

NEWS FROM THE IDA

4 months of work undone in 5 minutes? Yes it can happen.....

Written By: Valerie Gray



My story begins about 2 weeks ago. A salesman to some of our local companies came by to purchase a new industrial directory. During his wait he told Tammy about an incident that occurred at a local restaurant earlier that day. Mr. Salesman was enjoying his lunch and asked a couple sitting near him, how they felt about all the growth that was

taking place in the area. The couple looked at him as if he was crazy and stated, "What do you mean, there's nothing going on here!" "We are trying to figure out where to move, to get out of this awful area as quickly as possible." Mr. Salesman told Tammy, he was blown away by the comments. He asked them if they were aware of the new automotive OEM being constructed just 12 miles up the road. He asked them if they were aware of the 4 new facilities, one already open, across the street in the Chambers County Industrial Park (CCIP). They stared blankly at him and stated "not really, because as we said, nothing's going on here." He asked more questions and found out they lived less than 4 miles from Exit 70 and had never ventured into the CCIP. Mr. Salesman physically took them to view the construction and buildings in the park, and told them how blessed with opportunity this area is. He added that in his national travels there are very, few places that have as much hope as Chambers County/ West Point/ Greater Valley Areas. He hoped his message to the couple got through that times are tough... they are tough everywhere, and there are places who currently don't have much hope.

But here in the GVA we have hope... we also have bright spots...

- 2007 Announced 116 New jobs and \$11,300,000 capital investment from new & expanding industries
- 2008 Announced 822 new jobs and \$134.5 Million capital investment from new industries
- 2008 Southern Business and Development magazine ranked Chambers County in the top 101 great auto locations
- Chambers County IDA was evaluated and ranked by a Global Site Selection Firm NKF. The IDA and the County received high marks (compared to 10 other communities)
- Kardoes Rubber Company in LaFayette was just featured in a national trade magazine as a small company weathering the storm in the rubber industry, etc.
- The IDA worked with CPSI in Lanett, to keep them in our area and retain 50+ jobs for our citizens. They are now employing 73+.
- The new 9 holes at the Riverside Country Club. We now have an 18 hole golf course!
- River Oaks Subdivision, Riverwood Subdivision, Quail Run, Vistas, Verandas, et al. We now have single family and multi family living for all incomes.

...More in a minute...here are some other "Bright Spots" in Our Community...

Our Website can now be accessed at www.chambersida.com. Please remember to change your links and bookmarks.

Valerie Gray -
vgray@chambersida.com

Bruce Emfinger -
bemfinger@chambersida.com

Tammy Johnson -
tjohnson@chambersida.com

Please continue to remember Mr. Hennon and the King family in you prayers as he continues to recover.

Also, mark your calendars for April 3rd and join us at the Wing Stop for their Ribbon Cutting/ Grand Opening starting at 10:00 a.m. EDT.

We hope to see you there!

DON'T FORGET!

April 7th
at 5:30 p.m EDT

The Grand Opening
at
The Hampton Inn

Chambers County Career Tech Center Expands Programming

by Darin Baldwin, Director



Chambers County Career Technical Center has added Industrial Maintenance Technology to its list of program offerings this year. This new program will allow students to be immersed in a fast paced high tech curriculum that can serve as a springboard into post-secondary education. The program currently offers dual enrollment opportunities with West Georgia Technical College and Southern Union State Community College.

Students in the program are introduced to concepts such as: blueprint reading, applied measurement and basic tool safety prior to choosing between a machining curriculum track or a maintenance related curriculum track. The machining track will take students through basic mill and lathe operations to writing g-code for production computer numeric control (CNC) mills and lathes. The maintenance track will take students through a series of hydraulic and pneumatic trainers as well as basic electricity and motor control trainers with programmable logic controllers. Students will be exposed to green technology through the use of an electric car to teach some of the DC concepts.



The intent of the program is not to produce qualified job ready technicians, but to expose students to the field so they can make an educated career decision upon finishing high school. It is our desire that students leave our program with the basic building blocks to pursue a number of careers which may include: engineers, machinists, maintenance technicians or CNC programmers. The sky is the limit and the starting point is here.

City of Valley Looks to the Future

By James T. Bryan, City Administrator



As you exit Interstate 85 at the Phillips Road and Fob James interchange, you immediately notice development, progress, and change on both sides of the roadway. If traveling into Valley, you will see water and electrical lines being relocated, street light and traffic signalization improvements, street widening, and dedicated turn lanes being built.

Also obvious is the residential and commercial growth within that area, all made possible by an economic development tool commonly known as an "improvement district" which has been utilized across our great state in such projects as the Prattville Bass Pro shop on I-65 and the Spanish Fort-Malbis mall near the Mobile bay. These statutorily supported districts are defined areas in which development can occur, and where public and private partnerships exist to form a local district, which are then public corporations authorized to issue bonds backed by assessments on the real estate located within the district. They have well served Texas, Florida, and other states, and are now a leading tax incentive offered to prospective builders in our state.



Though many local citizens have questioned the logic and timing of Valley's ambitious improvement district works, the work is currently well ahead of schedule and there is a commitment to complete the project by August 2009. It is anticipated that new retail openings are soon to be announced, and that the city's plans will serve the thousands of new residents who will choose Valley as their home, and visiting shoppers.

The Industrial Development Authority of Chambers County is a leading player in the positive changes of our area, and will continue to be a partner with this City into the future. Please join me in continuing an optimistic outlook for Chambers County and the Greater Valley area, with great plans for 2009 and beyond!

...So, as I was saying...

We can dwell on the losses. We can dwell on the closures, or we can choose to get up everyday and find something bright in our economy and be positive about our area. You never know who you may be talking to at a gas station, or at lunch. It's hard to think that if Mr. Salesman had been a prospect that we had been working with for 4 months, how quickly all that hard work could have come undone by two individuals who are likely struggling in this economy right now.

Many people say hope and business do not mix. I have to at some extent disagree. We here at the IDA know people are hurting out there. Family members and friends of mine are struggling to survive. There is hope for some that many other areas do not have on the horizon. I'm thankful for our existing industries, our new companies and our citizens. It's true that our project load has slowed over the past two months but this week alone, has seen activity increase. There are still a lot of things that we are working on that we can't tell you about.

What I can tell you is this; our small group of 3 in the office work hard every day for you. There is not a group of people out there who work harder and fight for every project in Chambers County than me, Tammy and Bruce. We get beat up a lot, we lose some and we win some. It's hard to not get emotional, but we wouldn't be human if we didn't.

Our Board is dedicated to the advancement of Chambers County as well. Never, have I been surrounded by a better group of leaders (Commissioners, Representatives, Senator, Board members, Mayors and Councils) than what I am working with today. Over the past year you have all sacrificed your time and efforts to guide us through difficult decisions. I want to thank you for your dedication and thank you for your commitment to the people of Chambers County, the home that I am proud to be from and proud to raise my daughters in. As one last favor to ask from each of you reading this today, please help us. Help us sell our area.

...You never know who's looking, who's asking and why.

Current IDA Board Members

James Williams
President
Cary Baldwin
Vice-President
Tim Blanks
Secretary
Robert L. Johnson
Treasurer

Harvey Brown
Grady Harmon
Ray Hemrick
Allen Hendrix
Bonnie Jarrell
Hennon King, Sr.
Marcus Moreman
Kevin Pigg
Richie Terry
Mac Tucker

**INDUSTRIAL
DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY**
of Chambers County

2102 South Broad Avenue
PO Box 269, Lanett, AL 36863
tel: 334.642.1412
fax: 334.642.6548
www.chambersida.com