

# CSB NEWS

## CLIENT SPOTLIGHT ON... BENDER REAL ESTATE GROUP

Bender Real Estate Group opened its doors in March 2007. Gavin Bender, Sr. is President and has been involved in the real estate business in Mobile for over twenty years. Gavin Bender, Jr. is a Partner and Vice President. Gavin, Jr. graduated from the University of Alabama in 2000 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance and Computer Science and has been working in the real estate business for the past four years.

Bender Real Estate Group is a full service real estate brokerage company. They offer services that include sales, leasing, management and real estate development. The company has over 500,000 square feet of office, retail, and warehouse properties that they lease and/or manage in the Mobile area. Current expansion plans include the addition of leasing and management services in Birmingham and Huntsville.

Gavin, Sr. is a member of the Society of Industrial and Office Realtors (SIOR). This is an exclusive national organization recognized for its professional, ethical, and educational standards. Gavin, Sr. is the only SIOR – Office Professional recognized in the Mobile area.

Some of the office properties developed in Mobile by either

Gavin, Sr. or Bender Real Estate Group are the 60,000 square foot Sears Customer Center, the 70,000 square foot World Omni Financial Facility, the 55,000 square foot Downtowner Corporate Center, and many smaller properties scattered around west Mobile.

Bender Real Estate Group has a staff of five professionals consisting of two realtors, two accountants and one full time maintenance supervisor. They have the in-house capability to handle all physical and financial requirements of the properties that they lease or manage.



L to R: Glenn Leight, Gavin Bender, Jr., Margaret Bender, Brenda Johnstone, Gavin Bender, Sr.

Gavin, Sr. has been a CSB client for over 20 years. CSB is proud of its association with successful companies such as Bender Real Estate Group. If you would like more information about the services offered by Bender Real Estate Group, please contact Gavin Bender, Jr. at 251-445-2468 or by e-mail at [gavinjr@benderrealestategroup.com](mailto:gavinjr@benderrealestategroup.com).

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## VISION STATEMENT

Our firm's objective is to maximize our clients' wealth. We strive to be the premier accounting and consulting firm in our area by offering a complete range of quality services to our clients. We will employ only the best people and ensure outstanding training and long-term career opportunities.

## OUR TEAM MEMBERS

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# 2006 ANNUAL CLIENT SERVICE AWARD WINNER

## **Sandra Preslar**

Sandra Preslar received CSB's annual client service award at our December team retreat. Sandra always has a smile on her face and a warm welcome for our clients. She has been with CSB for four years and is such an important member of the CSB team. In fact, most callers and visitors expect to be greeted by Sandra and are generally disappointed when she is away from her "post."

To reward Sandra for her exceptional client service, she will receive an additional paid day off in 2007.



# 1ST QUARTER 2007 CLIENT SERVICE AWARD WINNER

## **Deborah Martinsen**

Deborah Martinsen is the recipient of our first quarter 2007 client service award. She started with CSB in November 1998, and is an integral part of our firm. As firm Office Manager, Deborah is the "Hub" of our office. She is in charge of the administrative team and handles everything that makes our office run efficiently. Her many duties include overseeing all personnel matters such as payroll, benefits, scheduling, evaluations, training, interviewing and hiring. She is also a valued assistant to the partners in all aspects of managing the firm.

If you want something done, Deborah is our "go to" person. She handles her many duties with a terrific attitude and a smile. Simply put, we could not survive without her!



In recognition of her outstanding service, Deborah received a \$50 NouVeau' gift certificate.

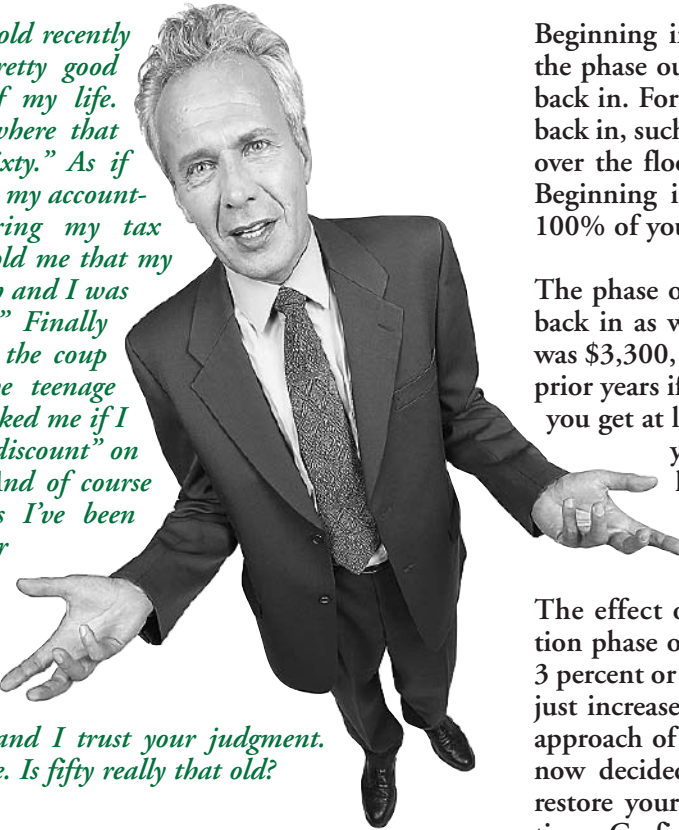
# ASK THE TAX MAN...

*Dear Tax Man,*

*I turned fifty years old recently and was feeling pretty good about this stage of my life. Then I read somewhere that "fifty is the new sixty." As if that weren't enough, my accountant, upon delivering my tax returns yesterday, told me that my income was too high and I was being "phased out." Finally this morning came the coup de grace, when the teenage server at Hardees asked me if I wanted the "senior discount" on my cup of coffee. And of course through all of this I've been receiving a regular dose of AARP solicitations in the mail.*

*Tax Man, I just want to cry. I'm a huge fan of yours and I trust your judgment. Enlighten me, please. Is fifty really that old?*

*Signed,  
Fifty Feeling Sixty*



Dear Fifty,

Here we go again: another letter full of superfluous fodder that I am unqualified to even address, much less answer. I wish you folks would find a good therapist.

Nevertheless, Fifty, I have good news. While I can't help you with AARP junk mail or nearsighted teenagers, I can tell you that your phase outs are being phased back in. Isn't that great?

As reported in a previous newsletter, there are many "phase outs" written into the tax law. The ones that perhaps affect most taxpayers are the phase outs for itemized deductions and personal exemptions. Here's how it works.

If your adjusted gross income (AGI) exceeded \$145,950 (the "floor") in 2005, you started losing part of your itemized deductions such as taxes, mortgage interest, and charitable contributions. The amount you would lose was equal to 3% of the excess of your AGI over the floor amount. For example, if your AGI was \$ 245,950, you would lose \$3,000 of your itemized deductions ( $\$100,000 \times 3\%$ ).

Beginning in 2006, Congress decided to start phasing out the phase out. Say what? Yes, your phase out began phasing back in. For 2006 and 2007, 1/3 of the phase out is phased back in, such that you only lose 2% of the excess of your AGI over the floor. And for 2008 and 2009, you lose only 1%. Beginning in 2010, your phase out is gone, and you get 100% of your itemized deductions.

The phase out of your personal exemptions is being phased back in as well. Your personal exemption amount for 2006 was \$3,300, which could have been phased out completely in prior years if your AGI was high enough. For 2006 and 2007 you get at least 1/3 of your exemption amount regardless of your income, and in 2008 and 2009, you get at least 2/3. Beginning in 2010, you get the full exemption amount regardless of your income level.

The effect of the itemized deductions and personal exemption phase outs has been an increase in your tax rate of 1 to 3 percent or more. Why then, you might ask, didn't Congress just increase your tax rate instead of using this "back door" approach of cutting back your deductions? And if they have now decided to decrease your taxes, why didn't they just restore your deductions and reduce your rate? Good questions. Go figure. You might as well ask "Why did the chicken cross the road?" and then "Why the heck did he come back?"

Fifty, take heart, because there is more good news. Maybe you're dyslexic, but what I think you read recently is that "sixty is the new fifty." So keep your head up, don't believe everything you hear or read, and remember these lyrics from Bob Dylan:

May your hands always be busy  
May your feet always be swift  
May you have a strong foundation  
When the winds of changes shift  
May your heart always be joyful  
May your song always be sung  
And may you stay  
Forever young

Thanks for writing, Fifty. Hold on. You've got a lot of miles left.

Your Friend,  
Tax Man



## TEAM MEMBER NEWS AND BRAGGIN' RIGHTS

CSB accountant *Tim Adams* and Gretchen Buschmann were married on June 9, 2007.

Mark and *Maura Carraway* are pleased to announce the upcoming birth of their first child in December.

CSB welcomes new accountant *Josh Cosker*. Josh received a BS in Accounting and an MBA from Troy University.

*Louise Crow*, daughter of Kenny and Marty Crow, is a very busy young lady! She was named the outstanding sophomore Greek female at the University of Alabama, she interned with Jeff Sessions in Washington during the first part of the summer and she is attending the Kappa Delta National Leadership Conference in Palm Springs, CA later this summer.

*Kenny Crow* was recently appointed to the University of Alabama's Capstone Council, the McGill-Toolen Foundation Board, and the University of South Alabama Gift Planning Council.



*Stephen Ritter and John Shields show off a pair of dolphin from a recent fishing excursion aboard client Randy Ritter's boat.*

*Jeremy Davidson* joined CSB in June. Jeremy received a BS in Accounting from Auburn University and is on our tax team. He is married to Mary Emily and they have one son, John Morgan, who is seven months old.

*Katie O'Connor* has been promoted to Senior Accountant. Way to go Katie!

Congratulations to *Jennifer Partain* – our newest CPA. Jennifer passed the difficult exam in March and is now a Certified Public Accountant. Additionally, Jennifer has been promoted to Senior Accountant.

*Henry Shields*, son of John and Therese, graduated from UMS Wright Preparatory School in May and plans to attend the University of Alabama in the fall.

Bob Schaefer and *Jill Shinault* proudly announce the birth of their daughter *Ilsa Rose*. Ilsa was born on March 23 and weighed 7 pounds, 10 ounces and was 21 inches long. Additionally, Maggie Schaefer was inducted into the National Honor Society at McGill-Toolen in the spring.



*Ilsa Rose*

*Emilee Shuler*, daughter of Deborah Martinsen and a junior at Baker High School, received an academic letter for outstanding academic achievement.

## LOOKING BACK

*We certainly know how bright our partner Gina Lacy McKellar is. According to an article entitled "Looking Back" from a recent edition of The Catholic Week, she has always been a high achiever. We thought you might enjoy some of these 25-year-old memories:*

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### Looking Back

By Anne Baggett



#### 25 Years Ago This Week...

President J. C. McAleer presided over the annual general membership meeting of the Mobile Catholic High Schools Alumni Association held at Korberts Restaurant in Mobile. The organization was established in 1979.

Andy Leon and Tom Lott, served as co-chairman for St. John Parish Lawn Party in Magnolia Springs. Father Anthony Zoghby was serving as pastor of the parish.

Agnes Lover was Valedictorian of the Senior Class and Karen Evans, Salutatorian of St. Jude High School in Montgomery.

Dr. Thomas L. Doyle, principal of Montgomery Catholic High School presented Michael Ross with National Alumni Leadership Scholarship from the University of Alabama. Michael Ross was also a National Merit Scholarship commended student.

*Gina Lacy* was named Ideal Graduate and Valedictorian for McGill-Toolen High School. Ann Schilling and Mike Adams were given the Student Athlete Awards.

Edward Eugene Smith was ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Oscar H. Lipscomb at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

Spring Hill College Baseball Coach Stan Galle retired after 26 years at the helm of the Badger baseball program.

## CSB CLIENTS IN THE NEWS

This is a new feature in our newsletter that gives us the opportunity to recognize and share some accomplishments of our clients and their families. If you have news that you would like to share, please email Deborah Martinsen at [deborahm@csbcpa.com](mailto:deborahm@csbcpa.com). We would love to hear from you!

*Philip Dempsey*, son of Ken and Jean Dempsey and *Margaret Gardner*, daughter of Reed and Joy Gardner, were recognized as outstanding students of the month by the Rotary Club of Mobile-Sunrise.

*William Harvey*, son of Keith and Ashley Harvey received the Edward Greene scholarship at UMS Wright. William won this award in recognition of his outstanding achievements in academics and sports. Nominees are made by the faculty and voted on by the students, and the winner receives a full year of tuition.

Client *Bradley Byrne* was named Chancellor of two-year schools in Alabama.

*Marshall Walton*, son of Johnny and Kathy Walton, received the sports award

for boys' soccer from the Rotary Club of Mobile – Sunrise. Marshall is a standout player for St. Paul's Episcopal School. The Club gives this award annually to the best male and female player in the Mobile area in high school soccer, tennis, and golf.

The following CSB clients were recognized by the Associated General Contractors of America for maintaining an excellent safety record throughout 2006: *Ollinger Construction, Inc.*, *John G. Walton Construction Co.*, *Smith Industrial Service*, and *WESCO Gas & Welding Supply, Inc.*

# CSB CARES

## RONALD McDONALD HOUSE

by Kenny Crow

Being involved in the community and having an opportunity to give back is something that is very important to all of us at CSB. Finding the right organization can be difficult because there are so many good causes and such great need out there.

The Ronald McDonald House of Mobile provides a home away from home to the families of children receiving treatment in area hospitals. In order to stay at the House, they must live more than 30 miles away from the hospital. A stay at the House is designed to make families as comfortable as possible while their children are being treated.

Miracles happen every single day of the week there. The norm is babies born several weeks premature or born with critical obstacles to overcome. Some of the babies never make it out of the hospital but there are so many that do and eventually lead normal lives. The families are so grateful to the House. They often come back just to experience the warmth and love they received at such a critical period in their lives.

The Board of Directors of the RMH is



L to R: Al Tendunfeld, Linda Hall, Kenny Crow

the most active board on which I have ever served. The board is made up of some of the most incredible people you will ever meet. They know that the House plays such an important role in the lives of so many people, so they freely give of their time and talent. The House began operations over seven years ago free of debt due to the hard work of the initial board, and has been very successful in continuing to raise funds because it is such a great cause.

The staff at the House is pretty special

as well. They live with these miracles every day and are such an important part of making our guests feel special while they are staying at the House. I have been on the Board since January of 2003. Since then, I have served on the executive committee for four years and as president for one year. My involvement with the Ronald McDonald House has been one of the most rewarding experiences in my life. If you would like to know how you can help, please contact me at [kennyc@csbcpa.com](mailto:kennyc@csbcpa.com).

## Businesses Getting Results 2007

Our sixth year of Businesses Getting Results (BGR) kicked off at our Mobile office on Thursday May 24. BGR focuses on helping small business owners with important issues such as cash flow, retirement and succession planning, team building, customer service, and more. Most business owners are very good at their specific skill, but rarely have had any real training on how to run a business.

BGR only requires two hours each month away from the office and enables you to learn about ways to grow your

business and increase your profits. BGR introduces new concepts in addition to reinforcing some time-tested strategies. The best part is that you learn in an interactive environment with other business owners who are dealing with many of the same issues.

If you want to learn more about how to manage your business better, interact with peers, and network with other successful entrepreneurs, call me at 343-1012 or email me at [kennyc@csbcpa.com](mailto:kennyc@csbcpa.com).

### BGR Class of 2007

- Universal Supply Company, Inc.
- C & H Construction Services, LLC
- The Club at Rock Creek
- Gleason & Associates
- Wintzell's Oyster House
- Al Pennington, Attorney at Law
- Wings Sports Grille of Mobile
- Dr. Java Coffee Company
- ICS Communications

3742 Professional Parkway  
 Mobile, Alabama 36609

121 Cove Avenue  
 P.O. Box 2405  
 Gulf Shores, Alabama 36547



Newlyweds Tim &  
 Gretchen Adams



Crystal Goolsby,  
 Mobile Bookkeeper



CSB partners sitting l to r:  
 Kenny Crow, Gina McKellar.  
 Standing l to r: Joey Bailey,  
 John Shields, Gray  
 McDermott



CSB Audit Team l to r:  
 Kathryn Bradley,  
 Jennifer Partain,  
 Katie O'Connor,  
 Tim Adams



Lisa Gonzalez,  
 Gulf Shores  
 Bookkeeper



CSB Tax Team sitting l to r:  
 Debbie Schoppert, Kristi  
 Daughtery, Lisa Norris  
 Standing l to r: Jerry  
 Watson, Tim Adams



Mobile Administrative  
 Team, Sandra Preslar  
 and Jill Shinault



Gulf Shores Administrative  
 Team, Jeannie Biggs and  
 Maura Carraway