fish Design Studio’s Marcus Neto on MobileAL.com.

Upcoming Events

- **Business After Hours & Arts & Crafts Festival Art Unveiling**
  Thursday, February 18
  5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
  Manci’s Antique Club
  1715 Main Street, Daphne
  The poster artist will be there to sign posters.

- **Morning Marketing Meeting**
  Thursday, February 18
  8:00 a.m.
  Dickey’s Barbeque Pit
  Jubilee Square
  6882 Hwy. 90, Ste. G2, Daphne
  Sponsor: Covenant Hospice

- **Eggs N’ Issues**
  Wednesday, February 24
  8:00 a.m.
  Daphne United Methodist Church
  Speaker: Kevin Corcoran, Chairman, Baldwin Co. Education Coalition Community Advisory Task Force

- **Young Professionals Social**
  Thursday, February 25
  5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
  The Bone and Barrel
  311 Fairhope Avenue, Fairhope

Governmental Affairs Survey

The results are back from a survey sent to Chamber members regarding several key issues facing our local leaders. Building community relationships is one of the chambers four core values and it’s our goal to make sure our businesses have a seat at the table when elected officials make those big decisions. In order to better serve the business community, The Governmental Affairs Committee recently sent out a survey asking pertinent questions that are affecting our community. [Click here](#) to read those results.
Eggs N’ Issues
January’s Eggs N’ Issues was all about our roadways. Alabama Department of Transportation Director, John Cooper spoke with chamber members over breakfast. He gave some of the rationale behind why some projects get funded and others get pushed to the back of the line. He did say that he expects to see a bridge built over Mobile Bay in his lifetime. The cost for the engineering and design of the bridge has been estimated at 70 million dollars. It was awarded to Mobile based Thompson Engineering back in July.

The next Eggs N’ Issues will be Wednesday, February 24 at 8 a.m. The guest speaker will be Kevin Corcoran, Chairman of the Community Advisory Task Force formed to address community concerns following the failed Baldwin County Schools property tax referendum vote.

Business After Hours
We had a great turnout for January’s Business After Hours. Eastern Shore Wound Care sponsored the event. This month’s Business After Hours will be held February 18 at Manci’s Antique Club. We will be unveiling the artwork for this year’s Arts and Crafts Festival posters. The artist will also be there to personally sign posters for those in attendance. Posters can be purchased for $15.

Morning Marketing Meeting
We had a packed house at Dickey’s Barbeque for our latest morning marketing meeting sponsored by The Blake at Malbis. This free monthly opportunity allows our members to highlight their business in a relaxed, roundtable setting. The next Morning Marketing Meeting is scheduled for February 18 and is sponsored by Covenant Hospice.

Young Professionals Raise Money for ACS
The Young Professionals got the chance to attend the American Cancer Society’s Black Out Cancer Ball Preview Party, and raised money for the organization. They donated $310 from selling raffle tickets to the Black Out Cancer Ball, which is the American Cancer Society’s biggest fundraiser in the area. Honorees for the ball were introduced at the preview party held at Windmill Market. The event also provided a great opportunity for our young professionals to network and build relationships.
Best Burger on the Eastern Shore Grand Champion

By: Heiko Einfeld

And the winners is...

**Best Burger on the Eastern Shore: Old 27 Grill**
The Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce’s Grand Champion for Best Burger goes to the “Soon to be Famous Holy Cow Burger” at Old 27 Grill. The fresh, hand-pattied, 8 oz. certified Angus burger is cooked to perfection and served with caramelized red onions and grilled tomato. It’s held together with Swiss cheese on a fresh toasted roll. It is smothered in a pepper-corn cream sauce that will make you say, “Holy Cow, someone just figured out how to put the cream back in the cow!”

**Most Exotic Burger: Manci’s Grill**
The “Quatro Formaggi” is a special tasting experience blending an amazing array of flavors. It starts with a 7oz. Angus Beef patty splashed with Worchester and seasoned to order. It’s topped with four cheeses (Swiss, Pepper Jack, Feta, and Cheddar) along with crispy French fried onions, balsamic aioli and Arcadian lettuce.

**Best Kick Butt Burger: Boudreaux’s Cajun Grill**
While Boudreaux’s has a wide array of burgers to choose from, mine had the honored title of being called the “Coonass Burger.” It has an amazing tasting kick to it. It starts with a juicy, ½ lb. ribeye-chuck patty, chopped and pressed, specially seasoned and cooked over their custom-designed Woodfire grill. It was dressed with shredded lettuce, red onion and tomato; expertly displayed atop a croissant bun. Added on top of the burger are fried tomatoes, hot capicola sprinkled with crushed red pepper and creole, and mozzarella cheeses.

**Best Blended Burger: Beef O’Brady’s**
The “Amarillo Firecracker Burger” has an outstanding blend of ingredients that produce the perfect blend of heat and taste. It starts with a 6 oz. patty, seasoned with a blend of kosher salt and black pepper, cooked to your liking, and served on a toasted brioche bun. Blended on top of that was smoked bacon, fried jalapenos, pepper jack cheese and sweet jalapeno mayo.

**Our Favorite Picks Along the Eastern Shore:**

**Best Backyard Burger: Fairhope Grill and Bar**
It just reminds you of what you’re going to find on the grill in your own back yard. It optimizes Mom or Dad’s traditional grilled burger topped with lettuce, tomato, onion, and pickles. You can’t beat a classic.

**Best Cheeseburger: Big Daddy’s Grill**
We completely understand why this is an award winning burger. It is the epitome of a great tasting burger that exudes excellence. It starts with two 5 oz. 80/20 ground beef patties, sprinkled with Canadian steak seasoning and cooked to perfection. Add on top of that Swiss and Cheddar cheeses, bacon, lettuce, sautéed onions and pickles. It becomes a glorious eating event.
Top of the Heap Burger: Old Bay Steamer
The grilled veggies on top of the “Church Street Burger” made it simple to crown it the top of the Heap. A 10 oz. certified Angus Beef patty, applewood-smoked bacon, cheddar cheese, grilled onions and bell peppers, jalapeno peppers, and mushrooms made it a great eating experience.

Best Kitchen Sink Burger: McSharry’s Irish Pub
Any burger that adds a fried egg to their toppings deserves to be crowned the best Kitchen Sink Burger. The “Super Blarney Burger” is delectable through and through. This delicious tower of a Burger features a ½ lb. hand-pattied, grilled, certified Angus burger topped with bacon, Swiss cheese, lettuce, tomato, pickles, jalapenos, sautéed mushrooms, and a fried egg in a burger bun.

Best Gourmet Burger: Sunset Pointe Grill
Not only is the Sunset Pointe Burger a superior delectable eating experience, it includes an exquisitely designed presentation. It includes two 4 oz. chuck patties, topped with Conecuh bacon intertwined with melted pimento cheese, while including locally grown bib lettuce, caramelized red onion, and tomato on a brioche bun.

The Real Man’s Burger: Rosie’s Grill
Their burger has a knife stuck in it because it’s so huge. The burger is a 100% certified Angus beef patty on a Kaiser roll with, and I mean this literally, anything on top. Rosie’s prides itself on building your own burger and the items include 4 different type cheeses, bacon, Portobello mushrooms, caramelized onions, jalapenos, avocado slices and pineapple. Awesome.

Blitz Campaign
“Team 1st Place” wins the Blitz Campaign. The Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce held the Chamber Blitz Award and Appreciation Reception at The Bone and Barrel on February 3. During the Blitz, Chamber volunteers helped recruit new members and sponsorship commitments.

During the first month, a football-style draft was conducted where participants chose potential new members and sponsors from a list provided at each meeting.

The Eastern Shore Chamber received more than $60,000 in commitments throughout the campaign. The winning team had fittingly named themselves “Team 1st Place.” Team members included Shirley Bonds, Nancy Grace, Ed Hammele, Scott Polk and Paul Stanley. The individual winner of the Chamber Blitz was Shirley Bonds. A special thank you to all of our volunteers who devoted their time and efforts.
Meaher State Park Opens New Fishing Cabins

By: Denise Curtis

Meaher State Park is now offering a new way for guests to enjoy the great outdoors. They now have two cozy, lakeside cabins available to rent. Guests can enjoy a morning cup of coffee from the front porch overlooking Ducker Bay, then put their boat in the water and enjoy a day of fishing.

The cabins are approximately 312 square feet and include a queen size bed, bathroom with shower, small kitchen, and living room with linens and kitchen utensils provided.

“They are not that large, but they are very nice on the inside and have most of the amenities needed. The view from the balcony is incredible and so much to enjoy right outside of the park as well. Having cabins brings in a whole new clientele to the park and allows those without a camper to experience nature as well,” said Park Superintendent Lisa Laraway.

The idea came from retired park manager, Mark Pillion. “He did all the research and the labor to put them together top to bottom. They were originally storage buildings and were put on pilings and then the entire inside fabricated to make it into a cabin,” said Laraway.

Laraway says the response has been very positive so far and they are booking very well, but there are no plans to add more cabins at the moment due to financial constraints with state parks.

The cabins rent for $99 a night on weekdays and $110 a night Friday and Saturday. There is a two night minimum on weekends and holiday rates apply.

For more information about the new Meaher State Park cabins and how to reserve your stay visit http://www.alapark.com/meaher-state-park
January New Members

Woman in the Moon
Furniture store, Woman in the Moon has opened its doors in Fairhope. This shop is breaking the rules of home décor and choosing pieces that embody culture. Owner, Kim Dumas says the store was named after the Barbra Streisand song. Pictured with owners Kim and Mike Dumas are Mayor Tim Kant, chamber staff and ambassadors. Woman in the Moon is located at 325 South Greeno Road in Fairhope.

You can also check them out on facebook at https://www.facebook.com/womaninthemoonfurnishings.

Eastern Shore Baby Café
New mothers now have an opportunity to find support through the Eastern Shore Baby Café. This breastfeeding support group is sponsored by Thomas Hospital. They meet each Friday from noon until 1:30 p.m. at Fairhope Dental Associates, 108 Professional Park Drive, Fairhope. There was quite a crowd of new mothers and fathers there for the ribbon cutting.

For more information about Eastern Shore Baby Café, visit their facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/easternshorebabycafe.

Covert Comics
Covert Comics has opened in a new location just south of Coffee Loft on N. Section Street in Fairhope. Covert Comics is open Monday - Saturday, 11:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. and Sunday from 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Keuler Gates and Lonnie Townsend are pictured here with Chamber staff and ambassadors.

Stop by their store at 409 N. Section Street Ste. E, Fairhope or find them on facebook at https://www.facebook.com/covertcomicsandcollectibles.

Do you know a business interested in the benefits the Chamber provides? Call 251-621-8222 or email Frank Shepard at fshepard@eschamber.com. Click here for a full membership directory.
Pro 1 Painters

Pro 1 Painters cut the ribbon at their location on Highway 31 in Spanish Fort, January 19. If you’re looking for the next level in professional painting in Alabama, then Pro 1 Painters is your go to solution. As a family owned and operated painting company, they understand the meaning of commitment, and bring the next level of customer service that you should always expect when dealing with any business. Their professional painter service is second to none and they stand by their commitment to make sure customers are happy with every job.

Go visit them at 11390 US Highway 31, Ste. 1, Spanish Fort or visit them online at www.pro1painters.com.

Strickland Orthodontics

Strickland Orthodontics is pleased to announce the addition of the Spanish Fort office which will offer the same personalized services as their Fairhope, Bay Minette and Foley locations.

Dr. Stephen Strickland has joined private practice with Dr. H. Len Strickland at Strickland Orthodontics and has achieved board certification through The American Board of Orthodontics (ABO).

The new location is across from the Eastern Shore Centre at 9816 Millwood Circle, Daphne.

Visit them online at www.stricklandorthodontics.com.

Specialized Therapy Services

Specialized Therapy Services is now open at 911-A Plantation Blvd. in Fairhope. STS is a specialty therapy clinic consisting of both occupational and physical therapy focused on very specific patient populations.

Their therapists have received extensive training and education to target lymphedema management, pelvic motor dysfunction, and vestibular dysfunction. Catherine Brock and Jill Lott have co-founded Specialized Therapy Services.

Visit them online at www.sts-alabama.com.

Our members have a lot of exciting news to share. Please visit our news releases page of the Chamber website to read more.