




Eufaula, Alabama 

2022  
NOVEMBER 7-9  
[www.almstnruraltourism.com](http://www.almstnruraltourism.com)

#ALMSTNRTC22

Sweet Home  
**Alabama**

[www.Alabama.Travel](http://www.Alabama.Travel)

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

KAY IVEY  
GOVERNOR



STATE CAPITOL  
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130

(334) 242-7100  
FAX: (334) 242-3282

## STATE OF ALABAMA

November 7, 2022

Greetings:

I would like to welcome you to the Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi Rural Tourism Conference held on November 7 - 9, 2022 in Eufaula, Alabama at Lakepoint State Park.

The State of Alabama is proud to host this exciting event and to welcome you with true Southern hospitality.

During your stay, I hope you will take advantage of the many family oriented and fun-filled activities that your host city has to offer.

Upon completion of the event, many of you will return to your homes. I wish you a safe and pleasant journey and hope you will come back to Alabama often.

Again, welcome to the Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi Rural Tourism Conference and best wishes for a memorable event.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kay Ivey".

Kay Ivey  
Governor

KIpb/aw



**JACK B. TIBBS, JR.**  
Mayor

**JOY WHITE**  
City Clerk/Treasurer

**JOEL P. SMITH, JR.**  
City Attorney



**COUNCIL MEMBERS**

**WES REGISTER**  
President  
**OTIS HILL**

President Pro Tempore  
**MAVIN BROWN**  
**BENJAMIN F. GARRISON, III**  
**JOHN WAYNE ROBINSON**

**Greetings:**

Welcome to beautiful Eufaula, Alabama! On behalf of all the citizens of Eufaula and our City Council, we are delighted that you have chosen Eufaula as the site of the 2022 AL | MS | TN Rural Tourism Conference on November 7-9. If time permits, please take a few minutes for a tour of what our city has to offer.

We are very proud of Eufaula, with its many fine recreational facilities, schools, wonderful people, and distinguished history. Eufaula is a rapidly growing and thriving community. True Southern hospitality is indeed alive and well in Eufaula.

The Yoholo Mico Trail, part of the National Rails-to-Trails System, affords visitors the opportunity to exercise while enjoying scenic views of natural waterfalls and Lake Eufaula from the old river bluff adjacent to the Chatahoochee River. The trail, which begins on East Broad Street, connects the downtown area with the northern portion of Eufaula. Or perhaps you will find interesting a walking tour of our historic district, which boasts numerous homes and landmarks listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including Shorter Mansion. The Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge located adjacent to Lakepoint State Park Resort is an outstanding nature preserve. And, of course, there are numerous opportunities for shopping excursions.

I am certain you will enjoy your guided bus tour of our historic community, as well as the welcome reception and our Main Street Christmas Open House on Monday. You will also be entertained and treated to the delicious culinary expertise at dinner with renowned Chef Chris Sherrill on Tuesday.

Again, welcome to Eufaula. We are honored to have you in our city and hope your visit is enjoyable.

Sincerely,

Jack B. Tibbs, Jr.  
Mayor

# Barbour County Commission

**COMMISSION MEMBERS:**

Jerry McGilvray, Vice Chairman District 5  
Rachel Smith, District 1  
Jason Bennett, District 2  
Frances Crews, District 3  
Patricia H Ivey, District 6  
Stan Adams, District 7

**EARL GILMORE**  
CHAIRMAN  
P.O. BOX 398  
CLAYTON, AL 36016  
TELEPHONE: (334) 775-3203  
FAX: (334) 775-1102

**STAFF:**

**RAYE ANN CALTON**  
Chief Administrator  
Walter B. Calton  
County Attorney

Greetings:

Welcome to Eufaula, Alabama and Barbour County. On behalf of the Barbour County Commission we welcome you to the 2022 Alabama-Mississippi-Tennessee Rural Tourism Conference on November 7<sup>th</sup> thru November 9<sup>th</sup>. We are glad you have selected our area to discuss rural tourism. We feel that not only Eufaula, but Barbour County offers you unique opportunities to experience a variety of activities and events.

Whether it be the historical parts of Eufaula or the interesting destinations in the county such as the Octagon House in Clayton, to Blue Springs State Park we feel you will not lack the opportunity to have a great time. Barbour County offers significant hunting venues in the county on many farms as well as the Alabama Wildlife Management outside of Clayton. If you like fishing, either on Lake Eufaula or the "State Lake" in Clayton, offers you a chance to catch the "big one".

We feel that whatever your interests, you can find it in Barbour County and Eufaula.

On behalf of the Barbour County Commission, we welcome you and hope to see you again on future trips to the area. Our little part of the world.

Sincerely,



Jerry A. McGilvray  
Barbour County Commission  
Vice-Chairman

**JACK B. THIBB, JR.**  
Mayor

**JOY WHITE**  
City Clerk/Treasurer

**JOEL P. SMITH, JR.**  
City Attorney



**CITY OF  
EUFULA**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS**

**WES REGISTER**  
President

**OTIS HILL**  
President Pro Tempore

**MARVIN BROWN**

**BENJAMIN F. GARRISON, III**

**JOHN WAYNE ROBINSON**

**Welcome!**

The Eufaula City Council welcomes you to Historic Eufaula, Alabama. We are excited to have the Alabama-Mississippi-Tennessee Rural Tourism Conference in our great city this year. Be sure to visit and enjoy the wonderful restaurants and downtown shops we offer while you are here. Set aside time to stroll on the Yoholo Mico Walking Trail, and no trip to Eufaula is complete without taking in our many historic homes and buildings.

The council congratulates The Eufaula Barbour County Chamber of Commerce and Main Street Eufaula on their hard work hosting and organizing this beneficial conference.

Eufaula is renowned for its hospitality and friendliness; the entire city is glad you are here and already looking forward to your next visit.

Sincerely,



**Wes Register**  
Eufaula City Council President  
District 3



**AL | MS | TN Rural Tourism Conference  
Pre-Conference Tour  
Monday, November 7, 2022  
Eufaula Barbour County Tourism  
Pre-registration required at:**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ALMSTNRTC22>

Join the Eufaula Barbour County Chamber and Main Street Eufaula team for an afternoon guided bus tour of Historic Eufaula. Board the shuttle at the Eufaula Barbour County Chamber of Commerce's west entrance (Livingston Avenue Side) at 2:45 p.m. or 4:15 p.m. *Each* tour is limited to the first fifty-five guests. Guest parking is available in the south parking lot of the Chamber building from Livingston Avenue, or along the median and sidewalks of East Broad Street.

Sights include: The Old City Jail, The Tavern, Yoholo Micco Walking Trail & Wiregrass Birding Trail, Manny, Splash Pad Park, James S. Clark Interpretive Center, MacMonnie's Fountain, Seth Lore & Irwinton Historic District, Downtown Business District and Monuments, Historic First Presbyterian Church, Fairview Cemetery, Shorter Mansion, St. James Episcopal Church, Eufaula Carnegie Library, Confederate Monument, Kendall Manor, Fendall Hall, and many more!



\*Each tour will feature a stop for a guided tour of the Historic First Presbyterian Church (201 N. Randolph) [www.firstpresbyterianeufaula.org](http://www.firstpresbyterianeufaula.org) and of Fendall Hall (917 W. Barbour Street) <https://www.fendallhall.org>



The Eufaula Barbour County Chamber's Board of Directors and Board of Realtors will host a welcome wine and charcuterie reception from 4 - 7 p.m. in the James S. Clark Interpretive Center located in the Eufaula Barbour Chamber of Commerce 333 E. Broad Street. On site conference registration will be available inside the Chamber during reception hours.

Following your tour and time at our Chamber reception, we hope that you will choose to explore our downtown shopping district's Christmas Open House that will be held Monday evening as well. Merchants will offer extended shopping hours and special Christmas Open House pricing in our downtown boutiques until 8:00 p.m. or choose to enjoy dinner in one of our shopping district's restaurants.

Again, welcome and we hope that you will enjoy  
*Experiencing Eufaula!*





## Conference Schedule

### Tuesday – November 8, 2022

- 6:30 – 7:30 a.m. Breakfast for conference attendees at Lakepoint Resort State Park served in The Water's Edge Restaurant.  
Sponsored by **Eufaula Barbour County Tourism**
- 8:00 – 8:45 a.m. Welcome
- 8:45 – 9:45 a.m. General Session #1  
*"Do as I Say, Not as I Do: Lessons Learned"*  
Paige Hutto, Executive Director,  
Chambers of Commerce Association of Alabama
- 9:45 – 10:00 a.m. Introduction of Exhibitors
- 10:00 – 10:45 a.m. Break - Snacks provided by  
**Alabama Blackbelt Adventures**  
Visit Exhibitor Booths
- 10:45 – 11:45 a.m. General Session #2 *"Main Street IS Tourism"*  
Mary Helmer Wirth, Executive Director,  
Main Street Alabama
- 11:45 – 1:15 p.m. Lunch – Water's Edge Restaurant  
Lakepoint Resort State Park  
Sponsored by AL|MS|TN Rural Tourism
- 1:15 – 2:15 p.m. General Session #3  
*"Rural Economic Development"*  
Brenda Tuck, Rural Development Manager  
Alabama Department of Commerce  
STS Scholarship Presentation
- 2:15 – 2:30 p.m.
- 2:30 – 3:00 p.m. Break – Snacks provided by  
**Alabama Blackbelt Adventures**  
Visit Exhibitor Booths
- 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. General Session #4 *"Black Belt Adventures"*  
Pam Swanner, Executive Director  
Black Belt Adventures
- 4:00 p.m. Sessions Close for the Day
- 4:45 p.m. Load Coaches at Lakepoint Resort State Park for transport to Eufaula's Shorter Mansion (340 N. Eufaula Avenue) for an evening with Eufaula native, Chef Chris Sherrill. For those driving personal vehicles, limited parking is available behind the Shorter Mansion Courtyard Pavilion, across the street at Eufaula's Carnegie Library, at First Presbyterian Church at 201 N. Randolph or in the downtown business district on East Broad Street.
- 5:00 p.m. Arrive at Shorter Mansion – Self-guided tour





The Shorter Mansion, one of Eufaula's most opulent homes and pristine example of Neoclassical Revival architecture, was constructed over a period of five years from 1901 to 1906 by Eli Sims Shorter II and his wife, Wileyna Lamar Shorter. Named to the National Register of Historic Places in 1972 and included in the Historic American Buildings Survey, the mansion is located in the Seth Lore and Irwinton Historic District of [Eufaula](#). The house was designed and built by Frank Lockwood and his son Frank Lockwood Jr. of [Montgomery](#), at the

then-remarkable cost of \$100,000. Today, the mansion houses the Eufaula Historical Museum and serves as headquarters of the Eufaula Heritage Association.

The 8,700-square-foot home is situated on land purchased by Eli Shorter II from his neighbor in 1901. The Neoclassical Revival mansion took five years to complete, with expert craftsmen creating its six-layer moldings, hand-carved wall sculptures, inset mirrors over fireplaces, and elaborate interior and exterior Corinthian columns. Hand-cut parquet wooden floors on the first floor were constructed from planks of mahogany, oak, and walnut and laid in three different patterns: chevron, hexagonal tiling, and interlaced ribbons.



The white stucco mansion is distinguished by the 17 distinctive Corinthian columns that line the front porch. Topped with curling acanthus leaves and scrolls, each side of the columns' capitals is decorated with a flower that bears an "S" in the center (in place of the pistil). Above the columns, wrapping around the entire building, is a frieze of oak leaves and stems; a small curved balcony sits over the front entrance. Six identical columns can be found inside the mansion, with one pair located in the entryway, a second pair in the double parlors, and a third pair in the upstairs master bedroom.

The front and back doors feature beveled leaded plate glass arranged in a lotus-blossom design. The rooms on the ground floor include the entryway, double parlor, dining room, sitting room, library, and solarium with curved glass windows, a new technology for the period. A large staircase leads to the second floor, which houses five bedrooms and a master bath. Above the downstairs back porch is a second screened room that served as the family's summer sleeping area.



The double parlor features hand-sculpted stippled panels and fireplace mantels with bead molding in a honeysuckle design. Sliding doors in the dining room are decorated with glass panels that were frosted through a painstaking process using patterns of glue on marble. The brick gardening and planting shed is the only existing building on the grounds. A backyard pavilion, completed in 2013, provides a space for events and parties.



In 1965, Wileyna S. Kennedy, who inherited the mansion from her mother, Fannie Shorter Upshaw (daughter of the Shorters), put the mansion up for auction, and the newly formed Eufaula Heritage Association placed the winning bid of \$33,000. The Eufaula Historical Museum now displays nineteenth and early twentieth-century clothing, furnishings, and toys and provides visitors with an interpretive exhibit of everyday life from that period in Eufaula and Barbour County. Portraits and memorabilia from the six state governors who hailed from Barbour County are showcased in

the Governor's Parlor. The Shorter Mansion is open year round and hosts the annual Eufaula Pilgrimage, Alabama's oldest tour of homes, on the first weekend each April. The mansion is also part of the Christmas tour of homes held on the first weekend of December. Enjoy the music of Pianist Gray Mitchell on one of the mansion's square grand pianos.

5:30 p.m.

An evening with Chef Chris Sherrill

Sponsored by **Alabama Power Company and Eufaula Barbour County Tourism**

We will adjourn to the Mansion's courtyard pavilion to meet and enjoy the evening's meal prepared by Chef Chris Sherrill.



Chef Chris Sherrill was born and raised in Eufaula, Alabama. Chris knew at an early age that he wanted to cook. All throughout his time in Boy Scouts he honed his campfire and wild game cooking skills. In High School, the urge to cook was overwhelming and the thought of being a professional chef was equally inviting. In 1995 Chris entered The National High School Recipe contest sponsored by Johnson & Wales University. Chris' dish of Fruit Stuffed Quail with Orange Cranberry Sauce was Alabama's winning recipe! It also awarded him a scholarship to Johnson & Wales University in Charleston, SC. During his time at Johnson & Wales he gained invaluable knowledge necessary to bring his talents to the table.



In addition to being a professional chef and restaurateur, he and his wife Jenny have 4 children. Chris enjoys hunting, fishing, coin collecting and of course being a Father. Chris was selected to cook for the 2012 Olympics in London where he and a team of chefs from the Gulf Coast brought the rich tradition from that area to London to cook for American Olympians and their families. In 2015, as Executive Chef, he represented Gulf Shores, Alabama at the World Food Championship where he finished 3rd in the world. In 2017 he traveled to Cabo Verde, Africa where he was Culinary Ambassador to the U.S. Embassy. Now retired from the restaurant life, Chris currently works as a food sales consultant and enjoys time with his family and his hobbies.

Accomplishments include winner of the 2012 Alabama Festival of Flavors, 5th annual Hangout Oyster Cook Off and People's Choice. 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 Perdido Key Wine and Arts Festival, AL.com's top 10 best burger on the island. Eagle Scout class of 1992. In 2015, he won the Zatarain's Restaurant Challenge. While he continues to share his culinary talent as a private chef for celebrities, he also happily answers the call of his hometown to assist with events. In addition to this evening's event, Chris has most recently returned to Eufaula to headline The 150<sup>th</sup> Celebration of Eufaula's First Presbyterian Church and also First Presbyterian's Wine to Water fundraiser that supports their local effort to install clean water systems in villages in the Dominican Republic. We are so thrilled to have Chris with us for the AL | MS | TN Rural Tourism Conference.

#### Event Menu

*Charcuterie hors d'oeuvres*

- Course 1:** *Shrimp & Grits with Alligator Sausage*  
**Course 2:** *Smoked Pork Loin adorned with pineapple relish with  
Roasted tri-color potatoes*  
**Course 3:** *Blackened Fish Jambalaya*  
**Course 4:** *Donut King Bread Pudding*

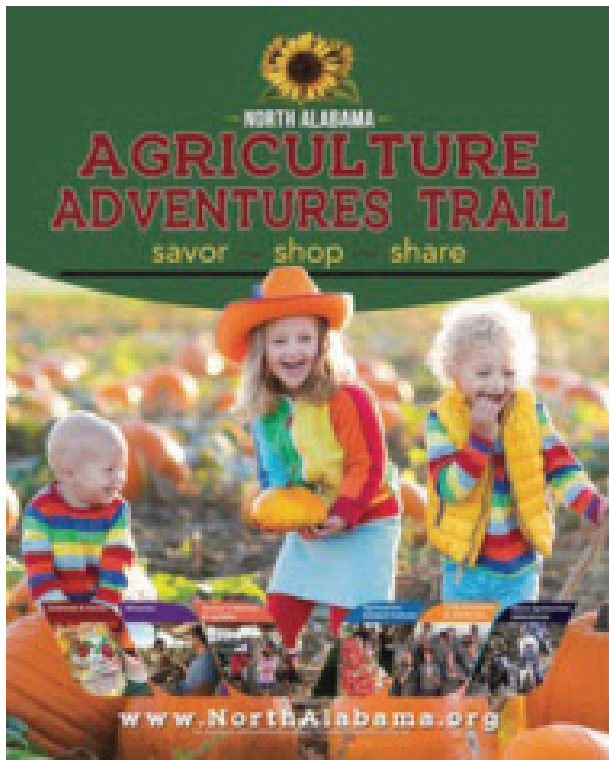
7:00 p.m. Shorter Mansion event concludes, but, feel free to catch a shuttle or enjoy the short stroll to East Broad Street (two blocks south) for extended shopping hours with our local merchants. Shuttles will continue to run to Lakepoint Resort every thirty minutes, with the final shuttle of the evening departing at 8:00 p.m. from the Eufaula Farmer's Market located at 115 S. Orange St.

*Note: An Evening with Chef Chris Sherrill event will be held outdoors under the beautiful Mansion Pavilion. A light sweater is recommended. Also, for those driving personal vehicles, parking is available in the lot behind Shorter Mansion or across the street at Carnegie Library.*



**Wednesday, November 9, 2022**

- 6:30 – 7:30 a.m. Breakfast at Lakepoint Resort State Park served in The Waters' Edge Restaurant.  
Sponsored by **Eufaula Barbour County Tourism**
- 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. General Session #5  
*"Developing Small Town Tourism – a Primer"*  
Tami Reist, President  
Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association
- 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. General Session #6  
*"Eufaula's Heritage & Outdoor Tourism"*  
Allie Logan, Coordinator  
Barbour County Extension  
Matt Ulmer, Extension
- 10:00 – 10:30 a.m. Awards Recognition  
Break – Snacks provided by  
**Alabama Blackbelt Adventures**  
Visit Exhibitor Booth
- 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. General Session #7 *"Give Us Your Best Pitch"*  
Marketing Your Tourism Brand  
Marty Marbry, West Tennessee Division Manager, Tennessee Department of Tourist  
Development
- 11:30 – Noon Wrap Up  
Evaluations  
Announce Silent Auction Winners  
Announce 2023 RTC Location  
Wine & Spirits Pull
- Noon ADJOURN

A group photograph of the JJPR Agency staff. There are ten people in total, seven women and three men, posed in two rows. The back row consists of seven women standing, and the front row consists of three women and one man sitting on a light-colored sofa. They are all dressed in professional, semi-formal attire. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

LET US TELL YOUR STORY

[jjpragency.com](http://jjpragency.com)

**JJPR**  
— AGENCY —

## Conference Speakers

### Greg Fuson



Greg Fuson is the Director of Research and Community Engagement for Chandlerthinks, a Franklin, Tennessee based place marketing company, specializing in brand development, place making, strategic planning, tourism asset assessments and event economic impact. Greg has been assisting clients in understanding their markets through the use of research for more than twenty-five years. Greg has managed studies for a number of national-branded clients, including work as the Director of Research for The Country Music Association. His passion, however, is in working with destinations, especially rural destinations, an area where he has worked with more than one hundred sixty communities around the country.

### Paige Green Hutto



Paige Hutto is the current President and CEO of Chambers of Commerce Association of Alabama. A seasoned chamber professional, Hutto has spent thirteen years as president and CEO of the Gilmer Chamber in Ellijay, Georgia. Her chamber career started in 1998 when she was hired as tourism director for the Eufaula Barbour Chamber of Commerce in her hometown of Eufaula, Alabama. Throughout her career, Hutto was hands on with the strategic operations, financial viability, communications and brand strategies of the organizations she served. A collaborative leader, her experience in event management, investor relations, governmental advocacy and fundraising were key skills sought by the CCAA board. A 2015 graduate of the US Chamber Institute of Organization Management (IOM), Hutto served on the board of the Georgia Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives and earned her Georgia Certified Chamber Executive (GCCE) in 2019.

### Allie Logan



Allie Logan was born and raised on her family's farm in Barbour County. She attended Auburn University where she obtained a Bachelors Degree in Agriculture Communications and a Master's Degree in Adult Education. As Barbour County Extension Coordinator, she has worked hard to improve the quality of life for Barbour County citizens. She enjoys working with the youth through 4-H programs and educating farmers on fruit production, mental health, business planning, and marketing. Allie is married to David Logan of Ozark, Alabama. They have a daughter, Carolina.

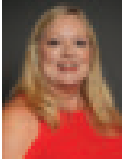
### Marty Marbry



Marty Marbry currently serves as West Tennessee Division Manager for the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development, a position she has held since 2005. In this role she works with twenty six counties developing both domestic and international tourism opportunities. She works to create and implement strategic marketing plans, works with media to inform the importance of tourism to the local and state economies. She also serves as the department liaison to Tennessee Hospitality and Tourism Association for the planning of the annual Governor's Conference. Prior to joining the state she spent ten years in retail-tourism management as marketing/tourism director for Urban Retail Properties, Wolfchase Galleria. In this position she was selected to work with eleven other premier shopping destinations across the United States in the Ultimate Shopping Excursions Program. This rewards program promoted shopping as the international and leisure tourist activity, offering discounts and shopping rewards.

Marbry graduated with a B.S. in Communication from the University of Memphis. She currently serves on the AL MS TN Rural Tourism Conference Board. In 2012 she was appointed to the Tennessee Tombigbee Waterway Authority Board by Governor Bill Haslam and has served on the Southeast Tourism Society board of directors. Additionally, she serves on the Metro Memphis Attractions Association, as well as the Memphis Convention and Visitors Bureau Tourism Foundation board of directors. Marty and her husband Greg live in Bartlett, TN.

## Tami Reist



During her more than three decade long career in the tourism and travel industry, Tami has lived by the theme expressed by the famous American heroine Helen Keller, "Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much." This theme is carried forth in all of her speaking engagements across the country and has had proven results in her professional accomplishments. Tami is the President/CEO of the Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association (AMLA). Her duties include planning, implementing, directing, and evaluating all promotional programs as well as overall development of the tourism and travel industry within the 16 northernmost counties of the State of Alabama. The region currently generates more than \$2.6 billion in travel expenditures on an annual basis. Tami's responsibilities also include strengthening and expanding the membership base of AMLA, a not-for-profit organization. This organization is supported by 500-plus members consisting of Chambers of Commerce, Convention & Visitors Bureaus, attractions, campgrounds, festivals, communities, counties, golf courses, restaurants, tour operators, accommodations, vendors, financial institutions, and individuals. Counties included within the AMLA region are Blount, Cherokee, Colbert, Cullman, DeKalb, Etowah, Franklin, Jackson, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Morgan, and Winston. Tami is a board member for a number of tourism and travel-related and civic organizations including: Governor Appointee to the Scenic Byways Committee, Alabama Tourism Chair for the Appalachian Regional Commission, Southeast Tourism Society Legislative Council, the Alabama Bicentennial Commission, Alabama Travel Council, Alabama Council of Association Executives, Alabama Association of Destination Marketing Organizations, and numerous other local and state travel related groups. Tami is also an instructor at the Southeast Tourism Society's Marketing College in Dahlonega, GA, and has been a contributing presenter to the tourism and travel field of study at Mississippi State University. Among her many recognitions are the ATHENA Leadership Award from the Decatur-Morgan County Chamber of Commerce, the Alabama Travel Council Partnership Award, the Southeast Tourism Society Dorothy Hardman Spirit Award, inductee into the Morgan County Leadership Hall of Fame and this is Alabama, Birmingham magazine's Women Who Shape the State honoree, a "Women of Impact" award recipient from Yellowhammer News / Yellowhammer Multimedia, and a 2021 graduate of the Appalachian Leadership Institute, a leadership and economic development program sponsored by the Appalachian Regional Commission. During her career, Tami has served as the President/CEO of the Decatur-Morgan County Convention and Visitors Bureau; as Project Manager and General Manager of Courtyard by Marriott - Decatur, Ala.; Regional Manager for Hampton Inn and Country Inn & Suites by Carlson - Decatur and Florence, Ala.; and as General Manager and Project Coordinator of the Amberley Suite Hotel - Decatur, Ala. Tami's interest include interior design, flying with her husband, traveling, and spending time with her grandchildren.

## Pamela J. Swanner



Pam Swanner has over thirty years of leadership experience in the tourism industry throughout Alabama and the Southeast. As Director of Alabama Black Belt Adventures Association ([www.alabamablackbeltadventures.org](http://www.alabamablackbeltadventures.org)) – a public/private sector non-profit organization – Swanner leads an association dedicated to fostering economic development in Alabama's 23-county black belt region through the marketing and promotion of the vast array of outdoor recreational opportunities such as hunting, fishing, canoeing, hiking, birdwatching, and others, and supports the marketing efforts of those representing the many cultural and heritage amenities.

Previously, Swanner has served as Project Manager for the Alabama Birding Trails development commissioned by Alabama Tourism Department; Field Researcher for Randall Travel Marketing, Charlotte, NC; Vice-President of Marketing – Greenville, SC Convention & Visitors Bureau; Executive Director – Decatur/Morgan County Convention & Visitors Bureau; and ten years in the hotel industry.

### Professional Service:

Alabama Bass Trail Board of Directors 2018-present  
Southeastern Outdoor Press Assn. Board of Directors 2017-present  
Alabama Association of DMOs Secretary 2017-2019/President 2000-2002

Hunting Works for Alabama Co-Chair 2016-2019  
Alabama Black Belt Commission Chair, Marketing/Tourism 2010-2014  
Alabama Tourism Partnership, Chair 2001-2005  
Alabama Mountain Lakes Association President 1997-1999  
Alabama Travel Council Board Member 1997-2006  
Alabama Hospitality Association Board Member 1997-2001  
Alabama Bureau of Travel & Tourism, Marketing Committee 1997-1999  
Hotel Sales & Marketing Assn Int. Alabama Board 1996-1997

**Awards:**

- 2015 SEOPA, Chuck Buckley Special Friends Award
- 2005 Alabama Tourism Partnership "Champion" Award
- 2005 Alabama Mountain Lakes Association "Tourism Professional"
- 2004 Alabama Mountain Lakes Association "Organization of the Year"
- 2003 Alabama Bureau of Tourism & Travel "Executive of the Year"

**Dr. Matt Ulmer**



Dr. Matt Ulmer serves as the Alabama Cooperative Extension System's state specialist for Community Development. Working alongside County Extension Coordinators and Regional Extension Agents, Dr. Ulmer leads strategic initiatives and programming to help individuals, families, and communities grow and thrive. Dr. Ulmer's areas of focus include workforce development, community leadership and civic engagement, disaster preparedness, tourism, and improving quality of life in Alabama communities.

Prior to his current appointment, Dr. Ulmer served as a graduate assistant with the Government & Economic Development Institute at Auburn University where he conducted policy research, supported institute educational programs, and assisted with community level projects and initiatives. He also previously held public relations and marketing roles in both the private and public sectors. Dr. Ulmer holds a bachelors, masters, and doctoral degree from Auburn University and a masters degree from the University of Virginia.

**Mary Helmer Wirth**



Mary Helmer Wirth brings a wealth of experience to downtown and neighborhood commercial district revitalization. She is an experienced professional specializing in community and economic development strategies, relationship building, training and leadership development. Ten years as a local Main Street Director in Emporia, KS forged a lifelong interest in district revitalization and community development. Emporia was the first Kansas community recognized with the prestigious Great American Main Street Award from the National Trust Main Street Center. In 2007,

Mary became a coordinator for the Kansas Main Street Program and served in that capacity for 5 years. In 2012, Mary formed Helmer Consulting LLC and has worked with communities in several states on market understanding, economic development implementation strategies, leadership development, fundraising and more. While working as a private consultant, she developed the leveraged funding package and managed the public relations on a project to convert a former high school into a hotel/convention center. In 2013, she became the President/State Coordinator of Main Street Alabama, where she worked to re-launch the statewide coordinating program following a 10-year hiatus, leaving small and large cities without resources to revitalize their downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts. Main Street Alabama was incorporated in 2010 as a 501(c)3 nonprofit to serve as the state coordinating Main Street program in Alabama. Mary was hired in 2013 to lead the program. Main Street is a national model designed to bring jobs, dollars, and people to small towns and commercial districts. Main Street programs leverage private investment and capitalize on the unique appeal of historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts. The result is one of the most successful economic revitalization strategies in the country. Main Street Alabama is dedicated to nurturing successful revitalization programs across the state. Alabama currently has 29 designated communities and 42 downtown network communities and continues to grow at a rapid rate.

### Education & Professional Development

- 1989 Emporia State University - BS in Psychology
- 2000 Total Trainer Institute
- 2004 Leadership Kansas Graduate
- 2004 Kansas Main Street Executive Director of the Year
- 2005 Great American Main Street Award
- 2007 National Trust Main Street Center - Certified Main Street Manager
- 2007 Kansas Main Street State Coordinator
- 2010 Heartland Economic Development Course
- 2013 Main Street Alabama President/State Coordinator
- 2015 Presented at the White House Convening on Rural Placemaking
- 2019 Leadership Alabama Graduate

For more information: Mary Helmer Wirth, President/State Coordinator of Main Street Alabama, [mary@mainstreetalabama.org](mailto:mary@mainstreetalabama.org), 205-910-8819

# Alabama

## Peanut Producers Association



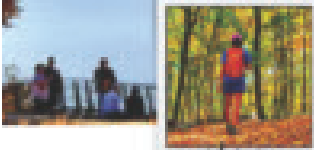




VISIT  
MORRISTOWN  
TENNESSEE

YOUR NEXT DESTINATION.

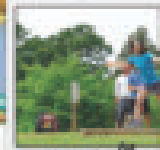
LAKES, MOUNTAINS, OUTDOOR ADVENTURE.



*Hiking*



*Boating*



*Disc Golf*

PANTHER CREEK STATE PARK | MOTUS PANTHER CREEK TRIATHLON  
HISTORIC DOWNTOWN | TN DISC GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS  
CHEROKEE LAKE | DIRT CIRCUIT ULTRA MARATHON

#VISITMORRISTOWNTN | [VisitMorristownTN.com](http://VisitMorristownTN.com) |   

# TRI-RIVERS



WATERWAY  
DEVELOPMENT  
ASSOCIATION

**The AL | MS | TN Rural Tourism Conference would like to especially thank  
the  
2022 RTC Planning Team**



Ralph Antonelli, Columbus, MS  
Christy Burns, Corinth, MS  
Nancy Carpenter, Columbus, MS  
Rachel Carter, Mississippi State University  
J. Thomas Chestnutt, Harvest, AL  
Trisa Collier, Alabama Tourism Department  
Colleen Coury, Jackson, TN  
John Dersham, Fort Payne, AL  
Frances Glenn, Columbus, MS  
Steve Hawkins, Eufaula, AL  
Mary Beth Hopper, Jackson, TN  
Candace Johnson, Tuscaloosa, AL  
Rene Lance, Columbia, TN  
Maggie Lowery, Jackson, MS  
Marty Mabry, Memphis, TN  
Danielle Morgan, Mississippi Tourism Association  
Jessica Morgan, Sweetwater, TN  
Reid Nevins, Columbus, MS  
Hope Oakes, Columbus, MS  
Beth Pippin, Savannah, TN  
William Poindexter, Mississippi State University  
Patti Presley-Fuller, Pickensville, AL  
Teresa Prober, McMinnville, TN  
Tami Reist, Decatur, AL  
Tina Robbins, Aberdeen, MS  
Jed Smart, Carrollton, AL  
Lynsey Smith, Natchez, MS  
Ann Sparks, Eufaula, AL  
Pam Stenz, Linden, AL  
Hugh Stump, Gadsden, AL  
Ann Tackett, Aberdeen, MS  
Kim Terrell, Southaven, MS



Fendall Hall - Eufaula, Alabama

## Alabama Power Company is proud to sponsor the Rural Tourism Conference 2022.

Welcome to all of our friends from the great states of Mississippi, Tennessee and our namesake Alabama. We here at Alabama Power Company trust that you enjoy your stay here in Historic Eufaula during this year's Rural Tourism Conference. Please enjoy the conference, the scenery and most importantly enjoy yourself.

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Alabama Power

# WELCOME RTC 2022



## Our Vision

To promote and foster a vibrant business community that enhances the quality of the greater Eufaula-Barbour County area.

## Our Mission

To be leaders ensuring our community is the best place to visit, live, work, invest and play.

**EUFAULA** *Alabama*  
**BARBOUR COUNTY**  
chamber of commerce

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# 15 County Regional Focus

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SERVING ALABAMA'S  
BUSINESS, INDUSTRY,  
AND GOVERNMENT  
SECTORS OF THE  
ECONOMY



### CONTACT US:

CEDE  
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Merrill Hall 900  
Jacksonville, AL 36205  
336-762-5224  
www.jcu.edu/ced



**Our strategy**  
Measuring impact through  
targeted research and  
data data analysis.

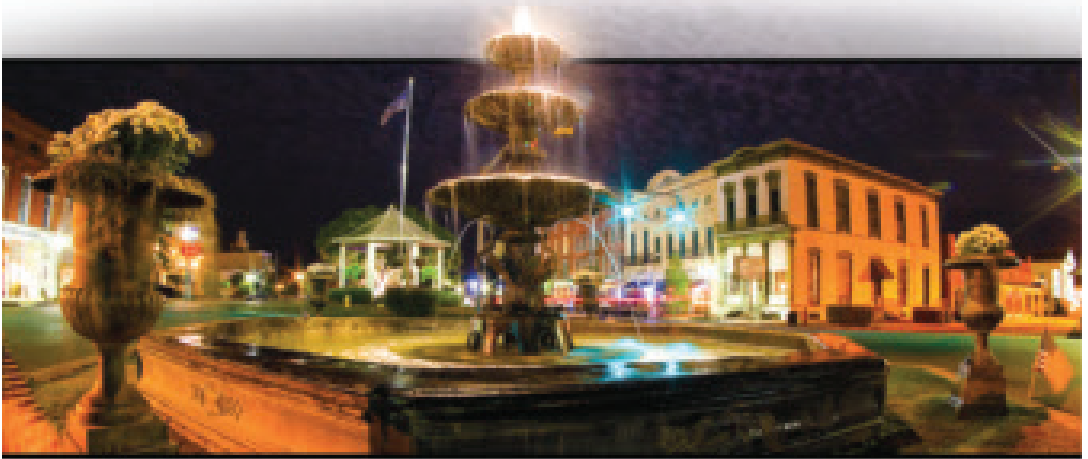


**CENTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
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# TTC

## TENNESSEE-TOMBIGBEE WATERWAY COUNCIL

# WELCOME RTC 2022



*Main Street is a proven strategy for revitalization.*

*Main Street is a powerful network of linked communities.*

*Main Street is a unique preservation based economic development program.*

*Our Main Street tell us who we are, who we were and how the past has shaped us.*

*Our Main Street is the place of shared memories where people still come together to live, work and play.*

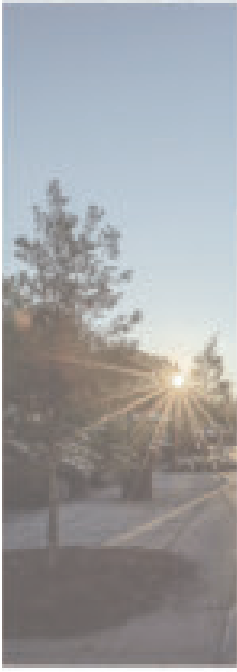
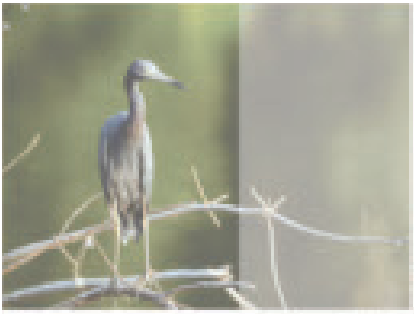


Promoting Commerce, Keeping Character

**MAIN STREET EUFAULA** *Alabama*

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