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CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

2024 EDITION ISSUE 4 JUL/AUG



Featuring

The Village at Hickory Street

THE NEWSLETTER

PROVIDING INFORMATION, SERVICES, LEADERSHIP AND VISION

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

Elevated Living at The Village at Hickory Street: Where Style Meets Sustainability

The Village at Hickory Street, a single family home rental subdivision, redefines modern living, seamlessly blending style, substance, and sustainability into a cohesive and elevated community experience. Nestled in the heart of Foley, AL, this premier rental living space offers expansive floor plans brimming with luxury amenities, cutting-edge smart home technology, and energy-efficient fixtures.

Residents enjoy the convenience of two-car garages and private fenced backyards, perfect for personal relaxation or family gatherings. Designed with a superior lifestyle in mind, these rental homes provide an environment conducive to growth and comfort. As a Security Deposit Free Community, The Village at Hickory Street ensures you can save money during your move, making the transition smoother and more affordable.

This exceptional community offers diverse living options with three-, four-, and five-bedroom floor plans. It boasts a central location, providing easy access to local elementary, middle, and high schools, shopping centers, and grocery stores. A mere 1.5 miles from Tanger Outlets and 2.5 miles from OWA Parks & Resort, residents are never far from entertainment and shopping opportunities. Additionally, the breathtaking white sand beaches of Gulf Shores and Orange Beach, recognized as some of the finest in the United States, are only 11 miles away.

The Village at Hickory Street is more than just a place to live—it's a lifestyle choice that offers unparalleled convenience, luxury, and a sense of community. Explore the heights of comfortable living where every detail is thoughtfully curated to enhance your everyday life.



THE VILLAGE AT HICKORY ST.



Online: www.thevillageathickorystreet.com

Facebook: facebook.com/villageathickorystreet/

 904 Shagbark Rd., Foley AL 36535

 (251) 484-9901

BALDWIN COUNTY, A VIBRANT GEM ON ALABAMA'S GULF COAST



SOUTH BALDWIN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

July 2024 | From the South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce



Photo courtesy of Gulf Shores & Orange Beach Tourism

In Baldwin County, Alabama, the sun rises over the Gulf Coast, painting the sky with hues of pink and gold, and waking up the white sandy beaches with a warm breeze. It's a place where the scent of saltwater mingles with the fresh aroma of blooming magnolias, and where the pace of life slows just enough to appreciate the simple pleasures.

In recent years, Baldwin County has found itself at the heart of a remarkable transformation. Once a quiet coastal retreat, it has blossomed into a bustling community where Southern charm meets modern growth. As the fastest-growing metro area in Alabama and seventh in the nation, it's become a beacon for those seeking new beginnings and better tomorrows.

The housing market, much like the ebb and flow of the tides, is in constant flux, but lately has been on a steady upward trajectory. In June, Baldwin REALTORS reported that the median sales price for a single-family home was a respectable \$411k+. It's a number that tells a tale of a market that's both thriving and competitive, with homes spending just under two months on the market before finding new owners. A combination of higher mortgage rates and inflationary pressures slowed the surge a bit in 2023, creating a more level playing field for buyers and sellers alike. Yet, the allure of Baldwin County—a blend of natural beauty and opportunity—continues to draw people in.

This part of Alabama isn't just about its scenic vistas; it's also a hub of economic vitality. Companies like Collins Aerospace and Segers Aerospace have found a home here, bringing with them jobs and prosperity. Vulcan Inc., an employee-owned company founded in Foley in 1968, and Ascend Performance Materials that started production in 1961, also play a key role in sustaining local employment in manufacturing. Baldwin County Economic Development

Alliance reports indicate that Health Care, Retail, and Hospitality are the lifeblood of this community, with Education and Manufacturing close behind, shaping a robust and diverse local economy.

For those not quite ready to settle down with a mortgage, Baldwin County offers a wide array of rental options. The Village at Hickory Street and Sevilla Place provide a touch of sophistication and comfort, while The Rivi offers luxury living in a brand-new complex. Outpost Orchard, with its charm and contemporary amenities, captures the a unique blend of style and convenience. Each development caters to different lifestyles, whether you're a young professional, a family with growing needs, or someone looking for a peaceful retreat.

But what truly sets Baldwin County apart is its spirit—a spirit that can be felt in the waves crashing on Orange Beach, in the laughter echoing from a family gathering at Gulf Shores, and in the quiet contentment of a sunset viewed from a historic small-town porch. The county's rich culture, steeped in Southern hospitality, makes it a welcoming place for all who come here, whether to visit or to stay.

It's a land of stories, each day adding a new chapter to the lives of its residents. From the bustling streets of Foley to the quaint shops of the small cities and townships, Baldwin County is more than just a place on a map. It's a tapestry woven with the threads of tradition and progress, nature and nurture, history and hope.

Whether you're drawn here by the promise of a new job, the charm of a vibrant community, or the simple beauty of the coast, Baldwin County stands ready to welcome you. It's a place where the past and present dance together, creating a future full of promise and possibility. Just like a good Southern tale, Baldwin County is a story that never gets old, always offering something new to those willing to listen and embrace its charm. ■



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We've implemented strict safety standards so that you can come to us confidently – knowing we are providing a safe place with quality care.

There's a good reason to get to a hospital fast in an emergency – **your life could depend on it.**

SouthBaldwinRMC.com



If you are experiencing a medical emergency, call 911.

THE SOUTH BALDWIN CHAMBER'S BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

July

Living My Best Life Realty, founded in 2019 by Broker/Owner Morgan Vecsey, has quickly become a standout in the local real estate industry. Specializing in Real Estate Sales and Long-term Property Management, this dynamic company sets itself apart with a unique philosophy. While their agents are undeniably top producers, success is not their sole focus.

At **Living My Best Life Realty**, the primary goal is to foster a positive environment where team members can thrive both personally and professionally. The team genuinely rejoices in each other's successes, creating a harmonious and motivating workplace. This supportive atmosphere extends to their clients, as they strive to make every experience seamless and enjoyable. Whether you're buying, selling, or leasing a property, their commitment to helping clients live their best lives is evident in everything they do. We encourage you to reach out to **Living My Best Life Realty** for any real estate needs. Stay connected with them on Facebook for updates on long-term rental properties and sneak peeks at upcoming listings.



 livingmybestliferealty.com |  (251) 948-5335

August

RJ's Seamless Gutters & More, Inc., our Business of the Month for August 2024 is located in Foley and has been serving residents and businesses in Baldwin County since 1976. In 2020, Josh Brady, Sales Manager, took ownership and continues the tradition of excellence. The company specializes in seamless gutter and leaf guard installations, as well as gutter cleaning services, all provided at affordable prices.

"Our philosophy is to offer the best products with professional installation while treating our customers with courtesy, honesty, and integrity," says Brady. "We aim to satisfy our clients with the best prices, quality services and products."

RJ's Seamless Gutters proudly supports the #SBAwesome program (*South Baldwin Awesome*) celebrating employees who excel in customer service throughout Baldwin County. Visit RJ's Seamless Gutters online and follow them on their social media channels! Call today for your free estimate!



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

JUL / AUG 2024 | The Gateway Workforce Initiative — A South & Coastal Chamber Initiative



The Gateway Workforce Initiative partnered with the EPIC

program for its 2023-2024 debut. EPIC offers a year-long experience teaching students the basics of starting a business, along with networking, resources, and funding. The after-school program is open to students in grades 7-12 from Foley, Gulf Shores, Orange Beach, Elberta, and surrounding areas. As EPIC enters its second year, **students are encouraged to apply**; applications accepted into August. We also seek volunteers and business sponsors, with sponsorships starting at \$50, which are tax-deductible through our 501(c)(3) Foundation.



GWI Welcomes New Team Member | Annie Lineberger, the Marketing & Data Analyst Manager, brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to her role. Born and raised in Fairhope, AL, Annie is deeply rooted in Baldwin County, yet her sense of home extends to Austin, TX, Worcester, MA, and Clemson, SC, where she forged lasting friendships and embraced diverse cultures. In May 2024, she earned a Master's in Marketing from Clemson University, complementing her Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Visual Art from the College of the Holy Cross. The GWI is excited to welcome Annie and have her join both South and Coastal chamber teams.



CHS Trains Employees on Mental Health

| Community Health Systems Inc. recently held Mental Health First Aid training for 30 managerial employees across six Senior Living facilities in Alabama. Led by Eric Goodcase from VitAL and The University of Alabama, the training teaches participants to identify and respond to mental health and substance use challenges. The Gateway Workforce Initiative completed five grants for investor businesses to receive this training. Nick Wilmott, Vice President of Operations, highlighted the training's importance, especially during COVID-19, stating it helps staff provide initial support and facilitate professional help.



Baldwin County Business Survey Request: Workforce Training Campus Needs Assessment



The **University of South Alabama** and **Coastal Alabama Community College** have partnered with the **South Baldwin Regional Workforce Development Authority (The Authority)** to gather crucial data on workforce issues and training needs. This information will inform the development of a new workforce training campus in Foley, Alabama. The City of Foley has generously committed land to support this project, and The Authority has engaged Community Development Group, LLC, to conduct the pre-development and master planning phase, which is currently underway.

YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS SURVEY IS VITAL. Your responses will help identify key needs and challenges, directly influencing the design of the master plan and future training programs. **The survey will take approximately 8-10 minutes to complete. Your input is essential to ensure that the campus can effectively address the needs of our community.**





SOUTH BALDWIN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

UPCOMING EVENTS

Leadership SERIES

Aug 14 & Sep 17, 2024



BUSINESS after hours

Thursday Aug 22, 2024



WALTON M. VINES FREE ENTERPRISE Summit

Friday Sep 20, 2024



GOLF FORE Education

Friday Oct 4, 2024



- Weddings/Receptions
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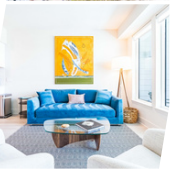
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Extra NEWS YOU CAN USE FROM THE WEB

Valuable tips, inspiring insights, and success stories designed to help our local small businesses, owners, and leaders succeed and thrive in today's economy.

Key Business Trends in the Southeast | AUG '24

AI assisted article via OpenAI ChatGPT

As the Southeast U.S.

navigates the economic landscape of 2024, businesses are facing a complex array of challenges and opportunities. Key topics include the region's economic slowdown, driven by high interest rates and moderated consumer spending, and significant shifts in the real estate market.

Additionally, the rapid adoption of advanced technologies like AI, evolving workforce dynamics with remote work, and a growing emphasis on sustainability and ethical practices are reshaping the business environment. Here are a few top Business Topics in the Southeast U.S. for August 2024:

Economic Slowdown and Interest Rates: The Southeast is experiencing a mild economic deceleration, mirroring national trends. [The Federal Reserve's high interest rates have slowed consumer spending and investment](#), though a potential soft landing is anticipated. Businesses are preparing for continued inflation and fluctuating consumer confidence.

Real Estate Market Shifts: The real estate market, particularly in sectors like multifamily and commercial properties, is undergoing significant changes. [Rising interest rates and fluctuating demand have impacted property values and transactions](#). The Southeast, known for its attractive real estate market, faces unique challenges and opportunities in adapting to these trends.

Technology Adoption and AI Integration: Businesses in the region are increasingly adopting advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI). This shift is driving efficiency and innovation across various sectors, such as [retail](#) and [manufacturing](#). Companies are also leveraging augmented and virtual reality to enhance customer experiences.

Workforce Dynamics and Remote Work: The Southeast is witnessing shifts in [workforce dynamics](#), with more [businesses embracing remote and hybrid work models](#). This trend is reshaping how companies operate

and compete for talent, especially as they navigate the challenges of a tight labor market and the demand for flexible work arrangements.

Sustainability and Ethical Business Practices: There is a growing emphasis on [sustainability and ethical business practices](#). Companies are increasingly focusing on environmental responsibility and social impact as consumers become more conscientious about their purchases. This trend is influencing business strategies and consumer engagement in the region.

These topics shaping the business landscape in the Southeast reflect broader economic and technological trends while also highlighting the region's unique characteristics and challenges.

Sources: (U.S. Chamber of Commerce) (J.P. Morgan | Official Website) (Deloitte United States) ■

Business Essentials For State Taxpayers | JUN '24

From the Alabama Department of Revenue

The B.E.S.T. program website provides small businesses in Alabama with resources and support to help them grow and succeed. It offers guidance on business development, including information on tax credits, incentives, and other financial assistance programs. The site also features tools for understanding compliance requirements, accessing training opportunities, and connecting with local business support networks.

VISIT: www.revenue.alabama.gov/b-e-s-t/ ■

MORE STORIES & TIPS FROM THE WEB . . .

- [Empowering Teams Through the Key Tenets of Leadership \(INDUSTRY LEADERS\)](#)
- [Green Flags in the Workplace: Five Markers of Exceptional Employers \(JUMPSTART\)](#)
- [Rediscovering the Joy of Entrepreneurship: A Guide to Reclaiming Your Passion \(CHAMBER NOTES\)](#)
- [8 Strategies to Address Mental Health in the Workplace \(SMALL BUSINESS TRENDS\)](#)

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BALDWIN COUNTY SHERIFF HUEY "HOSS" MACK RETIRES to Lead Alabama Sheriff's Association

Press Release:
southbaldwinchamber.com

The South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce extends sincere and heartfelt congratulations to Sheriff Huey "Hoss" Mack on his upcoming retirement and his new role as the Director of the Alabama Sheriff's Association. Sheriff Mack's dedicated service to our community since 1989 and his leadership as our Republican sheriff since 2007 have been invaluable. His decision to take on this significant role is a testament to his commitment to public service and his desire to make a positive impact across the state. We are grateful for his contributions to Baldwin County and wish him the best in this exciting new chapter.

"This has not been an easy decision as I have been with this office since 1989, and an honor to serve as your Sheriff since 2007. I believe the time is right for me to make this move. It is a great opportunity for me to work with all of Alabama's 67 sheriffs."

— Sheriff Huey "Hoss" Mack



LOWER ALABAMA YOUNG PROFESSIONALS Donate to the Alzheimer's Association

See the full story here:
southbaldwinchamber.com

The Lower Alabama Young Professionals (LAYP) turned their recent social event into a memorable evening of fun and philanthropy. Hosted at the Bier Shack Tap Room in Foley, the gathering not only provided a night of entertainment but also resulted in a generous donation of \$1,500 to the Alzheimer's Association.

The donation to the Alzheimer's Association underscores LAYP's commitment to impactful outreach and community support. The association's work is crucial in advancing research and providing support for those affected by Alzheimer's disease, and this contribution will play a role in furthering those efforts.

As they continue to host engaging events and contribute to meaningful causes, the LAYP proves that young professionals in Lower Alabama are making strides both in their careers and in their community.



REPAIR BALDWIN COMPLETES 800TH PROJECT Aiding Local Homeowners in Baldwin County

See the full story:
gulfcoastmedia.com

Repair Baldwin, a program under Ecumenical Ministries Inc. (EMI), installed its 98th ramp for Ray White's family, marking its 800th project since 2012. The program, aimed at addressing affordable housing issues in Baldwin County, has invested over \$1 million. Volunteer groups, often from local churches, build ramps and undertake other repairs, while contractors handle specialized work. EMI funding comes from grants, donations, and a thrift store, with some costs recouped via homeowner contributions. The initiative seeks to preserve homes and provide affordable living environments.

"Repair Baldwin was put in place to address the crisis of affordable housing in the county," said Sally Deane, executive director of EMI. "Our goal is to save homes."



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"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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