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2024 EDITION ISSUE 2 MAR/APR



Featuring

HOLLIS INTERIORS Est. 1952

THE NEWSLETTER

PROVIDING INFORMATION, SERVICES, LEADERSHIP AND VISION

200 North Alston Street, Foley, Alabama 36535 | 251.943.3291 | www.southbaldwinchamber.com

Nestled in the heart of downtown Foley, Alabama, **Hollis Interiors** stands as a beacon of refined taste and timeless elegance. Stepping into this showroom, you're immediately enveloped by an atmosphere of sophistication and warmth, where every corner tells a story of craftsmanship and passion for interior design.

Hollis Interiors, formerly Hollis Furniture, is a family-owned business established in 1952 by John Hollis and his son, Wayne. Tootsie Hollis Allen and Kelly Hollis took over their family business in 2003 and introduced interior design as their specialty. They grew up inside the store and were taught by their father to always prioritize the customers and put in extra effort to ensure a perfect job completion.

At the core of Hollis Interiors' philosophy lies a commitment to quality and authenticity. By partnering with renowned brands known for their craftsmanship and attention to detail, such as Bradington-Young, Coaster Fine Furniture, Gabby, Hooker, Norwalk, Pulaski, and Uttermost, they ensure that each piece curated for their clients is not only aesthetically pleasing but also built to last.

What sets Hollis Interiors apart is their personalized approach to design. From the initial consultation to the final reveal, the team at Hollis Interiors works closely with each client to understand their vision, preferences, and lifestyle. Whether it's a cozy living room retreat, a sophisticated dining area, a tranquil bedroom oasis, or a home or corporate office, they tailor every design to suit the unique needs and tastes of their clientele.



Hollis Interiors specializes in premium designer services tailored for residences, vacation retreats, and commercial spaces. Their comprehensive offerings encompass expert design consultation coupled with exclusive access to a curated selection of furniture, spanning contemporary to antique pieces, luxurious decorator fabrics, and exquisite home accessories.

Beyond their exquisite selection of furnishings and accessories, **Hollis Interiors** offers a range of design services, including space planning, color consultation, and custom upholstery. Their team of talented designers brings a wealth of experience and creativity to every project, ensuring that each space they touch reflects a harmonious blend of beauty and functionality. By infusing each project with a sense of warmth, character, and personal flair, they create spaces that not only dazzle the eye but also nourish the soul. It's this dedication to creating meaningful connections and enriching lives through design that has earned Hollis Interiors a loyal following and a reputation for excellence.

As you stroll through the streets of downtown Foley, take a moment to step into Hollis Interiors and experience the magic for yourself. Whether you're embarking on a new design project or simply seeking inspiration, you'll find a warm welcome and a world of possibilities waiting inside. After all, at Hollis Interiors, the journey to creating your dream space is as enchanting as the destination itself. ■



Crafting Timeless Elegance in Downtown Foley, Alabama
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FOLEY MAIN STREET: A BEACON OF REVIVAL IN ALABAMA'S HEARTLAND



SOUTH BALDWIN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

April 5, 2024 | From the South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce | FOLEY MAIN STREET



In the ever-evolving tapestry of American towns and cities, there exists a thread of resilience woven into the fabric of Foley, Alabama. Amidst the ebb and flow of economic tides, **Foley Main Street** emerges as a

harbinger of downtown rejuvenation, steering the course of this Alabama gem toward a prosperous horizon.

Established in 2018, Foley Main Street, Inc. found its roots within the esteemed Main Street Alabama program—a national initiative boasting four decades of triumphant collaborations with downtown districts. With a mission steeped in revitalization, this organization has become a cornerstone of Foley's urban landscape, breathing new life into its historic streets.

"There are many cities that participate in Main Street programs, but not all of them are designated," Darrellyn Dunmore, Executive Director of Foley Main Street said. "You have to meet very stringent criteria to be a designated city. We're also accredited at the national level which is an annual accreditation."

At the helm of this commendable endeavor lies a dedication to preserving Foley's rich heritage while fostering growth and innovation. One need only glance at the organization's website or peruse its Facebook page to witness the fervor with which Foley Main Street champions its cause.

But what, you may ask, has been the tangible impact of this initiative on the downtown Foley area? To answer this query, let's take a look into the economic resurgence witnessed firsthand by locals and visitors alike. Foley Main Street has served as a catalyst for economic growth, nurturing a fertile environment for businesses to thrive.

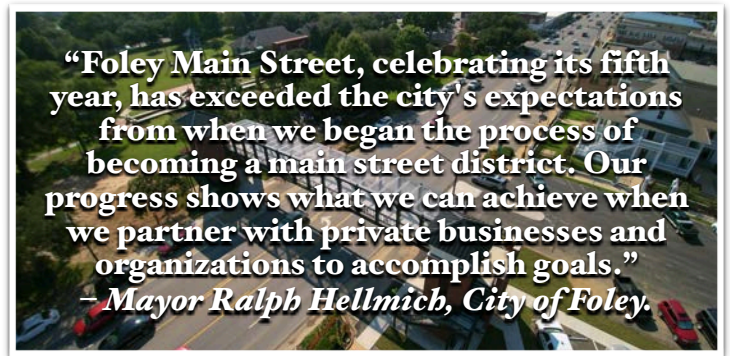
Within the downtown district, an array of enterprises continue to flourish under the nurturing wings of Foley Main Street. From the chic elegance of Hollis Interiors to the timeless charm of The Hotel Magnolia, each establishment adds its own unique hue to the vibrant tapestry of Foley's commercial landscape.

Venture further, and one encounters the eclectic appeal of Covert Comics, the cultural oasis of The Foley Art Center, the historical treasure trove of Holmes Medical Museum, and delightful tasty treats of Yabba's Wacky Snack Shack. From quaint cafes like Gypsy Queens Java to Manning Jewelry, an elegant jewelry shop with a selection of award-winning fine jewelry, Foley's downtown community boasts a diverse array of businesses catering to every taste and inclination.

A unique array of businesses—spanning across various industries—call downtown Foley their home. From retail and hospitality to healthcare and professional services, the district thrives with a tapestry of entrepreneurial endeavor, each thread contributing to the vibrant fabric of the community.

As partners in this progress, Foley Main Street and the South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce create a formidable alliance, leveraging their respective strengths to propel Foley towards a more promising future.

Membership in the South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce stands as a testament to the enduring value of community collaboration. Through shared resources, networking opportunities, and advocacy efforts, chamber members—both businesses and individuals—play an integral role in shaping Foley's economic landscape.



Foley Main Street, Inc. stands as a shining exemplar of grassroots revitalization—an ode to the indomitable spirit of small-town America. Through its unwavering commitment to preservation, innovation, and collaboration, this organization breathes life into the heart of Foley, Alabama, ensuring that its historic streets continue to thrive for generations to come. ■

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THE SOUTH BALDWIN CHAMBER'S BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

March

Benson's Appliance Center, family-owned and operated, has been serving the Baldwin County community since 1973. As one of the largest appliance stores in the area, Benson's Appliance Center carries a wide range of the latest appliances, along with a top tier selection of mattresses. With a reputation based on quality service, excellent prices, and a family atmosphere, Benson's specializes in service, sales, and repair of major brands of appliances. Their highly trained service professionals get the job done and stand behind their work and products. "As a family-owned business we made a commitment 50 years ago to have the most knowledgeable professionals assist you with your purchase. Our team is friendly and willing to take the time to discuss the details of what you need for your home. Whether you want to stop by to learn more – or plan to purchase a major appliance or mattress – we'll treat you like family. From our sales team and sleep engineers to the delivery and service teams, we have your back every step of the way."



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April

Coastal Investment Realty was born from a desire to empower individuals in making the most significant investments of their lives, be it acquiring their first home or advancing as a seasoned investor. We understand the challenges of navigating the market, which is why we provide comprehensive guidance on essential concepts like cash flow and property appreciation. Our tailored expertise caters to diverse client needs, emphasizing inclusivity and personalized service. Proudly serving Baldwin County, we're more than just a realty company; we're your committed partner in investment endeavors. To support informed decision-making, we're thrilled to offer **free home valuations throughout April**. This initiative aims to provide clients with valuable insights into their property's value, facilitating strategic planning and optimization. Whether you're a newcomer or an experienced investor, our team is here to offer the knowledge, support, and resources you need. Visit our office to discuss your aspirations and let Coastal Investment Realty guide you through the complexities of real estate, ensuring your investments surpass expectations. Join us in realizing your real estate dreams.



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A GATEWAY TO THE FUTURE: Workforce development group partners with Gulf Shores High to offer industry tours in Tri-City

March 22, 2024 | **GULF COAST MEDIA** by Kayla Green

The Gateway Initiative to bring Gateway to Great Careers program to Foley next school year

As a team works to secure Tighten Up, a three-story, sandy white, blue-bottomed yacht, within the massive wheels, steel and straps of a Marinelift, a group of 30 teenagers mills around in the chilly pre-spring wind whipping off the Intracoastal Waterway. Not the crew's regular observers.

In the 30 minutes prior, the teens, juniors and seniors at Gulf Shores High School, had toured Saunders Yachtworks, learning about everything from large-scale painting and engine repair to woodworking, about the level of detail in working on a 100-foot boat with a 70-foot clearance to the level of detail in the intricate honeycomb design of on-board cabinetry.

"We send mechanics all the way to South Africa, all over the world," said M. Boyd Siegel, their guide for the morning.

Siegel started at Saunders 10 years ago as a fiberglass tech. Now, he's director of operations. Noting that career growth is a puzzle piece to connect the importance of the day to the young onlookers.

The tour on March 19 was part of a program being piloted in Gulf Shores this school year. **Gateway to Great Careers** was born out of conversations between Jessica Sampley, director of academics and career tech for the city school district, and Tyler Morgan, director of career and business development for the Gateway Initiative.

"It's very hands-on," said Carson Schaff, marine science and engineering teacher at Gulf Shores. "The local jobs they're exposed to...I didn't even know everything there is right here at home." [...]

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STARTS IN THE PIPELINE ▶ The Gateway Initiative launched in 2018 with a vision to "move South Baldwin forward." The programming expanded in 2019 to over 1,700 businesses with a partnership between Gateway and leadership from the South Baldwin Chamber and Coastal Alabama Business Chamber. A goal is to leverage collaboration between businesses, educational organizations and local municipalities, with funding through private businesses and public entity investment, in the Tri-City - Foley, Orange Beach and Gulf Shores - to address "workforce development, community betterment, entrepreneurship, advocacy and businesses innovation." [...]

STEPS FOR THE FUTURE ▶ If Baldwin County is growing, so is Gateway. Morgan said a grant from the South Baldwin Chamber Foundation will be used to implement Gateway for Great Careers at Foley High School next school year, and she is in talks to bring it to Orange Beach High School. [...]

READ FULL ARTICLE HERE ▶ <https://bit.ly/3UclOd8>



THE GATEWAY INITIATIVE

Workforce Development & Recruitment +
Pro-Business Advocacy & Legislative Action +
Entrepreneurship & Existing Business Assistance +

G A T E W A Y I N I T I A T I V E . C O M



Chambers Partner for Mental Health Training | Gateway Initiative completed three Alabama Workforce Stabilization Program grants for the South Baldwin Chamber, the Coastal Alabama Business Chamber, and Baldwin EMC for employees to be trained and certified in First Aid Mental Health. "The facilitator was very informative and engaging. This training takes real workplace experiences and relates them to difficulties one might be facing if going through a situation or crisis effecting their mental health," said Donna Watts, President and CEO of the South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce. | [EMAIL Tyler@GatewayInitiative.com](mailto:EMAIL_Tyler@GatewayInitiative.com) to learn more; the target audience is for supervisors, managers, and organization leaders.

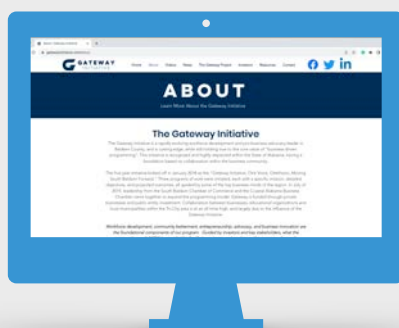


Investor Spotlight: Original Oyster House | Auburn Technical Assistance Center (ATAC) has once again partnered with a Gateway Initiative investor to help bring professional development training to their business. Original Oyster House is nestled in the portfolio of ARK Restaurant Group, and has two locations both in Gulf Shores and on the Mobile Bay Causeway. Gateway was able to submit a grant through Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment (SWAPTE) for this training to be completely paid for with funds from the Alabama Workforce Stabilization Program (AWSP).



Congratulations to ARHA ProStart Winners | A total of 20 teams comprised of hospitality and culinary students competed at the Alabama ProStart Student Invitational. The annual competition is hosted by the Alabama Restaurant and Hospitality Association Foundation (ARHAF). Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach hosted the event and awards ceremony. In 2021, the Gateway Initiative forged a partnership with ARHA to establish a dedicated chapter in south Baldwin County. This innovative collaboration brings together hospitality businesses biannually, providing a platform to address workforce requirements, explore training avenues, and champion advocacy initiatives. The next meeting is set for October.

Thank you to our **INVESTORS** for your partnership, leadership, active participation and support in the Gateway Initiative.



CHAIRMAN'S CIRCLE



MAR/APR 2024 | The Gateway Team



SOUTH BALDWIN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

UPCOMING EVENTS

BUSINESS
after hours

Thursday Apr 25, 2024



AM
Connections

Wednesday May 15, 2024



Leadership
SERIES

Tuesday May 21, 2024



BUSINESS
after hours

Thursday May 23, 2024



- Weddings/Receptions
- Corporate Events
- Company Parties
- Family/Class Reunions
- Skeet Shooting
- Pheasant Shoots
- Lodge/Bunkrooms

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Extra NEWS YOU CAN USE FROM THE WEB

Balancing Act: Ways to Keep Your Personal Life from Affecting Your Work | APR '24

By the dedicated team of editors and writers at Newsletter Station

In the hustle and bustle of modern life, keeping our personal and professional lives separate is often challenging. However, maintaining this boundary is crucial for our overall well-being and productivity. When personal issues start encroaching on our work, it can lead to decreased performance, increased stress, and strained relationships with colleagues.

So, how can we effectively manage and compartmentalize our personal lives to prevent them from spilling over into our professional sphere? Here are some strategies to help you strike that delicate balance:

- ✦ ESTABLISH boundaries
- ✦ PRACTICE Time Management
- ✦ MAINTAIN a Support System
- ✦ DEVELOP Coping Mechanisms
- ✦ SET Realistic Expectations
- ✦ SEEK Professional Help When Needed
- ✦ PRACTICE Self-Compassion
- ✦ COMMUNICATE Effectively

...maintaining a healthy balance between your personal and professional life requires conscious effort and ongoing self-awareness.

Read article: <https://www.newsletterstation.com/blogs/124378.php> ■

8 AI Tools and Features to Enhance Your Customer Service Experience | 2024 USChamber.com, Kaytlyn Smith,

Contributor

As artificial intelligence (AI) continues to evolve, many companies are taking advantage of AI-powered tools to improve the customer service experience. From answering complex queries to making business recommendations based on customer data, there are countless ways to apply this technology to your operations.

Here are eight AI tools and features your small business can leverage to boost your customers' experiences to the next level.

- ✦ Caffeinated CX
- ✦ Custify
- ✦ Fin by Intercom
- ✦ Freshdesk
- ✦ KIQ Customer Assist by Kustomer
- ✦ Salesforce Einstein
- ✦ Tidio AI
- ✦ Zoho Desk's Zia

Discover top artificial intelligence tools and features to improve your business's customer service experience, from conversational chatbots to data analytics:

Read article: <https://www.uschamber.com/co/grow/customers/ai-customer-service-tools> ■

BBB Tip: How to identify AI in photos and Video |

MAR/APR '24 Better Business Bureau

Gone are the days when one could confidently say, "Seeing is believing." New artificial intelligence (AI) technology is becoming more sophisticated and more accessible, making it possible for just about anyone to create realistic-looking images and videos.

Unfortunately, this also means scammers can now use AI images and videos to lend credibility to their tricks. AI videos and images can make a phony celebrity endorsement look real or convince family members of a fake emergency.

What can you do to spot synthetic, AI-generated content? BBB has a few TIPS to share:

- ✦ Tips for recognizing AI-generated text
- ✦ Tips for recognizing AI-generated images
- ✦ How to identify AI-generated videos
- ✦ How to verify that a photo or video is authentic

FYI: Read BBB tips on how to spot a deepfake, phony celebrity endorsements, and how con artists may use ChatGPT in their scams.

Read article: <https://www.bbb.org/all/spot-a-scam/how-to-identify-ai> ■

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Local NEWS TO SHARE

ABOUT PEOPLE & PLACES
YOU KNOW



REMEMBERING JOHN KONIAR

A Legacy of Dedication to Foley & Pillar of the Community

John Koniar, a cornerstone of Foley's community, passed away at the age of 80, leaving behind a profound legacy. Serving as mayor and City Council member for four decades, he guided Foley through significant growth. Notable achievements include the Gulf Coast Hot Air Balloon Festival and the Foley Railroad Museum, demonstrating his commitment to enhancing community life. Koniar's love for Foley shone brightest during the festive season, where he delighted in the city's Christmas spirit. He also valued Foley's employees, recognizing their contributions to the city's success. Above all, Koniar's enduring devotion to his wife Linda for 57 years exemplified his dedication to both family and community. His impact will be felt for generations, shaping Foley's history indelibly.

City of Foley News Article:
<https://bit.ly/3TrGPQg>



EMPOWERING TOMORROW'S ENTREPRENEURS

EPIC Celebrates Inaugural Graduates

Congratulations!

The South Baldwin Chamber Foundation and Coastal Alabama Business Chamber proudly announce the first graduates of **EPIC** –*Entrepreneur Program Impacting Communities*– a groundbreaking young entrepreneurial initiative launched in Fall 2023. Through the support of business leaders and sponsors, EPIC is designed to provide aspiring entrepreneurs with essential business skills, foster networking opportunities, and provide resources and funding for student ventures. The inaugural cohort, comprising Kaleb Beauchamp, Austyn Manasco, Marija Turkic, Justis Wright, Carson McKee, and Dawson Akins, marked their milestone achievement alongside mentors, local business luminaries, and educators. Congratulations to these trailblazers shaping tomorrow's business landscape! sbchamberfoundation.org/epic | facebook.com/epicsouthbaldwin



"WOMEN HOSPITAL CEOs TO KNOW" – MARGARET ROLEY, CEO of South Baldwin Regional Medical Center

More online:
beckershospitalreview.com

Becker's Healthcare has acknowledged Margaret Roley, CEO of South Baldwin Regional Medical Center, as one of the standout "Women Hospital CEOs to Know" for 2024. This recognition highlights Roley's dedication alongside other female leaders in healthcare to enhance care access, equity, diversity, and overall healthcare delivery improvement. Roley, who also serves on the [South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors](#), has been instrumental in advancing healthcare initiatives in Baldwin County since 2006, notably leading the ongoing \$200-million expansion project at South Baldwin Regional Medical Center, slated for completion this year. Her leadership underscores a commitment to advancing healthcare standards and services within the community, shaping a more inclusive and accessible healthcare landscape.

The women leading these hospitals and health systems are passionate about care access, equity and diversity, and the overall improvement of healthcare delivery.



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BUSINESS
CREDIBILITY
AND VISIBILITY

scan me



"It's not just about joining the South Baldwin Chamber, but getting involved that has made a tremendous impact on the profitability of my business."

- Sted McCollough, McCollough Architecture



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APPLY NOW ONLINE!

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