



## A Great Place To Live

A recent study by On Numbers, a sister publication of the Birmingham Business Journal, revealed that out of more than 1300 cities considered, Mountain Brook ranked No. 4 in the South for quality of life. In their national study, Mountain Brook ranked No. 13 out of 3,764 places. Other high ranking cities in Alabama were Vestavia Hills (No. 180) and Madison (No. 205). Consideration criteria for the study were economic health, traffic, cost of living, housing and education.

### HOW MOUNTAIN BROOK COMPARES . . .

| 2012 Budget Information:             | Mountain Brook | Homewood      | Trussville   | Vestavia     |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Real estate tax revenue              | \$13,450,000   | \$16,000,000  | \$1,350,000  | \$11,870,767 |
| Portion retained in the General Fund | 100%           | 28%           | 100%         | 100%         |
| Sales tax                            | \$8,200,000    | \$20,600,000  | \$21,481,200 | \$9,298,229  |
| Portion retained in the General Fund | 100%           | 58%           | 73%          | 100%         |
| Total General Fund revenue           | \$30,918,998   | \$36,110,774  | \$27,887,000 | \$30,004,396 |
| General Fund surplus (deficit)       | \$485,086      | (\$1,938,548) | \$2,250,000  | \$-0-        |
| Number of full-time employees        | 215            | 503           | 188          | 252          |
| Area (square miles)                  | 13             | 8             | 22           | 18           |
| Population                           | 20,413         | 25,167        | 19,933       | 34,033       |

## ARBOR DAY 2012 TREE GIVEAWAY

The Mountain Brook Tree Commission will be distributing approximately 1500 tree seedlings on Saturday, **March 3, 2012** at local grocery stores (Piggly Wiggly: Crestline and River Run, Western, and Whole Foods). **The giveaway will take place from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.** This year's selections include southern red oak, sassafras, vitex, white dogwood, and sweetbay magnolia.

The Tree Commission will also be conducting the annual school program and distributing 500 white dogwoods to students to take home and plant. Once again, Boy Scout Troop 320 will brave a cold evening of preparing and bagging the seedlings prior to the event. We want to thank Troop 320 and the management at each supermarket for making this event a perennial success. Be thinking of a perfect spot for your new tree!



SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

### SHOP MOUNTAIN BROOK FIRST

Keep your sales tax dollars in Mountain Brook by using **Mountain Brook**, not Birmingham, as your delivery address when ordering online or from catalogs.

www.welcometomountainbrook

the Reporter  
Mountain Brook, Alabama

PRSR STD  
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**Mayor Lawrence T. Oden**  
CITY COUNCIL

**Council President** Virginia Carruthers Smith

**President Pro Tem**

Jesse Vogtle, Jr.  
Amy Carter  
William S. "Billy" Pritchard, III  
Jack Carl

**City Manager**

Sam S. Gaston  
802-3800

For advertising or Chamber of Commerce information, call 871-3779.

## WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

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## RECENT CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS

The City Council has adopted the following ordinances since October, 2011.

- Ordinance #1863 – adopted Stormwater Management Authority's Standard Operating Procedures.
- Ordinance #1864 – repealed Chapter 129, Flood Overlay District of Mountain Brook City Code.

The City Council has authorized or approved the following projects since October, 2011.

- Approved contracts for services for FY-2012 with the following agencies:
  - Alabama Symphony - \$10,000
  - Birmingham Botanical Society - \$5,000
  - Jefferson County Council on Aging - \$650
  - Birmingham Museum of Art - \$13,000
  - Alabama Veterans' Memorial Foundation - \$1,000
  - Jefferson County Historical Commission - \$1,000
  - Exceptional Foundation - \$7,500
- Authorized appropriation of \$20,000 to the Mountain Brook Board of Education to be used for the purchase and installation of playground equipment at the Crestline Elementary playground.
- Awarded lowest bid to Consite Services, Inc. for storm debris chipping and disposal services.
- Approved Taylor-Miree Construction, Inc. Contract Change Order No. 4 with respect to the municipal complex construction project.
- Authorized the magistrates to engage the services of Spanish interpreters for municipal court defendants in consideration of \$30/hour with a two-hour minimum per court session.
- Authorized sale or disposal of certain surplus property.
- Approved certain Mountain Brook

Municipal complex change orders as set forth in RFP No. 3.

- Awarded the bid for roof repair at the Public Works building in the amount of \$64,345 to Goodgame Company, Inc. and authorize the execution of a contract for same.
- Authorized the execution of a maintenance service agreement between the City and Digital Corporation with respect to the City's Avaya telecommunications equipment and telephone system.
- Accepted the proposal submitted by Lower Bros. Co., Inc. in the amount of \$8,000 for the resurfacing of two (2) tennis courts at Overton Park.
- Authorized agreement between the City and Enviro Management Corporation (EMC) for additional testing services at the sewer plant at the High School.
- Authorized the execution of Taylor-Miree Construction, Inc. Contract Change Order No. 3 with respect to the municipal complex construction project.
- Authorized agreement with Mercer Group in the amount of \$27,500 for management and organizational study of City's Public Works Dept.
- Authorized execution of Franchise Agreement with Charter Communication until December 31, 2016.
- Authorized execution of Agreement with AT&T Alabama for broadband services until December 31, 2016.
- Authorized amendment to City's Alabama Deferred Compensation Plan.
- Authorized City Manager to select consultant for Village Walkway system, Phase 6 for construction, engineering and inspections services.

## THIRD QUARTER CRIME STATISTICS

|                    | 3rd Quarter 2011 | 4th Quarter 2011 | Total for 2011 |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| ROBBERY            | 1                | 0                | 6              |
| BURGLARY/RESIDENCE | 16               | 17               | 66             |
| BURGLARY/BUSINESS  | 1                | 4                | 6              |
| THEFT              | 65               | 64               | 294            |
| AUTO THEFT         | 3                | 3                | 9              |
| ASSAULTS (OTHER)   | 3                | 3                | 8              |
| IDENTITY THEFT     | 14               | 13               | 36             |
| CRIMINAL MISCHIEF  | 8                | 22               | 51             |
| DRUGS              | 3                | 13               | 34             |
| FAMILY VIOLENCE    | 7                | 10               | 29             |
| ACCIDENTS          | 288              | 285              | 1,090          |
| A WITH INJURIES    | 22               | 22               | 85             |
| A WITH FATALITIES  | 0                | 2                | 5              |
| CALLS FOR SERVICE  | 7,117            | 5,065            | 24,623         |
| HOUSE WATCHES      | 2,339            | 747              | 5,748          |
| PROPERTY STOLEN    | \$319,758        | \$194,760.86     | \$2,089,749    |
| PROPERTY RECOVERED | \$16,619         | \$9,491.65       | \$61,628       |

## BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY

| Permit Type:          | 3rd Quarter - 2011 |                      | 4th Quarter - 2011 |                      |
|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
|                       | No.                | Permit Value         | No.                | Permit Value         |
| New Construction      | 13                 | \$ 6,272,788         | 12                 | \$ 5,739,876         |
| Alterations/Additions | 160                | \$ 10,335,715        | 60                 | \$ 6,381,670         |
| Repairs/Other         | 233                | \$ 3,806,858         | 169                | \$ 2,436,071         |
| <b>Totals:</b>        | <b>406</b>         | <b>\$ 20,415,361</b> | <b>241</b>         | <b>\$ 14,557,617</b> |

## WANT TO HELP US GET THESE NUMBERS LOWER?

1. Lock your vehicle
2. Take your keys
3. Don't leave valuables in plain view in your vehicle
4. Keep lawn and sports equipment around your home secured when not in use.
5. Keep doors locked and use your security system when you're not at home.

*See it! Hear it! Report it! Let us know when you see suspicious activity in your neighborhood.*



## MOUNTAIN BROOK WALKWAY MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Since 1992, the goal of the Mountain Brook Walkways Master Plan has been to provide a system of sidewalks and trails for pedestrians to create a healthier and more vibrant community. The plan has connected schools, neighborhoods, the villages, parks, and places of worship across all parts of the City. Over the last decade, the Mayor and City Council have been very successful in obtaining federal grants through the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) with the city providing the matching funds. Typically, Mountain Brook matches 20 cents for every dollar spent building the sidewalks.

In 2011, the City saw the completion of two sidewalk projects, Memory Lane and the widening of the stone bridge over Watkins Creek. Both projects utilized federal funds. There is now a safe pedestrian link between the transit stop on Montclair Road and Crestline Village, and a safe way for students and parents to cross the bridge over Watkins Creek.

Phase 6 of the Walkway Master Plan bid in December; construction should start in early 2012. This project utilizes CM/AQ (Congestion Mitigation / Air Quality) federal funds available to the Birmingham Metropolitan Area. This 2.6 mile phase starts on Overcrest Road, goes over the hill to Cherokee Road to Overbrook Road and ties into the sidewalk at Beechwood. This route provides a pedestrian link between the Brookwood Forest and Overton Village areas all the way to Jemison Park. It also connects to existing walks on Old Leeds Road, Shiloh Drive, Knollwood Lane, and Green Valley Road.

Projects that will be ready to bid in 2012 are the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) projects at Mountain Brook Elementary and Crestline Elementary Schools. The 1.9 miles of sidewalks included in the Crestline Elementary project will be on Dexter Avenue, Vine Street, and West Montcrest Road. The sidewalks near Mountain Brook Elementary will be on Canterbury Road, Overhill Road, and Watkins Road. The sidewalks will complete loops that run through the neighborhoods and connect to the schools. Construction is scheduled to begin in late 2012.

ALDOT is also reviewing final plans for an important regional trail connection along Shades Creek Parkway between Jemison Trail and the Homewood Shades Creek Greenway. The project is a coordinated effort between Homewood, Jefferson County, and Mountain Brook. Construction should begin in early 2013.

Phases 9 through 11 have received approval for federal funding and the City will begin designing these in succession over the next few years. Construction will not start on any of these phases before 2014. Phase 9 connects the High School to Brookwood Road by way of Oakdale Drive and Crosshill Road. Phase 10 runs along Old Leeds Lane, Dunbarton Road, and Montclair Road, and Phase 11 runs along Locksley Drive and North Woodridge Road.

The walking system now has a total of thirty-five miles of walkways and trails. In 2012 and 2013 another 5 miles of sidewalk will be added to the system to bring the total to over 40 miles. The Master Plan shows over 47 miles of walkways. If future funding can be obtained, the goal of building a 50 mile network of pedestrian trails and walkways in the City of Mountain Brook can be accomplished before 2020.

Choose Links on our City web site ([www.mtnbrook.org](http://www.mtnbrook.org)) for a copy of the Master Sidewalk Plan.

## STREET LIGHT OUT?

Alabama Power Company maintains nearly 400 street lights on the streets and alleys of our city. However, they do not regularly check for street lights that are not working. If you see a street light that is not functioning properly, please report it to the City Manager's office at 802-3800 or [gastons@mtnbrook.org](mailto:gastons@mtnbrook.org) so the City can coordinate its repair with Alabama Power Company.



## CAROLE EPSTEIN EARNS MMC DESIGNATION.

Carole Epstein, Executive Assistant and Deputy City Clerk, has recently earned the Master Municipal Clerk designation from the International Institute of Municipal Clerks. The Master Municipal Clerk program is a continuing education program to prepare clerks for complex municipal duties.

Carole will serve as 2012 President of the Jefferson County City Clerks Association, an organization that provides networking and continuing education for its members.



## JOY MOMAN ELECTED VICE PRESIDENT

At the September 2011 annual conference for Alabama Municipal Court Clerks and Magistrates, one of our court clerks, Joy Moman, was elected to the office of Vice President. This will automatically place her in the President's position in September of 2013.

The duties of this office include attending quarterly board meetings in Montgomery where they review house bills directly affecting municipal courts in Alabama. Ms. Moman also teaches classes at regional seminars administered by the Administrative Office of Courts in Montgomery.

## IMMIGRATION ACT 2011-535

The State of Alabama recently passed the "Beason-Hammond Alabama Taxpayer & Citizen Protect Act" ("Immigration Act") which affects how local governments contract and conduct business transactions. The portion of the Immigration Act affecting business transactions became effective on January 1, 2012.

Despite public opinion about this legislation, the City is required to enforce the law. Accordingly, starting January 1, 2012, the City will implement new policies and procedures in an effort to comply with the Immigration Act. Some of

these changes include the City's verification of immigration status of applicants for business licenses and permits and other persons entering into contracts with the City. The City will attempt to verify immigration status through the federal government's Systemic Alien Verification for Entitlements ("SAVE") program. To do so, the City will require documentation for individual and partnership account activities. Documents include, but are not limited to, an unexpired state issued driver license, birth certificate, U. S. passport, naturalization or other documents

proving lawful immigration status as issued by the federal government. A complete list of all acceptable documents is available in the Mountain Brook Revenue Department. Please call Melissa Honeycutt, Revenue Examiner, at 802-3808 for more information.

Due to the complexity of the Immigration Act and pending legal challenges, the City is monitoring relevant legal cases and will implement whatever changes to its policies and procedures that are considered necessary to maintain compliance with the law.

## SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

|                                    |  |           |  |
|------------------------------------|--|-----------|--|
| <b>City Council*</b>               | 2nd & 4th Mon.<br><i>(Call 802-3800 for time of Pre-Meeting and location.)</i> | 7:00 p.m. | City Hall  |
| <b>Board of Education</b>          | 2nd Mon.   | 3:30 p.m. | Call Board of Ed Office                              |
| <b>Library Board</b>               | 3rd Tues.  | 4:45 p.m. | Library  |
| <b>Park &amp; Recreation Board</b> | 2nd Tues.  | 5:00 p.m. | City Hall  |
| <b>Board of Zoning Adjustment</b>  | 2nd Mon.   | 5:00 p.m. | City Hall  |
| <b>Planning Commission</b>         | 1st Mon.   | 5:30 p.m. | City Hall  |
| <b>Design Review Committee</b>     | 3rd Wed.   | 8:00 a.m. | City Hall  |
| <b>Tree Commission</b>             | 3rd Tues. (odd months)   | 5:15 p.m. | City Hall  |
| <b>Chamber of Commerce</b>         | 3rd Thurs.   | 7:30 a.m. | Board of Education Office<br><i>(32 Vine Street)</i> |

\*Reminder: City Hall has moved to 3928 Montclair Road which is two buildings east of the Crestline Post Office

## BOARD VACANCIES/APPOINTMENTS

### BOARD VACANCY

The City of Mountain Brook has the following board/committee vacancy to fill immediately:  
*Parks & Recreation Board – (5-year appointment)*

### APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Oden has recently made the following appointment:

*Dr. Brian Christine – Planning Commission*

The City Council has recently made the following appointment:

*Sally Legg – Tree Commission*

The City Council has recently made the following reappointments:

*John Lyon, Jr. – Finance Committee*

*Caroline Roberts Darby – Emmet O'Neal Library Board*

## TRUNK SHOW LICENSING AND PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS

Trunk shows appear to be a growing trend in the city. Trunk shows are being held in existing businesses and in residences on a regular basis. We would like to inform the public and hosts of these events of city's regulations regarding these activities.

Trunk shows held in the city must be licensed and the appropriate sales taxes paid. There is also a separate permit required for each trunk show. Licenses and permits for trunks shows are required for shows taking place in a residence or in an existing business.

- Persons who have trunk shows in the city are required to purchase a trunk show permit and license [City Code Sec. 129-295(b)].
- A person/firm that conducts trunk sales shall not be required to have a city business license if they obtain an appropriate retail/wholesale Mountain Brook business license. If dealing with goods of more than one manufacturer or distributor and fewer than all of such manufacturers or distributors has a current retail/wholesale Mountain Brook business license, such person/firm shall be required to obtain a business license with respect to the goods of the manufacturer or distributor not licensed.
- Trunk sales are defined as the sale of new clothes, clothing accessories, and other consumer goods by means of the purchaser ordering finished goods from samples and/or catalogs that are available for inspection at a location within the corporate limits of the city.
- Gross receipts are defined as the entire receipts of all sales arising out of, or in connection with, any such trunk sale, regardless of the place where the sale was consummated or the place of delivery of the article sold, and shall include the amount of any federal excise tax, state sales tax and county sales tax and there shall not be made any deductions for commissions or payments to agents or for any purpose not herein specifically provided for.
- Trunk show permits are required of the representative hosting the show.

For more information or to register a trunk show please contact the Revenue Department at 205-802-2400 option 4.

## NEW BUSINESSES

### 4D Mommies, LLC

200 Office Park Drive,  
Suite 216  
265-9584

### Alabama Psychotherapy & Wellness

3 Office Park Circle,  
Suite 115  
912-2000

### American Nationwide Mortgage

6 Office Park Circle,  
Suite 100  
870-9600

### AMN Auctioneering, LLC

3821 Westbury Road  
901-8899

### C'est Bon, LLC (new owner)

5 Dexter Avenue  
870-9978

### Crest Valuation Realty

421 Office Park Drive  
223-4202

### Daniel Wolter Law Firm, LLC

402 Office Park Drive,  
Suite 216  
500-2781

### DIYPC Inc dba Vitola Fine Cigars

2909-2911 Cahaba Road  
222-8060

### Dobbins Group, LLC

500 Office Park Drive,  
Suite 420  
503-4000

### Forensic Neuropsychology

3401 Springhill Road  
969-1373

### iCap Realty Advisors

500 Office Park Drive,  
Suite 420  
259-6710

### Lane Schmitt-Speech Pathology

4 Office Park Circle  
259-8698

### Little Caesar's Pizza

3150 Overton Road,  
Suite 10  
444-4101

### Martha Anne Rich, PhD

6 Office Park Circle,  
Suite 213  
870-1932

### Mila Hirsch Gallery, LLC

75 Country Club Boulevard  
413-2448

### Net Access Solutions, LLC

3657 Oakdale Road  
837-4106

### Realty Resources of Alabama, LLC

2900 Cahaba Road,  
Suite G4  
281-3562

### Rejuvenate Face & Body

2816 Culver Road  
413-0232

### S & H Designs

3417 River Bend Road  
914-4801

### Shalla Wista Studio

136 Fairmont Drive  
835-8514

### Shelsky Metal Detector Sales & Service

3640 Northcote Drive  
529-1111

### Spruce, LLC

4004 Little Branch Road  
902-8770

### Taco Mama

63 Church Street  
414-9314

### The Beauty Spot at Angel Hair

66 Church Street  
871-4689

### The Gibson Law Firm

4 Office Park Circle,  
Suite 215  
445-0895

### THS Exploration, LLC

119 Euclid Avenue  
879-7720

### William G. Perkinson (Tile Contractor)

3524 Old Leeds Road  
365-9249



# SHOP. DINE. DISCOVER.

## Welcome to the Villages of Mountain Brook

### MOUNTAIN BROOK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Providing an environment to help our members prosper and succeed through a proactive partnership with the business community, city government, and the community at large

#### Mountain Brook Chamber of Commerce 2012 Board of Directors

- President  
*Amy M. Jackson*
- Executive VP  
*Terry Chapman*
- VP Governmental Affairs  
*Paul DeMarco*
- VP Community Affairs  
*Lee O. Perry*
- VP Marketing/Communications  
*Christiana Roussef*
- VP Business Development  
*Derick Belden*
- CO VPs of Retail
- 280 Plaza—*Ann Sanders*
- Brookwood Village—*Doug Prescott*
- Cahaba Village—*Paige Gilliland*
- Crestline Village—*Will Haver*
- English Village—*Kathryn Keith*
- MB Village—*Seth Adams*
- Office Park—*Jalona Patterson*
- Overton Village—*Annie Damsky*
- River Run—*Craig Martin, DVM*
- Secretary  
*Martha Gorham*
- Treasurer  
*John Wilson*
- Directors at Large
- Frank Caley*      *Dyron Powell*
- Jean Clayton*      *Bob Schuler*
- Tricia Drew*      *Lori Smith, M.D.*
- Kaye Emack*      *Howard Torch*
- John Montgomery*      *Alice Womack*
- General Counsel—*David Faulkner*
- Past President—*Steven Hydinger*
- 2nd Past President—*John Rucker*
- Sustaining Member—*Sam Gaston*
- City Council Liaison—*Amy Carter*
- Executive Director—*Suzan Smith Doidge*
- Project Manager  
*Hannon Sharley Davidson*

- Mountain Brook City Schools Foundation Board  
*Craig Fravert*
- Mountain Brook Sports Corporation  
*Doug Centeno*

## HAPPY NEW YEAR



and create solutions for business and community issues.”

The Chamber is involved in numerous projects throughout the year that benefit our community. We are proud to host the Village to Village 10k and Fun Run, Tuesday Tweet Ups, an Annual Awards Luncheon, Quarterly Luncheons, the Holiday and Mystics of Mountain Brook Parades and more.

As the 2012 Chamber President, I am honored to serve alongside an army of volunteers who work out-front and behind the scenes to build a better Mountain Brook for all citizens. Thinking outside the box, working together to make things happen, and supporting the efforts of all make our community unique.

If you're not a member of the Mountain Brook Chamber of Commerce, please join us today. Your investment will pay big dividends in many different ways as we work together to make Mountain Brook a better place to live, to work and to raise our families.

Sincerely,

Amy M. Jackson  
Chamber President, 2012

You can find MBTV on Channel 10 and [www.mbtvonline.com](http://www.mbtvonline.com).

Be sure to catch the next episode which airs February 20th



## Ribbon Cuttings

As a community, we share the vision. We work, we volunteer, we support and we serve as we build on the successes of those who came before us and develop new and innovative strategies that will make Mountain Brook even better.

For many years, this Chamber of Commerce has diligently fulfilled the mission of its founding fathers to “create, enhance, and promote the economic environment, employment opportunities and the quality of life in our community and to advocate



Vino Ribbon Cutting: (L-R): Amy Jackson, Al Rabiee, Lee Perry, Mayor Terry Oden



Vitola Fine Cigars (L-R): Lee Perry, Jim Saunders, Harris Saunders IV, Harris Saunders III, Mayor Terry Oden, Steven Hydinger, Alice Womack

## Happy 10th Anniversary!



Hassig Family Chiropractic (L-R): Representative Paul DeMarco, Dr. Lori Hassig, Dr. Brad Hassig, Mayor Terry Oden, Lee Perry, Steven Hydinger

Platinum Level Member:



Gold Level Members:

Borland Benefield | Bryant Bank | Christian & Small, LLP | Costco Wholesale | First Commercial Bank | iStore Self Storage | Regions Bank | Southern States Bank  
ShopMountainBrook.com | Sterne Agee | Village Living | Vulcan Media Team

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Adler



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*Paige Albright*  
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*Valentine's Day is Tuesday, February 14*



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MOUNTAIN BROOK  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## Annual Luncheon February 9, 2012 - The Club



**Keynote Speaker:**

**DON LOGAN**  
retired Time Inc. CEO,  
Owner Seek Publishing  
Inc., B.A.S.S. LLC  
and the Birmingham  
Barons.

*Don Logan, left with  
chamber president  
Steven Hyding  
and chamber  
executive director  
Suzan Smith-Doige*

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**IBERIABANK**

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For more information or to register go to  
[welcometomountainbrook.com](http://welcometomountainbrook.com)



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## DEBATE TEAM SUCCESS: A CULTURE OF COMMITMENT

**I**magine, as a teenager, spending your free time researching and writing arguments about morality, public policy and law.

What motivates a group of students to spend long hours arguing about ethics or world events when they could be hanging out with friends, going to sporting events, or gaming? Students who enjoy reading, researching, writing, and discussing issues for debate events are among the brightest in the country. And they are very competitive.

“I believe that there is no better activity to do in high school than debate,” Mountain Brook High School junior and debater Zijie Yin said, “because it forces one to think critically not only about the function and interactions of different arguments, but also allows oneself to delve

deeper into what constitutes the good life and how to distinguish right from wrong.”

“Something most people don’t realize about debate is it makes you mentally tough,” says junior debater Haley Siddall. “You learn to accept the good with the bad to work harder than anyone else if you want to win.”

Some debaters focus on the opportunity to interact with other debaters. “The people are what I love most about debate,” sophomore Chamblee Shufflebarger said. “It’s great to meet all sorts of interesting people and to hear all the different things they will say in a round. This is especially true when you actually get to know these people in between debate rounds or at debate camp. And the MBHS team members - we’re practically like family and they are

some of the nicest, most intelligent people I have ever met.”

Haley Siddall loves the excitement involved in debating. “I think the one thing I love most about it is the suspense. Every round there is something new, some new curveball thrown at you. You learn information on the most interesting topics and are forced to form opinions (on both sides, of course) and debate them.”

Mountain Brook High School debate coach Jeff Roberts describes the commitment of students to debate. “Our debaters spend the first part of their summer preparing for the national tournament and then attend debate camps for several weeks afterward. By the time they fin-

— continued on page 18



*continued from page 17 —*

ish with those, it is time to start school again in August. During the school year, they give up many of their weekends to travel around the country competing in debate tournaments.”

Chamblee prefers participating in debate to other activities. “I find that debate tournaments are a better use of my time than sitting at home all weekend being lazy or going to the movies or something. Given that getting up early for the tournament isn’t very pleasant, the rounds are still fun. Also, without debate, I would have never been to Harvard or Wake Forest, or the school where they shot Ferris Bueller’s Day Off. It’s a great expe-

“Something most people don’t realize about debate is it makes you mentally tough. You learn to accept the good with the bad to work harder than anyone else if you want to win.”

—Haley Siddall, MBHS debater

rience to be able to travel across the country with people who can talk with you about anything for an entire plane ride. Basically, debate is not an experience, it’s a lifestyle. An intense one. I wouldn’t give it up for anything.”

The culture of debate competition is a unique one. Like debate coaches, the students sharpen each other by challenging each other’s arguments both in and out of debate rounds. This increases the level of competition by increasing the critical thinking around refuting arguments and makes all the debaters better.

From an educational perspective, the debate “classroom” goes way beyond physical classroom because the feedback students receive from teachers from all over the country broadens their learning experiences. Former debate coach and administrative services director Lisa Beckham believes learning occurs in both. “When students present their arguments, refute their opponents’ arguments, and get constructive feedback from the judges who are other debate coaches, lawyers, and other professionals in the field, they learn as much as, if not more than, from all their research and writing. They gain perspective from other cultures and communities and are forced to think critically about social and ethical issues from all angles.”

Graduates of Mountain Brook High School agree that the debate program is high quality and teaches students lifelong skills. State Representative Paul DeMarco, a Mountain Brook graduate, described his involvement in debate as a highlight of his high school years. “Debate was a great training ground for public speaking, doing

## Three Types of Debate

In **Lincoln-Douglas** debate, debaters must argue for and against a proposition of value which concerns what ought to be instead of what is. In Lincoln-Douglas debate, debaters will argue over widely held values about what ought to be the case rather than what may actually be the case.

**Policy debate** is team debate where one side proposes a plan, in the form of a resolution, to solve a problem and the opposing team argues against the plan. It typically calls for policy change by the federal government. It is characterized by very rapid speech, which makes it largely inaccessible to general audiences.

**Public Forum debate**, is public friendly, no prior training required, and is the kind of debate often seen in televised political debates. In Public Forum, invented by Ted Turner for his networks, debaters argue over current events in a style typical of Cross-Fire style television news shows.



research, and preparation for both public service and my law career. I received a great education at Mountain Brook High School, and the extracurriculars like debate that prepare you for real life experiences are invaluable. I’m really proud of what the debate team has accomplished over the years, and I’m glad I was a part of it.”

A goal of Coach Roberts’ is to increase community awareness of the debate program and build

support for it. “I want to continue to build ownership in this team and this activity. Our community has a debate program that is among the best in the country. Our program was one of the top 10 in the nation for the last four years. Many people don’t know what debate is but they know that we’re a winning school; I think that’s the culture you have to have to succeed consistently and that’s the culture that we want.”

## HIGHLIGHTS OF MBHS DEBATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- 2005-2011 State Champions in Debate events
- 2009 & 2011 Overall (all events, theatre, speech, congress, and Debate) School State Champions
- 2009-2011 a MBHS Debater finished inside the top 10 in the nation at the National Championship – over 110,000 high school students are members of speech and debate teams
- 2009 made “Elite Eight” of the Tournament of Champions
- 2011 made the “Sweet Sixteen” at the Tournament of Champions
- 2007 MBHS won every in-state tournament’s over-all team award
- 2011 Mountain Brook won the Barkley Forum at Emory University
- 2009 MBHS won JV Policy National Championships at Woodward HS in GA
- 2009 MBHS was one of only two schools in the country to qualify teams to the Tournament of Champions in all three major debate events
- 2011 MBHS was 4th place in Policy Debate at the National Championships
- 2010-11 MBHS made the 100 club of the NFL Honor Society
- 2010 MBHS made the top 32 at the National Debate Coach Association Championships
- 2011 MBHS was named the Deep South District Leading Chapter
- Many individual state champions
- Individual state championships in Extemporaneous Speaking, Impromptu Speaking, After Dinner Speaking, and Congress.
- 2007 MBHS Coach named AFEA coach of the year, in 2009 the AFEA student of the year, 2010 the AFEA competitor of the year, and in 2010 & 2011 the NFL Deep South District Honor Society Student of the year



## Jeff Roberts, Mountain Brook High School Debate Coach

THE REPORTER: How long have you coached debate and how did you get into it?

**JEFF ROBERTS:** This is my sixth year as head coach. I was not a debater in high school or college. I, sort of, fell into being a debate coach. I have a personality that is suited to wanting to do something like this and am extremely competitive, and I don't like doing anything unless I can do it all the way. Before I moved into coaching debate full time, I felt as though I



wasn't able to give my all to being both an English teacher and a part-time debate coach, and I wanted to do really well at one of them. (MBHS Principal) Mr. Wilson asked me which I wanted to do and I chose to coach debate full-time.

**Q:** Obviously, debate requires travel and interaction with other teams and with other coaches. What is the culture like among high school debate coaches?

**A:** Our community is coast-to-coast and students are able to present their learning and their thinking through debate rounds. Our kids see the best educators from the best high schools from the entire country at every competition. This creates a large body of people who serve as teachers for our students at these events. My professional learning community consists of the other coaches I come in contact with at tournaments, in between rounds and in the tab room and at the conferences and coaching institutes I attend. We talk about best practices and it's a practicum in professional learning. When I go to Harvard and other places to teach debate in the summer, I'm sharing labs with the best coaches in the country. The debate coaches group is so supportive of each other because the better a coach I am, the better my students are at debate and the better the competition is at every tournament.

# WEB Leaders

## WEB Leaders Welcome and Support New MJBH Students

**M**ost of us who have been through junior high remember two universal concerns of being a new student: (1) dealing with new people and (2) being able to open our lockers. Those and more are addressed by Mountain Brook Junior High's WEB Leaders program. Now in its fourth year, WEB Leaders (Where Everybody Belongs) are 9th graders—this year a total of 83—who agreed to serve as leaders and role models for 7th graders. The big event at the beginning of the school year is Spartan Day. "Spartan Day gives the students the opportunity to develop new relationships with other 7th grade students," said principal Ben Hudson. "It allows them to meet teachers and visit classrooms before school starts. It helps with the transition to the junior high on social, academic and practical levels."

Faculty member Chad Sorrells, who cosponsors WEB Leaders with Adam Johnson, also emphasizes the intent of Spartan Day. "In a tight community," he said, "we have four groups of students who have been with the same group of kids for as long as seven years. So, the transition to a school where you don't know three-quarters of the students can be tough."

On Spartan Day, groups of ten 7th graders are assembled, with an eye toward each student interacting with 7th graders from elementary schools other than their own. Each team of ten 7th graders is led by two 9th grade WEB Leaders. "We have a pep rally to get them pumped up about school," Mr. Sorrells said. "We go through their schedules to get them used to the setting and we introduce them to key people. We hope that alleviates some of the anxiety about starting the year."

WEB Leader Griffin Cope agrees. "I came from Brookwood Forest which is a small school, so I was coming in to a much larger place. At this age, you tend to be self-conscious, but you really have to put yourself out there to make new friends."

Before Spartan Day, WEB leaders are selected



Spartan Day, August 2011

from a large pool of applicants. They participate in two days of training in the summer. Chandler Law, a WEB leader this year, said that the training taught the leaders how to help the 7th graders learn how to meet new people. "That's important for being able to be happy at the school," she said.

But the WEB Leaders program doesn't end on Spartan Day. WEB Leaders continue to check in with their assigned 7th graders during the year. More activities are sponsored by the WEB program. On a Sunday evening in December, the program sponsored "Cocoa & Cram," a study session attended by 50 students and 15 teachers, who gave up their Sunday evening to help students preparing for exams.

"WEB provides a support system for 7th grade students as they transition to the Junior High and for that first year," said principal Ben Hudson. "Also, it provides 9th grade students the opportunity to be leaders and to be role models."

Web leader Kristin Walton had a specific reason for choosing to be involved as a WEB leader. She transferred into MJBH in the middle of the 8th grade from Hoover. "I wanted to help new students at this school feel welcome, the same way I was made to feel welcome when I came here." to help new students at this school feel welcome, the same way I was made to feel welcome when I came here."

### LEGAL NOTICES

#### NONDISCRIMINATION NOTICE

The Mountain Brook School system does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability or age in any of its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: Dr. Dale Wisely—Director of Student Services (Title VI), Mrs. Sylvia Harper—Personnel Director (Title IX), Dr. Missy Brooks—Director of Instruction (Title II), Mrs. Shannon Mundy—Special Education Director (Section 504). Contact Information: 32 Vine Street; Mountain Brook, AL 35213; 205-871-4608

### KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

#### SAVE THE DATE!

Mountain Brook Schools

Registration for All Incoming Kindergarten Students

|                                    |                    |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Mountain Brook Elementary</b>   | <b>February 15</b> |
| <b>Brookwood Forest Elementary</b> | <b>February 16</b> |
| <b>Cherokee Bend Elementary</b>    | <b>February 22</b> |
| <b>Crestline Elementary</b>        | <b>February 28</b> |

For more information, call your elementary school office.



# Mountain Brook City Schools Foundation



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## Mountain Brook City Schools Foundation Funds Library Enhancement

Each year the Mountain Brook City Schools Foundation evaluates a request from the school system for funding that will affect student learning in the areas of technology, staff development and library enhancement. For the 2011-2012 school year, an allocation was made for each school library. Much like in the classrooms, the technology needs and applications are constantly changing in the libraries/media centers. No longer places where silence and stillness prevail, libraries are now centers of activity. The following are comments from Jan Winstead and Steven Yates who are the librarians at Mountain Brook High School regarding the value of the additions to the library because of funding from the foundation:

*Activity is never in short supply at the MBHS library. With an average of over 1,000 patron visits per day, the library strives to provide access to print and digital resources for all of its stakeholders. One way the Mountain Brook City Schools Foundation has helped the library achieve this goal is providing funds for the continued development of an ebook collection for research on a variety of subjects.*

*These ebooks are revolutionizing the way our students access information for research. For roughly the cost of one print copy of a book, the library is able to purchase unlimited online access to the book. This access allows any student wanting to use the book the chance to read it at the same time as their classmates whether at school or at home. If the school library owns the ebook format, the library staff puts a label inside the print book to notify the students. The students can also search the library catalog and icons identify books that are available in ebook format. The librarians instruct the students on accessing the ebooks from school and home, furnishing login and password information at the time of instruction. The students are taught how to use the ebook features including searching within the books, an option far more digital learner-friendly than using the index. Other features include the ability to "arrow" to specific chapters and the option of printing directly from the computer. The number of ebooks on our research topics is still limited but the availability and quality is improving. This revolutionary research development does not replace our rich print collection or the Alabama Virtual Library. Instead, it gives students the opportunity to take full advantage of the MBHS library collection. Without the support of the MBCS Foundation, the MBHS library could not provide this research tool for its 21st century learners.*

### Learn More About The Foundation

If you have questions about the activities of the Mountain Brook City Schools Foundation, call our office at 414-0042 or visit the website at [www.mtnbrookschooolsfoundation.com](http://www.mtnbrookschooolsfoundation.com). We welcome your interest and we invite you to join in our efforts to provide funding for academics in the Mountain Brook Schools. Although much has been accomplished thanks to the over \$4.4 million in funding that has already been provided by the foundation, much more can be achieved with your participation. Please make an investment in education that will benefit our schools for years to come. A pledge card is included in this publication or you can download one from our website.

### Mountain Brook High School Class of 2002 Reunion

Planning is underway for the 10-year reunion for the Class of 2002. The reunion will take place this spring or early summer, and the official dates for the reunion and a preliminary schedule of events will appear in the next issue of The Reporter. Organizers will be communicating with class members by email and snail mail, so please update your contact information as follows:

Reunion Email Address:

[mbhsclassof2002@gmail.com](mailto:mbhsclassof2002@gmail.com)

Carmine Jordan, Executive Director,

Mountain Brook Schools Foundation:

[mbcsfoundation@bellsouth.net](mailto:mbcsfoundation@bellsouth.net)

Facebook: "MBHS 2002 Reunion!" Group

