Chamber Connections

Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce

March 2021

Still Connecting, Advocating, Growing
Page 4

Wiregrass Companies Shine In State Rankings
Page 12

Local Student Selected As Girls Inc. National Scholar
Page 13

What's Inside

March 2021

2 Events Calendar
3 Ribbon Cuttings
4 Cover Story
7-11 Business Briefs
12 Grow Dothan
13 Workforce Development
14 Small Business Development

Also In This Issue

8 Exchange Center Names Money Clinical Director
9 Great Families Need Great Partners
10 Hayes Joins Capsouth Wealth Management
14 SBA Programs - Scams And Fraud Alerts

Your Cover Photo

Your cover photo features Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce President Matt Marker providing a Grow Dothan update to the Dothan City Commission. For more information, see page 4.

www.dothan.com
(334) 792-5138

UNITED STATES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
ACCREDITED

CCAA 2017-2021 ACCC ALABAMA ACCREDITED CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Events Calendar

March

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	5	6
7	8	**9**	**10**	11	**12**	13
14	15	16	**17**	18	19	20
21	22	**23**	**24**	**25**	26	27
28	29	30	31			

1 **Ribbon Cutting: Wild Honey – 2 p.m.**
Location: 102 Central Park Ave., Suite 4

2 **Ambassador and Diplomat Committee Meeting – 9 a.m.**
Location: 102 Jamestown Blvd. (Chamber)

3 **LEADS Group 1 Biweekly Meeting – 8 a.m.**
Location: 102 Jamestown Blvd. (Chamber)

Ribbon Cutting: Scrubs 101 Uniform Boutique, LLC – 2 p.m.
Location: 3074 Ross Clark Circle, Suite 12

DAYP Weekly Eats – 11 a.m.
Location: 4440 W. Main St., Suite 5 (Jimmy Johns Dothan Inc.)

4 **Ribbon Cutting: Vision Nutrition – 10:30 a.m.**
Location: 126 S. Alice St., Suite 5

9 **Ribbon Cutting: A & A Auto Imports – 10:30 a.m.**
Location: 1149 W. Main St.

10 **LEADS Group 2 Biweekly Meeting – 8:15 a.m.**
Location: 102 Jamestown Blvd. (Chamber)

DAYP Weekly Eats – 11 a.m.
Location: 3850 W. Main St., Suite 300 (Blue Plate West)

12 **Ribbon Cutting: Southern Nutrition & Weight Loss – 10:30 a.m.**
Location: 104 Rock Bridge Road, Suite 2

Small Business Person of the Year Nominations Deadline – 5 p.m.
Location: 102 Jamestown Blvd. (Chamber)
*See page 15 for more information.

17 **LEADS Group 1 Biweekly Meeting – 8 a.m.**
Location: 102 Jamestown Blvd. (Chamber)

DACC Board of Directors Meeting – 8:15 a.m.
Location: Zoom Virtual Platform.
*Corresponding Zoom link will be emailed prior to the meeting.

Ribbon Cutting: Alfa Insurance - Mills & Rice Agency – 10:30 a.m.
Location: 213 N. Broadway St., Ashford

DAYP Weekly Eats – 11 a.m.
Location: 3515 Ross Clark Circle (Panera Bread)

23 **Ribbon Cutting: MidSouth Bank Operations Center- 10:30 a.m.**
Location: 2570 W. Main St.

24 **LEADS Group 2 Biweekly Meeting – 8 a.m.**
Location: 102 Jamestown Blvd. (Chamber)

Ribbon Cutting: Five Star Food Service – 10:30 a.m.
Location: 116 Vulcan Way

DAYP Weekly Eats – 11 a.m.
Location: 3411 Ross Clark Circle (LongHorn Steakhouse)

25 **Leadership Dothan Education Day – 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.**
Location: 102 Jamestown Blvd. (Chamber)

Bean Press, LLC
411 N. Broadway St.
Ashford, AL 36312
Melissa Clark
(334) 899-7345
RESTAURANTS, FOOD & BEVERAGE

Tyndall Federal Credit Union
1690 Ross Clark Circle
Dothan, AL 36301
Jessica Crips
(850) 769-9999
www.tyndall.org
FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Havana Breeze Cigar Lounge
104 Apple Ave., Suite 4
Dothan, AL 36303
Humberto Berrios
(334) 305-0299
www.havanabreezecigarlounge.com
SHOPPING / SPECIALTY RETAIL
ARTS / CULTURE / ENTERTAINMENT

Wiregrass Toastmasters
600 Westbrook Road
Dothan, AL 36303
Tesi Conte
(334) 790-4353
www.wiregrass.toastmasters clubs.org
NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Property Champions Real Estate
618 Westgate Parkway
Dothan, AL 36303
Stephen Holland
(334) 479-8449
www.thepropertychampions.com
REAL ESTATE – RESIDENTIAL

Southeast Plumbing & Electric, LLC
5775 Montgomery Highway, Suite 5
Dothan, AL 36303
Kaelyn Calabretto
(334) 648-0644
www.southeastplumbingandelectric.com
PLUMBING & ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS

Southern Fields Brewing
2328 Highway 2
Campbellton, FL 32476
Joe McMullian
(850) 661-5590
www.southernfieldsbrewing.com
RESTAURANTS, FOOD & BEVERAGE

Truckworx
461 Ross Clark Circle
Dothan, AL 36303
Daniel Watters
(334) 673-5012
www.truckworx.com
AUTOMOBILE SERVICE AND/OR REPAIR

Still Connecting, Advocating, Growing

Everyone can agree that last year was a monumental year and will definitely take its place in future history books. Here we are a year later, and at times it seems we are still trying to safely navigate our ships through the mist and rough waters to keep our families, our jobs and our businesses unharmed.

It has been through vigilance, perseverance and the determination not to give up that our area is slowly starting to recover and beginning to see a light at the end of the tunnel. We may not be out of the woods yet, but we are headed in the right direction.

With all that has taken place, the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, Grow Dothan and Southeast AlabamaWorks recently provided an update to the Dothan City Commission and wanted to share with our readers.

Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce

The state of the DACC is strong with its five major strategic goals: (1) Grow the economy of the Wiregrass; (2) Develop a seamless education and workforce system; (3) Enhance the Wiregrass region's quality of life; (4) To sustain and strengthen the Wiregrass region's business policies and military foundation; and (5) Grow membership and provide the resources necessary for busines people to create, sustain and explore regional companies. The Chamber continues to provide resources and serve you our members and the community.

Some highlights include:

- Initiated a "First Step" program to connect local entrepreneurs and existing businesses to local resources;
- Second year of Citizen Promise program in Dothan City Schools. This program works with high school students to help make them citizen, career and life ready;
- Partnered on financial support with the Wiregrass Foundation for DCS Career Tech Director and continue our involvement with the Dothan Technology Center and Houston County Career Academy in connecting the centers with businesses and industries for job opportunities, co-ops, speakers and resources;
- Continued to strengthen our Dothan Area Young Professionals group, Leadership Dothan - Year 39, Youth Leadership Dothan-Houston County - Year 29 and Dothan Business Hall of Fame 10th Annual Banquet scheduled for 2021;
- Partnered with Business Council of Alabama on state and federal issues to make sure business policies are strong;
- Continued support of Friends of Fort Rucker and encourage business membership in the AUSA Wiregrass Chapter; and
- Grow DACC Membership, goal of 1,200 by December 2021.

Grow Dothan

The state of our local economy is also strong. The Grow Dothan team has continued its daily efforts to bring growth, regionalism, businesses and jobs to the area. Some accomplishments include:

1. In 2020, there were 94 new, expanding or relocation projects in market area in distribution, retail, health care, manufacturing, commercial services and financial/insurance sectors;
2. Between 2018-2020, there were 2,300 jobs added from our target industry list of Accelerate Alabama 2.0;
3. There were 25 Microloan and/or Revolving Loan projects to support new and expanded growth in market;
4. Continued efforts on regional collaboration for new investment in region;
5. Expanded the IDA of Houston and Henry Counties to include Geneva County in order to support and partner on industrial development;

DACC President Matt Parker provides an update to the Dothan City Commission on economic development and activities.

6. Working with 11 counties in southeast Alabama to implement regional marketing program for industrial development through Grow Southeast Alabama;
7. Studying four laning of SR 52 West to Hartford and SR 167 to provide more capacity with Build Grant planning grant. Regional partnership with Dale, Geneva, Houston and Coffee counties;
8. Started Grow Dothan fund raising during pandemic to continue economic development efforts for 2021-2023;
9. COVID-19 CRISIS – DACC provided one stop shop on resources and support for existing business community. Collaborated with city, county, state, region and business community to get information out and provide support during these challenging times;
10. Goal this year was to get a project in the former Jabil/Nypro building and did so with PPE manufacturer of GRI-Advanced Product Solutions; and
11. There are currently industrial prospect activities in Dale, Geneva, Henry and Houston counties.

Southeast AlabamaWorks

The state of the area's workforce is challenging. If you look at the job opportunities within 25 miles of Dothan, **www.indeed.com** shows 447 opportunities within the last 14 days and 1,879 opportunities within the last 30 days. On **www.alabamaworks.alabama.gov** there were 1,419 opportunities within the last 14 days and 2,381 opportunities within the last 30 days.

This past December, southeast Alabama, north Florida and south Georgia formed a 72-county tri-state alliance spanning eight workforce development regions. This alliance paves the way for best practices nationally using technology, borderless communication and virtual services to eliminate boundaries and support the connection of workers and jobs in the Southeast.

Another workforce advancement is Wallace Community College has established the Second Chace Program to help supply workforce ready employees. Supported by Southeast AlabamaWorks, Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce and judges of Henry and Houston counties, the program will supply local business and industry with a pipeline of employees, and offer short-term training and employment during sentencing. The program is expected to launch summer 2021.

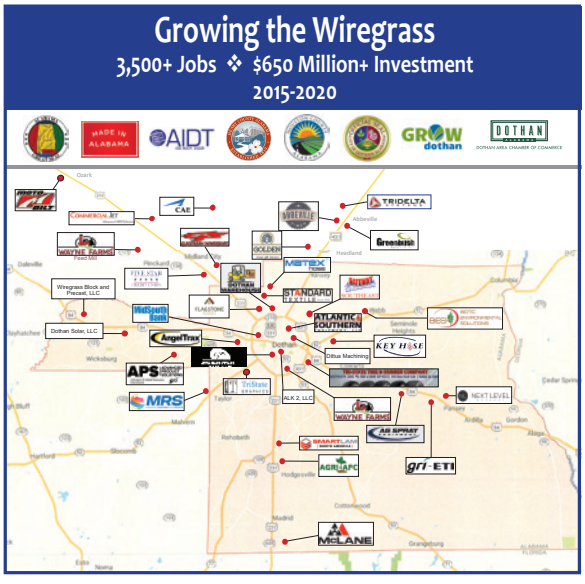
DOTHAN ALABAMA

DOTHAN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

GROW dothan

SOUTHEAST ALABAMA WORKS!

DACC Executive Director Dean Mitchell gives an overview on the state of the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce to the Dothan City Commission.



Southeast AlabamaWorks Executive Director Ann Carr talks about the work and accomplishments of Southeast AlabamaWorks.

Entity	Jan. 2020 Employment	Feb. 2020 Employment	Apr. 2020 Employment	Dec. 2020 Employment
City of Dothan	28,896 (3.2%)	29,010 (2.8%)	25,452 (11.5%)	28,847 (4.2%)
Houston County	44,592 (3.2%)	44,619 (2.8%)	39,144 (11%)	43,927 (3.7%)
Dothan Metro Area	61,733 (3.2%)	62,019 (2.8%)	54,251 (10.3%)	61,617 (3.5%)

Source: Alabama Department of Labor in conjunction with Bureau of Labor Statistics, January 2021.

Houston County 2020	OCT	NOV	DEC
Labor Force	46,069	45,789	45,617
Employment	43,597	43,922	43,927
Unemployment	2,472	1,867	1,690
Rate of Unemployment (%)	5.4	4.1	3.7

Area Profile for Houston County, AL

Occupations by Advertised Jobs Table

The table below shows the occupations with the highest number of job openings advertised online in on Houston County, AL (Jobs De-duplication Level 2).

Rank	Occupation	Job Openings
1	Registered Nurses	201
2	Physicians and Surgeons, All Other	84
3	Retail Salespersons	59
4	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	46
5	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	40
6	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	38
7	Customer Service Representatives	34
8	General and Operations Managers	33
9	Cooks, Restaurant	30
10	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	30

Source: Online advertised jobs data
Downloaded: 01/26/2021 9:52 AM

Source: Alabama Department of Labor

New**Members**

Clip and add these to your Membership Directory.

A & A Auto Imports
Marcus Allen
1149 W. Main St.
Dothan, AL 36301
PH: (334) 405-0886 cell
FAX: (334) 446-5749
AUTOMOBILE DEALERS

Alfa Insurance - Mills & Rice Agency
Brad Rice
213 N. Broadway St.
P.O. Box 2007
Ashford, AL 36312
PH: (334) 899-3700
FAX: (866) 823-8257
www.alfainsurance.com
INSURANCE

Property Champions Real Estate
Stephen Holland
618 Westgate Parkway
P.O. Box 1057
Slocomb, AL 36375
PH: (334) 479-8449
www.thepropertychampions.com
REAL ESTATE - RESIDENTIAL

Southern Fields Brewing
Joe McMullian
2328 Highway 2
P.O. Box 184
Campbellton, FL 32476
PH: (850) 661-5590
www.southernfieldsbrewing.com
RESTAURANTS, FOOD & BEVERAGE

Vision Nutrition
Mel Poke
126 S. Alice St., Suite 5
Dothan, AL 36301
PH: (334) 718-4440
RESTAURANTS, FOOD & BEVERAGE

Renewing**Members**

80 to 89 Years
McDaniel & Associates, PC

70-79 Years
Hudson Office Supply Inc.
Mayer Electric Supply

50-59 Years
AAA Cooper Transportation
Barge Design Solutions
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama
Bob Woodall Air Care Systems Inc.
Century 21 James Grant Realty
Coca-Cola Bottling Co. United Inc.
Davis Oil Co.
Dothan Animal Hospital
Dothan Brace Shop
Flowers Hospital
Higgins Electric Inc.
Lee, Livingston, Lee, Nichols & Barron, PC
Mike Schmitz Automotive Group
Northcutt Drug Co.
Poly Inc.
Regions Bank
Register Realty Co. Inc.
W.P. Shealy Advertising Inc.
Swedish Match Cigars
Twitchell Corp.
Whatley Supply Co.

40-49 Years
McDonald's of Dothan
Palmer Electric Construction Co.
PeoplesSouth Bank
Southeastern Oral-Maxillofacial & Facial Cosmetic Surgery Center, PC
Terminix Service

30-39 Years
All in Credit Union
Dothan Pediatric Clinic
ENT Care
Farley Nuclear Energy Education Center
Flagstone Foods
Troy University
Wiregrass United Way
Women's Health Care of Dothan, PC

25-29 Years
Scott-Cook Pharmacy

20-24 Years
Dale Carnegie Emerald Coast
Southern Heritage Funeral Home & Crematory

15-19 Years
Alabama Technology Network
Dothan Pilcher Ambulance Service
First South Farm Credit
City of Midland City

10-14 Years
Northview Christian Church

5-9 Years
All About Cleaning, LLC
Angel Hands Home Care
CarMax
Dandridge Dental, PC
Dothan Tuesday Rotary Club
FASTSIGNS of Dothan
Ingram Land & Realty, LLC
Mike's Plumbing and Electric, LLC
Murray Vision Source
Brian Davidson State Farm Insurance
Troy Cablevision Inc.
Zonta Club of Dothan

1-4 Years
The Ark
Ashford Downtown Redevelopment Authority
Cheeburger Cheeburger
Dr. Watts Electric
Entech.net, LLC
F.R.I.E.N.D.S.
Five Star Painting of Dothan
Motobilt Inc.
Preferred Risk Services
Southeastern Institute of Restorative Medicine
Wholesale Wood Products

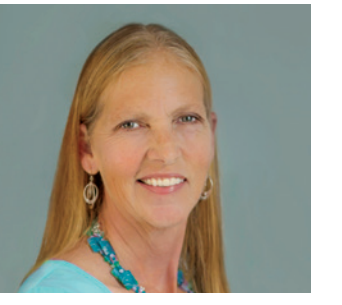
Ambassadors**&Diplomats**

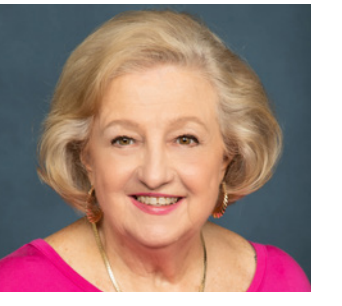
Star Of The Month

Mary Colburn
Wiregrass Auto Care

Team Of The Month

Drawing A Blank





Congratulations to our Ambassador and Diplomat Team of the Month – Drawing A Blank. Team members (l-r) are Joseph Brackins, ***All in Credit Union***; Mary Colburn, ***Wiregrass Auto Care***; Brad Kendrick, ***Hampton Inn & Suites by Hilton***; and Joyce Tyson, ***Century 21 James Grant Realty***.

Thank you to all our Ambassadors and Diplomats who serve as the eyes and ears for the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce. It is with your dedication and support that assist your local Chamber in meeting its goals.

Be sure to check out next month's *Chamber Connections* to see who will claim the title.

#SaveTheDates For These Upcoming Member Events

Seeds of Hope
Every Thursday • 7 p.m.
Harvest Church Fellowship Hall. This is a grief support group for those who have lost loved ones, are going through a divorce or experiencing any kind of life-changing loss to offer understanding and support to each other as they walk through similar situations. For more information, call (334) 702-6555 or email **ccare@harvestdothan.com**.

"Early One Evening At The Rainbow Bar & Grille"
March 9 - 13 • Times Vary
The Cultural Arts Center. Presented by the Southeast Alabama Community Theatre, the world is coming to an end. You have one day left. What do you do? Forget mass hysteria and anarchy. If your name is Shep and you tend bar, it's merely business as usual. Meet some strangely upbeat small-town folk as they unceremoniously come to grips with their impending doom, and a travelling salesman who turns out to be... Well, you'll need to join SEACT and see. Content advisory: for mature audiences; includes racist language. Tickets are $20 adults. For more information, call (334)794-0400 or visit **www.seact.com**.

Galleries Open Late
March 18 • 5 - 7 p.m.
Wiregrass Museum of Art. WMA's galleries will be open for extended evening hours on the third Thursday of every month. General admission is always free. For more information, call (334) 794-3871 or visit **www.wiregrassmuseum.org**.

Spring Farm Day
March 20 • 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Landmark Park. Come experience life on a Wiregrass farm in the 1890s. Watch plowing with horses and mules, spring planting, arts and crafts, pottery, textile work and more. Cost is $8 for adults; $6 for seniors and military; $4 for kids; free for park members and children 2 and under. For more information, call (334) 734-3452 or visit **www.landmarkparkdothan.com**.

Have an upcoming event planned?
Send your event information to melia@dothan.com

O'Brien, Peterson, Sapp Join Merrill Lynch Wealth Management

Merrill Lynch Wealth Management is pleased to announce the addition of Adam O'Brien, Paul Peterson and Jim Sapp to its team.

O'Brien joins Merrill Lynch in a client associate role and most recently served clients in the Premier Banker role with Wells Fargo since 2008. He and his wife Jodi have two children, Aiden and Cace, and live in Dothan.

Peterson joined SouthTrust Securities as a financial advisor in 1995 and served his clients most recently with Wells Fargo Advisors, and has held the Certified Financial Planner since 2000. He formerly served as a board member with Wiregrass Hope Group and is an active member of the Elks Club. Peterson and his wife Kelli have two sons, Paul Jr. and Andrew, and are active members of First Methodist Church in Dothan.

Sapp rejoins Merrill Lynch Wealth Management after most recently serving his clients with Wells Fargo Advisors. He holds the Certified Financial Planner and Chartered Retirement Planning Counselor designations. Sapp is a past president of the Dothan Jaycees and former member of the Dothan Rotary Club. He and his wife Jennifer live in Chipley, Florida, with their three children and are active members of First Baptist Church in Chipley.

To reach any of the above, or for more information, call Merrill Lynch Wealth Management at (334) 793-6960.

Hey Chamber Members, Did You know ...

Did you know that the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce has a Job Listings page on its website **www.dothan.com** just for you our members?

Having every available option for its members and businesses to list job openings is a priority to the DACC and we are excited to offer this free benefit.

Beneficial not only to you our members, but it's also a place where individuals looking for a job can see what position(s) members currently have open. An additional resource for you and job seekers, it's a win win for your business, the area's citizens and our community.

If you haven't already used the Job Listings page to your advantage, we encourage you to check out this chamber-member benefit designed just for you!

Exchange Center Names Money Clinical Director

Carolyn Money

The Exchange Center for Child Abuse Prevention recently named Carolyn Money the agency's new clinic director. Money has worked at the Exchange Center since 2013 and her past experiences include working in both inpatient and outpatient psychiatric and substance abuse treatment settings.

A licensed professional counselor, Money has a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's in counseling. She is certified by The International Association of Trauma as a clinical trauma professional and has worked in the mental health field since 2001.

For more information, contact the Exchange Center for Child Abuse Prevention at (334) 671-1966 or visit **www.exchangecap.org**.

Chamber Executive Director Selected For U.S. Chamber

Dean Mitchell

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation recently announced Dean Mitchell, Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce executive director, was selected to participate in the fourth cohort of its premiere business leadership program.

The Business Leads Fellowship Program trains and equips leaders from state and local chambers of commerce with resources, access to experts, and a network of peers to build their capacity to address the most pressing education and workforce challenges.

Mitchell stated, "I am honored to represent the 1,100 Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce members in this important workforce leadership program. Helping our business and industry and education partners tackle the important challenges of ensuring a skilled and educated pipeline is a priority for me, and I look forward to this incredible opportunity."

"We created the Business Leads Fellowship Program in response to the needs of our state and local chamber partners," said Cheryl Oldham, senior vice president of the Center for Education and Workforce. "They, better than anyone, see the critical link between education and economic development, and we are glad to be able to support them as they take on this critical leadership role in their community."

Following a competitive application and selection process, Mitchell was selected along with 34 other state and local chamber executives and association leaders to participate in the fourth class of this program. The year-long virtual program, which tentatively concludes with an in-person meeting in January 2022, will cover the entire talent pipeline, including early childhood education, K-12, higher education and workforce development.

Upon completion, Business Leads Fellows will join the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's dedicated network of 200 chambers of commerce and statewide associations from around the nation who regularly engage on education and workforce initiatives.

For a full list of participants in the Business Leads Fellowship Program, visit the U.S. Chamber Foundation website **www.uschamberfoundation.org/Fellowship-Program**.

Southeast Alabama Dance Company

A MERMAID'S TALE

SEADAC Presents "A Mermaid's Tale"

The Southeast Alabama Dance Company will present its spring performance of "A Mermaid's Tale" Thursday-Sunday, March 4-7, at the Dothan Civic Center at 6:30 p.m. each night.

Tickets can be purchased at the Dothan Civic Center Box Office by calling (334) 615-3175. For more information, visit **www.southeastalabamadancecompany.org** or call SEADAC at (334) 702-7139.

Flowers Medical Group makes it easier to see a primary care provider— quickly. Our primary care providers offer same-day and telehealth appointments for well visits, acute illnesses, and chronic conditions. Whether in person or on screen, we'll be glad to see you. **To connect with a provider or to schedule an appointment online, visit FlowersMedicalGroup.com.**

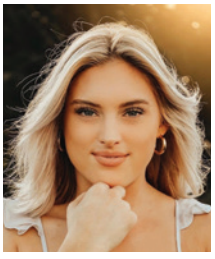
ASK ABOUT
SAME-DAY OR TELEHEALTH APPOINTMENTS
FOR PRIMARY CARE.

Flowers Medical Group Primary Care Locations
Dothan West Family Medicine • 500 Healthwest Dr., Dothan • 699-5994
Family Medicine Medical Drive • 108 Medical Dr., Dothan • 944-7041
Health and Wellness • 4300 W. Main St., Ste. 15, Dothan • 944-7056
Internal Medicine Associates • 210 Westside Dr., Dothan • 793-5074
PrimeCare of Daleville • 144 Virginia Ave., Dothan • 793-2120
PrimeCare of Dothan • 4126 W. Main St., Dothan • 793-2120

FlowersMedicalGroup.com

Flowers Medical Group

Berkshire Hathaway Welcomes New Agents



Camden Davis

Keith Denton

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Showcase Properties invites readers to join them in welcoming two new agents: Camden Davis and Keith Denton.

Davis is a college graduate with a marketing degree from Northern Arizona University. With eight years of customer service experience, she excels in peer-to-peer communication and works professionally with respect and consideration of others. Her favorite part of being a realtor is meeting people in her community and helping a person through the most important purchase, buying a home. You can each Davis at (254) 317-2334.

Denton who previously worked as development director and administrator at Big Oak Ranch in Gadsden, Alabama, and also as the founder and executive director of Seamark Ranch in Jacksonville, Florida, has a devotion to helping, educating and working with people, which is expressed through his previous Bricks 4 Kidz franchise-Lego camps in Dothan where he taught architectural/engineering skills to 800 plus Wiregrass children from 2014-2018. Denton also enjoys coaching youth sports. As a realtor, he is passionate about helping his clients and families sell or find their first-time, perfect or forever home. To reach Denton, call (334) 803-6882.

Synovus Appoints Enterprise, Dothan Market Executives

Kerri DeShazo

Philip Wilkes

Synovus is pleased to announce the appointment of Kerri DeShazo as market executive for Dothan and Philip Wilkes as market executive for Enterprise. DeShazo and Wilkes succeed Lamar Loftin, who recently retired from Synovus after 42 years with the bank.

"Philip and Kerri are tremendously experienced bankers who care deeply about the businesses and people they serve. Their communities and our bank will be well served by their knowledge of industries and economic development opportunities in southeast Alabama," said Mark Lane, Synovus division CEO. "We congratulate Lamar on a well-earned retirement and thank him for his work on behalf of our bank and customers for more than four decades, as well as his continued service as chairman of our local Board of Advisors."

DeShazo has 26 years of banking experience and joined Synovus in 2008. She is a graduate of Troy University and lives in Headland, Alabama. Wilkes' banking career began in 1984 with Coffee County Bank, which was later acquired by Synovus. He attended Enterprise State Community College and completed the Graduate School of Banking at Louisiana State University.

Synovus Bank, a Georgia-chartered, FDIC-insured bank, provides commercial and retail banking, investment, and mortgage services together with its affiliates through 289 branches in Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina, Florida and Tennessee. Synovus Bank has been recognized as one of the country's "Most Reputable Banks" by American Banker and the Reputation Institute.

For more information, visit Synovus Bank on the web at **www.synovus.com**, and on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram. Equal Housing Lender.

Alabama Family Central

Great Families Need Strong Partners

Alabama Family Central is your one-stop destination, connecting you with hundreds of programs, tools, services and support. No matter if you're a parent, family member, caregiver or teacher, AFC makes finding education, health services, child care and family services easy. Great families need strong partners. So, with leadership from the Children' s Cabinet, **www.AlabamaFamilyCentral.org** was created.

Partners include departments of child abuse and neglect prevention, early childhood education, education, human resources, Medicaid, mental health, public health, rehabilitation services/early intervention, A+ Education Partnership, Alabama Partnership for Children, Office of the Governor of Alabama, with support from the Office of Information Technology. A steering committee guided the development and the Alabama Partnership for Children, a statewide public/private partnership, manages the project.

Submit a listing - it's free and only takes a few minutes to submit a service to be included in the directory. All submissions go through a 1-2-week review process. If you would like to submit a service for consideration to be published as part of the online directory, visit **www.alabamafamilycentral.org/submit-listing**. When you are filling out the form, be sure the contact information you provide is someone that can and will reach back out to interested users.

For more information, contact Alabama Family Central at (888) 928-3471 or email **alfamilycentral@apcteam.org**.

YourChamber

Are You A New Chamber Member?

As a return on your investment as a Chamber Member, you are entitled to one business card ad within 90 days in the Chamber's monthly newsletter, *Chamber Connections*.

Spotlight your business and boost its exposure! For more information, contact Melia McKean at (334) 792-5138 or **melia@dothan.com**.

King Joins Dothan Real Estate Team

Koran King

Dothan Real Estate Team is pleased to announce Koran King has joined its team of realtors.

Originally from Birmingham, Alabama, King met his wife DeeAnn in 2009 and became a resident of the great Wiregrass area. He has an associate degree in applied science - avionics technology from the Enterprise State Community College Alabama Aviation Center.

Although new to selling properties, King is no stranger to selling. He had a very successful career as a salesman in the food and beverage industry where he was often voted the monthly top salesman. He and his wife also own rental properties in the area.

King's favorite phrase is "I'm fired up, and ready to go!" That's how he approaches each and every day. No task is too hard and giving up is not an option. He is passionate about loving God, his family and people. King wants to make sure people are seen, heard and acknowledged.

King is anxious about working with first time home buyers, but said, "That is such an exciting time in a person's life. As an agent I will do my best to help others navigate the process confidently and easily."

Hayes Joins CapSouth Wealth Management

Wesley Hayes

CapSouth Wealth Management is proud to announce Wesley Hayes has joined the Dothan office as a wealth manager. Hayes joins a team of experienced and knowledgeable professionals whose purpose is to help clients define and achieve their "One Best Financial Life."

As a wealth manager, Hayes dedicates his time to building and managing personal relationships with private clients as he helps them define and accomplish their goals. He dedicates his time to working with corporate retirement plans in the tri-state area.

When asked to identify his top CapSouth Core Value, Hayes chose Driven to Improve, because he continually strives to improve his expertise in the Wealth Management sector and application of it.

Hayes is a native of Troy, Alabama, and graduated from Troy University with a bachelor's degree in business administration with a concentration in global finance. He is also no stranger to the Dothan business community as he currently serves as a Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce Ambassador and looks forward to the continuation of building professional relationships in the Wiregrass area.

CapSouth Wealth Management is a fee-only independent, registered investment advisor founded in 2001 with offices in Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina. CapSouth is excited to be celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

CapSouth Partners Inc., dba CapSouth Wealth Management, is an Independent Registered Investment Advisory firm. For more information, contact Amy Kennedy, marketing director, at (334) 673-8600 or visit **www.capwouthwm.com**.

Has Your Address Changed?

Don't forget to let the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce know if your mailing address has changed so we can be sure to keep you up-to-date on activities and events.

Call Hayden Camp at (334) 792-5138 or email hcamp@dothan.com.

April Is National Child Abuse Prevention Month

Each April during National Child Abuse Prevention Month, the Southeast Alabama Child Advocacy Center coordinates a community-wide Blue Ribbon Campaign. The blue ribbon is a national symbol of the need to protect our children.

The purpose of the campaign is to raise awareness about child abuse and to generate support for programs and services to help victims. This year marks the Child Advocacy Center's 27th annual campaign, and they are so thankful for the continued support that the community gives to the children served through the CAC.

Bonnie Finley, a grandmother, made a personal commitment to stop child abuse when she tied a royal blue ribbon on the antenna of her car after her own 4-year-old grandson was killed at the hands of his mother's abusive boyfriend. Little did she know the impact that this simple gesture would have on people and communities across the United States. Out of her tragedy and heartache emerged an outcry and thus began a National Blue Ribbon Campaign.

Last year, the Southeast Alabama Child Advocacy Center provided interviews to 351 children with new allegations of abuse. More than 700 victims of abuse received therapy, crisis counseling and criminal justice support services. Child abuse is a problem that is too big for one person or one agency to solve. It takes an entire community working together to take a stand and speak out on behalf of our children.

This is your opportunity to make a difference by partnering with the CAC and support the "Giving Hope, One Paw at a Time" Blue Ribbon Campaign by purchasing a T-shirt to wear in April on Blue Ribbon Friday For Kids. The deadline to order T-shirts is Friday, March 5. To order, visit **www.givebutter.com/CACBR21**. Or for more information, contact Lindsay Wagner at (334) 671-1779.

YourChamber

Spotlight your business. Get more exposure!

As a Chamber member, you are entitled to one free business card ad in the Chamber's monthly newsletter, *Chamber Connections*, within 90 days from the date you join. For more information, contact Melia McKean at (334) 792-5138 or **melia@dothan.com**.

Ashford Plans Spring Fling & Music Festival

The city of Ashford will host a Spring Fling Music Festival Saturday, March 13, from noon until 9 p.m. in downtown Ashford on Broadway Street.

Festival activities include bounce houses and a petting zoo for the kids, craft vendors, a Corn Hole Tournament, car show, food and live music on three different stages:

Main Stage:
- Uptown – Noon - 1:30 p.m.
- Thomas Mac – 2-3 p.m.
- Jeff Bates – 3-4 p.m.
- David Dale – 5:30 p.m. - 7 p.m.
- Riley Andersson – 7-9 p.m.

Town Hall Stage:
- Byrd Family – 12:30 p.m. - 2 p.m.
- Dylan Kelley – 2:30 p.m. - 4 p.m.
- Stateline 5 – 4:30 p.m. - 6 p.m.

McArthur Park:
- Aileen Clayton – 4:30-5:30 p.m.

For more information, email **kvann@asfordDRA.com**.

Ellis, Ingram Join Dothan's Weichert Realtors

Weichert affiliated offices in Dothan recently welcomed two new agents to its team - Elizabeth Ellis and Ciera Ingram. Both Ellis and Ingram are thrilled to join the dedicated team of knowledgeable agents at Weichert Realtors, JBR Legacy Group.

Weichert Real Estate Affiliates Inc. has grown steadily since Jim Weichert, president, chairman and CEO of Weichert Companies, launched the company's franchise division in 2001. The affiliate division was created to offer a business model for franchisee ownership candidates described as "a clearly defined operating system for marketing and managing a real estate business."

Each Weichert franchised office is independently owned and operated. For more information, contact Pam Roberts at (334) 794-7211 or **pam@dothanforsale.com**.

Wiregrass Companies Shine In "Business Alabama's" 2021 Top Rankings

Each year *Business Alabama* provides rankings in various business sectors throughout the state of Alabama. The Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce is very proud and pleased to recognize those businesses that made some of the top rankings in their respective category.

We often times forget some of the great companies we have in our backyard and their significant contributions to the area, state and national economy. Congratulations to our area firms who made the list and thank you for your continued contribution to the area and the notoriety you provide our area in building a strong business climate.

This information is provided by *Business Alabama* and their ranking system is noted in each category.

Alabama's Largest Private Companies
(Source: Dun and Brad Street and Business Alabama Rankings):
3. Coca Cola Bottling Co.
8. Great Southern Wood Preserving Inc.
16. Mayer Electric Supply Co. Inc.
19. AAA Cooper Transportation
21. PowerSouth Energy Cooperative
26. Buffalo Rock Co.
39. Coleman Worldwide Moving

Alabama's Largest Accounting Firms
(Source: "Business Alabama" Surveys):
2. Carr, Riggs & Ingram, LLC
5. Jackson Thornton & Co. PC
30. McDaniel & Associates, PC

Alabama's Largest Engineering Firms
(Source: "Business Alabama" Surveys):
3. Barge Design Solutions Inc.

Alabama's Largest Subcontractors
(Source: "Business Alabama" Surveys):
5. Qualico Steel Co. Inc.
7. Covenant Steel Warehouse Inc.

Alabama's Largest Hospitals
(Source: Alabama Hospital Association):
10. Southeast Health
28. Flowers Hospital
46. Medical Center Enterprise

Assisted Living Facilities
(Source: Assisted Living Association of Alabama):
25. Wesley Place on Honeysuckle

Largest Manufacturers
(Source: Economic Agency Information):
10. M 1 Support Services
15. Buffalo Rock Co.
27. Keystone Foods

Automotive Manufacturers
(Sources: Economic Development Agency Information, EBSCO, and Data Axle):
36. Michelin North America Inc.

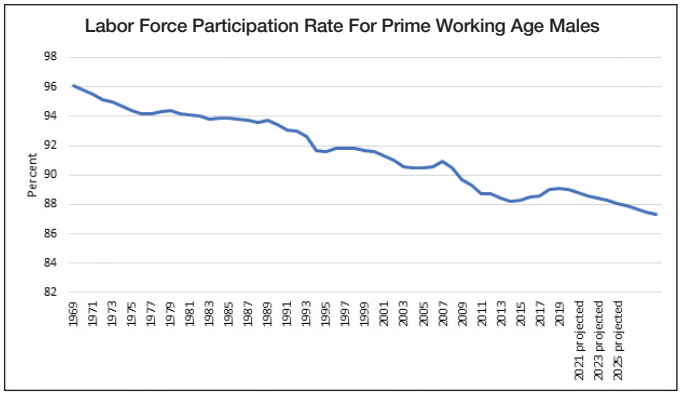
Alabama's Commercial Insurance Agencies & Providers
(Source: "Business Alabama" Surveys):
20. Flowers Insurance Agency, LLC

Financial Planning & Investment Advisory Firms
(Source: Business Alabama Surveys):
9. Jackson Thornton Asset Management, LLC
12. CapSouth Partners Inc. dba CapSouth Wealth Management

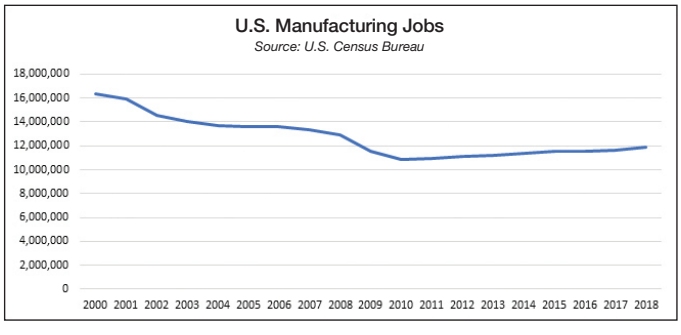
The Prime Working Age Labor Force Participation Decline

Steve Turkoski, Project Manager

Last month's article provided information on the declining labor force participation rate, with the exception of the over-55 cohort, which has rising participation. The labor force participation rate is calculated using the civilian non-institutionalized population age 16 and over. With an aging population, comes a growing population entering retirement age. In general, discussions on the working-age population considers those between 16 and 64; however, the "prime-working-age" cohort is the population between 16 and 54. For the most part, this cohort has finished their formal schooling, and are not on the verge of retirement.



A paper by the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco suggests that since 2000, the loss of blue-collar jobs has brought down the prime-age labor force participation rate. U.S. Census Bureau numbers show a 27.5 percent decline in manufacturing jobs nationwide between 2000 and 2018.



The following quote is from a National Bureau of Economic Research working paper titled Explaining the Decline in the U.S. Employment-to-Population Ratio: A Review of the Evidence by Katherine G. Abraham and Melissa S. Kearney:

"Among the factors whose effects the evidence allows us to quantify, labor demand factors, in particular increased import competition from China and the penetration of robots into the labor market, are the most important drivers of observed within-group declines in employment. Labor supply factors, most notably increased participation in disability insurance programs, have played a less important, but not inconsequential role. Increases in the real value of state minimum wages and in the share of individuals with prison records also have contributed modestly to the decline in the aggregate employment rate. In addition to the factors whose effects we roughly quantify, we identify a set of potentially important factors about which the evidence does not yet allow us to draw clear conclusions. These include the challenges associated with arranging child-care, improvements in leisure technology, changing social norms, increased use of opioids, the growth in occupational licensing, and declining labor market fluidity."

The "leisure technology" mentioned as a factor is online gaming. It has become such a significant factor for young men 21 to 30, that the subject has been the topic of several studies, one of which can be accessed at **www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w23552/w23552.pdf**.

girls inc.®

Local Student Selected As Girls Inc. National Scholar

Aniyah Dent

Congratulations to Aniyah Dent, a member of Girls Inc. of Dothan and an 11th grade student at Dothan High School, who has been chosen as a 2021 Girls Inc. National Scholar and awarded a $20K Girls Inc. Lucile Miller Wright scholarship. Selected for her outstanding academic achievements, community service work and dedication to the Girls Inc. mission of inspiring all girls to be strong, smart and bold, Dent is one of 30 Girls Inc. National Scholars selected in 2021 from across the United States and Canada.

Dent has participated in Girls Inc. of Dothan since 2012. She is on the track and field team at Dothan High School and a member of Delta Gems Chapter, SADD Chapter, Z Club and Black Youth Vote. Her goal is to attend the University of Alabama in Birmingham and study medicine and biology, both to a doctorate level.

"Girls Inc. is not just a place with girls, it is a sisterhood that changes your life. Girls Inc. has brought out a fire in me that I did not think I had," said Dent. "I will forever be grateful to my Girls Inc. family, and no matter what direction life takes me, I will always be a Girls Inc. girl."

The Girls Inc. Lucile Miller Wright Scholarship program was created in 1992, when the female pilot and long-time supporter gave a bequest for scholarships for young women. Over $6.5 million in Girls Inc. scholarships have made post-secondary education more accessible to high school women and has inspired them to succeed in school and consider a broad range of career possibilities.

For more information, contact Jamie Hale, executive director, at (334) 793-2321 or visit **www.girlsincdothan.org**.

#SaveTheDate For Our Next Luncheon Seminar

What Are Google Ads?

Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce
Wednesday, March 10 • 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Tec Tony Lloyd

Every second, there are over two million searches performed on Google, and the majority of the search results include Google ads. Google ads can be an extremely effective way of driving relevant traffic to your website exactly when people are searching for the types of products or services your business offers (*Source: WordStream.com*).

Do you know what Google Ads are or how they work? Come learn this and much more with the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce at the luncheon seminar "What are Google Ads?" Wednesday, March 10, from 11:30 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Presented by Tec Tony Lloyd, owner of Pathfinder Digital Marketing) and Dothan's only Google Data Engineer, will show us that there's a lot more to the service than our company just showing up on Google. We will also learn how we can leverage all the online tactics Google has to offer.

The seminar cost is $15 per person, which includes a boxed lunch, and preregistration is required. To preregister, contact Hayden Camp at (334) 792-5138 or **hcamp@dothan.com**. For more information about Tec Tony's expertise, visit **www.imkindofabigdealindigitalmarketing.com**.

Please note this will be an in-person event. Seating will be limited and the DACC will be following recommendations per the CDC, Alabama Public Health and Gov. Kay Ivey's face mask requirements.

PATHFINDER DIGITAL MARKETING LLC

U.S. Small Business Administration

SBA Programs - Scams And Fraud Alerts

By Office of Inspector General

Beware of Scams and Fraud Schemes

The Office of Inspector General recognizes that we are facing unprecedented times and is alerting the public about potential fraud schemes related to economic stimulus programs offered by the U.S. Small Business Administration in response to the Novel Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19). The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), the largest financial assistance bill to date, includes provisions to help small businesses. Fraudsters have already begun targeting small business owners during these economically difficult times. Be on the lookout for grant fraud, loan fraud, and phishing.

Scams and Fraud Schemes

Grants

- SBA only communicates from email addresses ending in @sba.gov. If you are proactively contacted by someone claiming to be from the SBA, who is not using an official SBA email address, suspect fraud.

Loans

- If you are contacted by someone promising to get approval of an SBA loan, but requires any payment up front or offers a high interest bridge loan in the interim, suspect fraud.
- SBA limits the fees a broker can charge a borrower to 3 percent for loans $50,000 or less and 2 percent for loans $50,000 to $1,000,000 with an additional ¼ percent on amounts over $1,000,000. Any attempt to charge more than these fees is inappropriate.
- If you have a question about getting a SBA disaster loan, call (800P) 659-2955 or send an email to **disastercustomerservice@sba.gov**.
- If you have questions about other SBA lending products, call SBA's Answer Desk at (800) 827-5722 or send an email to **answerdesk@sba.gov**.

Phishing

- If you are in the process of applying for an SBA loan and receive email correspondence asking for PII, ensure that the referenced application number is consistent with the actual application number.
- Look out for phishing attacks/scams utilizing the SBA logo. These may be attempts to obtain your personally identifiable information (PII),to obtain personal banking access, or to install ransomware/malware on your computer.
- Any email communication from SBA will come from accounts ending with **sba.gov**.
- The presence of an SBA logo on a webpage **does not** guaranty the information is accurate or endorsed by SBA. Please cross-reference any information you receive with information available at **www.sba.gov**.

Report Fraud

Report any suspected fraud to OIG's Hotline at (800) 767-0385 or online at, **www.sba.gov/about-sba/oversight-advocacy/office-inspector-general/office-inspector-general-hotline**.

$450 DEPOSIT!
FULLY REFUNDABLE!
**See Reservation Form for more details*

DISCOVER & EXPLORE

ANCIENT GREECE

WITH THE DOTHAN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

9-DAY JOURNEY

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Round trip scheduled airfare
- Round trip transfers between airports and hotel
- 7 nights at the King Saron Hotel (all-inclusive resort) in Isthmia ... Single Hotel Holiday!
- All meals included while at the hotel
- City tour of Athens
- Corinth Canal Crossing
- Full day tour to Mycenae, Epidaurus & Nafplion

Click here to BOOK NOW

EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT
~~$3,099 PER PERSON~~
$2,799 PER PERSON
*if deposited by February 28th!**

BOOK & SAVE
~~$3,099 PER PERSON~~
$2,899 PER PERSON
*if deposited by April 21st!**

Departing October 21, 2021

For more information, please contact Hayden Camp at hcamp@dothan.com

CHAMBER DISCOVERIES

DOTHAN ALABAMA
DOTHAN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

DOTHAN ALABAMA
DOTHAN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

2021 Small Business Person of the Year Award Nominations

The Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce has been presenting the Small Business Person of the Year award to deserving outstanding business owners since 1987. Agnes Simpson of WOOF Radio was the Chamber's first Small Business Person of the Year award recipient. This prestigious recognition is awarded annually to an individual owner of a local small business (1-25 employees). The candidate must show growth or sustainability of their business, have strong employee relations, show commitment to social responsibility and exemplify strong community involvement. Although the candidates will be judged in all of these areas they do not have to excel in every area to win.

Do you know a small business owner with a success story and who is making a contribution to the local community and the economy? If so, nominate them. The Chamber will accept nominations for the 2021 Small Business Person of the Year from Jan. 4 to March 12, 2021. The winner will be announced in May at the Small Business Week General Membership Luncheon.

Each nominee must meet the following criteria:

- Employ between one and 25 people.
- Be the founder, partner or owner of the business.
- Business must be a member in good standing of the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce.
- Have been an active Chamber member for at least three continuous years.
- Business must have been operating in the Dothan area for a minimum of three years.
- Business must exhibit growth and longevity, involvement in community development, innovative practices, and success in the face of adversity.
- Adhere to ethical business practices.
- Candidate can not have won award within the past 10 years.

To nominate a small business person, fill out the information below. *(Please type or print)*

Name of Nominee: _____

Company: _____

Nominated By: _____

Your Phone Number or Email Address: _____

_____

Why this individual deserves recognition: *(For additional comments, attach an additional sheet.)* _____

_____

_____

_____

Return this form to:
Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce • Attn: Hayden Camp
P.O. Box 638 • Dothan, AL 36302 • Fax: (334) 794-4796
Or email Hayden at **hcamp@dothan.com**

Nominations are due by March 12, 2021, 5 p.m.
Thank you for your nomination!

Chamber
Connections

A Publication of the
Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce
March 2021
Vol. 48, No. 6 (USPS 700-660)
© Copyright 2021

Economic**Indicators**

▼	**Labor Force for the Dothan MSA for December:** 64,227 in 2019; 63,249 in 2020 62,600 in 2019; 61,036 in 2020 Employed
▲	**Unemployment for the Dothan MSA for December:** 2.5% in 2019; 3.5% in 2020
▲	**Residential Building Permits for the City of Dothan for December:** 9 issued ($2.68 million) in 2019; 14 issued ($3.96 million) in 2020
▲	**Home Sales in Dothan for December:** 113 sold in 2019; 158 sold in 2020
▼	**Enplanements for Dothan Regional Airport for December:** 5,134 in 2019; 2,297 in 2020
▼	**Houston County & Dothan Sales and Use Tax Collections ($) for December:** $1,740,682 in 2019; $1,602,547 in 2020 (County) $6,403,078 in 2019; $5,827,357 in 2020 (City)

Editor's Note: Sources for this information vary; call the Chamber for details. Data as of 2/04/21. Visit www.dothan.com for the most current information.

Chamber Connections is published monthly (USPS 700-660)
for the members of the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce,
102 Jamestown Blvd., Dothan, AL 36301. Subscription rate is $24 annually.
Postmaster: Send address changes to Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce,
P.O. Box 638, Dothan, AL 36302. Periodicals postage is paid at
Dothan, AL and additional mailing office.

DOTHAN
ALABAMA
DOTHAN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
(334) 792-5138
melia@dothan.com

meeting the challenge ▶ shaping the future

www.dothan.com