

Alabama Retailer

*RETRO RETURN
ARC Returns
\$7.5M to Members*

*SHOP ALABAMA
Holiday Spending
to Grow 4%
to \$18.75B*

*MEMBER HIGHLIGHT
THE PACEY FAMILY
Owners Of Punta Clara Kitchen*

*RETAIL HONOREES
Retailers of
the Year and
Centennial
Retailers*

FROM HER KITCHEN TO YOURS

Ashley McMakin

FOUNDER/CEO OF ASHLEY MAC'S KITCHEN



From the President



Collective Courage Adds Up & Makes Alabama Better

Let's talk about courage.

It takes a lot of courage to open a business.

Having a dream and making it your reality, recognizing a need in your community and acting on it, takes courage.

You do the research and you invest. You put in the hard work.

Then, you unlock that door and hope the customers walk through it.

I'm in awe of you and your courage.

These pages are full of courageous people. I so enjoyed visiting with this year's Retailers of the Year (Pages 6 and 7). Learning about your businesses. Meeting your families and your teams. Watching your communities celebrate you and witnessing your commitment to community. I teared up a bit, every time.

Inside are stories about family businesses, businesses that have endured for generations. Businesses that carry on the legacies of their founders. When faced with great loss, you carry on.

Some have had the courage to grow their businesses, to start again in more communities.

Some have nurtured the next generation and have passed the torch to them.

All that courage adds up.

Alabama's retailers, restaurants and bars employ more than 400,000 of our state's citizens, or one of every four Alabamians employed in the private sector. Your payroll nears \$11 billion.

Wow, just wow.

Getting to represent you is the best job in the world.

Rick Brown, Publisher and President

Alabama Retailer

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Rick Brown

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Holiday Spending to Near \$18.75 Billion in Alabama

Holiday spending in Alabama should near \$18.75 billion, growing 4% from last year.

Alabamians spent 5.6% more during November and December 2022 than they did during the same period in 2021.

Through August 2023, taxed sales in Alabama had grown 5.5% over the same eight months in 2022, based on the Alabama Revenue Department abstracts.

Alabama Retail projects that sales will continue to grow in Alabama through the end of the year, with the pace of growth slowing to 4% and possibly 3.5% depending on another interest-rate hike and government budget uncertainty.

A 4% growth rate in the traditional holiday spending months would put taxed spending at \$18.74 billion in our state. In the final two months of 2022, Alabamians spent \$18 billion.

Alabama Holiday Spending

2023*	\$18.74B
2022	\$18B
2021	\$17B
2020	\$15B
2019	\$13B

*Projected



Alabama consumers have not stopped spending in the face of inflation and higher prices, but they continue to shop smarter and shop early. Looking for the best deals for their holiday purchases, consumers everywhere continue the trend of stretching their shopping budget out over a longer period. Many began holiday shopping as early as August, while others made a sizable dent in October.

Punta Clara Kitchen began making its fruitcakes, a holiday favorite, in August this year to meet demand through November (Page 4). "The holiday season is our busiest time at Ashley Mac's," Ashley McMakin in our cover story (Page 11-12). Besides buying holiday staples at the grocery store, consumers are buying more and more ready-made or heat-and-serve meals like those offered at Ashley Mac's Kitchen. ■

👉 [Visit alabamaretail.org/news/holiday-shopping-prediction-2023/](https://alabamaretail.org/news/holiday-shopping-prediction-2023/) for updates throughout the season.

CANDY AND MORE

Pralines, Divinity, Fudge, Bourbon Balls, Toffee and Fruitcake, Oh My!

FOR 71 YEARS, THE PACEY FAMILY HAS BEEN MAKING CANDY AND CANNING SOUTHERN DELICACIES ON ALABAMA'S EASTERN SHORE

Story and photos by Nancy King Dennis.



Paul and Susan Pacey stand with their daughter Kim Pacey Clay behind a morning's worth of fruitcakes mixed up and ready to go into the oven at Punta Clara Kitchen. "All of this will take two days to cook," said Kim. "We try to get (the fruitcakes for the holidays) done before the end of November."

In the late summer or early fall, you might find Paul Pacey at one end of a table mixing; his daughter Kim Pacey Clay at the other end using the back of a serving spoon to pack ingredients tightly into various sizes and shapes of pans; and his wife Susan Pacey on the opposite side of the table adorning unbaked cakes with pecans and glacé fruit, like cherries and pineapples.

If you walk into Miss Colleen's house at 17111 Scenic Highway 98 and see that scene, you know it is fruitcake making time at Punta Clara Kitchen on Alabama's Eastern Shore.

The Pacey family uses a recipe that is more than 100 years old, passed down from generation to generation.

This year, whenever the final pan goes into the oven for its two-hour bake, they hope to have 750 pounds of fruitcake for their customers to buy this holiday season.

That is about 250 pounds more than last year, but if you haven't ordered yours yet, do so soon, because for the past three years they've sold out before December.

Dorothy Brodbeck Pacey (1920-2008), Paul's mother and Kim's grandmother, started Punta Clara Kitchen in 1952 as a backyard hobby, about a mile and a half down the road from her grandfather's house in Point Clear's historic district. In 1974, Dorothy inherited the house from her Aunt Colleen, a portion of which has been home to the Punta Clara Kitchen ever since.

The business began when a friend of Dorothy's suggested she sell her fig preserves rather than give them away. Today, the Paceys still put up and sell fig preserves. "We actually go and pick our figs from people nearby who have fig trees," said Kim Pacey Clay, president and manager of the family business. As much as possible, the family uses local produce. The pecans in the fruitcakes, for example, come from the Underwood Pecan Farm in Summerdale.

The Paceys don't grow any crops, even though you can find glass jars glistening on shelves in front of massive windows

filled with 25 different fruits and vegetables. Besides figs, there's pickled okra, watermelon rind/bread and butter and other pickles, pepper/scuppernong/muscadine and other jellies, peach preserves, raspberry jam, orange marmalade and candied jalapenos (Kim's recipe).

While the fruitcake recipe is Bessie Brodbeck's (Dorothy's mother's), Kim says 90% of the recipes Punta Clara Kitchen uses today are Dorothy's, including the pralines Dorothy and her husband developed when they were just starting the

business in the early 1950s. The business is also known for its fudge, divinity and polliwogs (a milk chocolate base topped with a vanilla caramel and pecans). The "old-fashioned confections that bring people back to their childhood memories" tend to be the biggest sellers, said Kim.

Besides fruitcakes at Christmas, the Paceys also sell panoramic sugar eggs and

chocolate bunnies at Easter. Brandee Pacey, one of Dorothy's granddaughters, had the idea to decorate the bunnies with masks when COVID hit, which boosted sales to 800 bunnies in 2020. Brandee is Punta Clara Kitchen's resident cake baker and decorator.

When the fruitcakes are being made, Brandee is also around the table as is Amy Boddie, who weighs the cakes out in one, two, three and five-pound increments. Amy's also responsible for social media for the business.

Kim recommends getting some of the earliest fruitcakes made, even if you are buying or having them shipped closer to the holidays. "They're better, the longer they sit," she said. "They'll easily be good for three to six months" without refrigeration or freezing and will last longer when cooled.

The recipe includes brandy. "We cook 'em, they cool off, and then we put 'em down in tubs and airtight containers with apple slices to kind of soften 'em up," said Kim. "Then, we take 'em out of that and we season 'em with more brandy, and then we shrink (wrap) 'em and pack them. They are well pickled by the time they go out on the shelf." ■



Punta Clara Kitchen at 17111 Scenic Highway 98 in Point Clear is open 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday to Saturday and 12:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sundays year-round. On Christmas Eve, it is open 9 a.m. to noon. It is closed Independence Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter. Visit and order online at puntaclara.com

And the 2023 Alabama Retailers of the Year are ...

Photos by Nancy Dennis and Brandon Robbins.

1

MARK MCKINNON

McKinnon Toyota and Nissan, Clanton
Gold, Annual Sales More Than \$20 Million

2

CHRISTIE HOWELL

Wrapsody
Hoover, Auburn, Trussville and Homewood
Gold, Annual Sales \$5 Million to \$20 Million

3

GREGG AND BEN WOOD

JBT Power, Daphne and Semmes
Silver, Annual Sales \$5 Million to \$20 Million

4

THE WILSON FAMILY

Saw's Inc., Homewood | Saw's Juke Joint, Mountain Brook | Saw's Soul Kitchen, Birmingham
Bronze, Annual Sales \$5 Million to \$20 Million

5

BRYSON KESSLER

Clover + Bee, Vestavia Hills
Gold, Annual Sales \$1 Million to \$5 Million

6

SID, SHEA, BRIAN & GINA SCHROLL

The Name Dropper/Storkland, Montgomery
Silver, Annual Sales \$1 Million to \$5 Million
(Pictured with their extended family)

7

ELIZABETH ADAMS

ExVoto, Mountain Brook and Montgomery
Bronze, Annual Sales \$1 Million to \$5 Million

8

MELISSA SIDES ANDERSON

Toodlebugs, Athens
Gold, Annual Sales Less Than \$1 Million (Tie)

9

SARAH JANE LEVINE

Lily Jane Boutique, Auburn
Gold, Annual Sales Less Than \$1 Million (Tie)

10

ANN C. WELCH

Nunnally's Noble Frame & Gallery, Anniston
Silver, Annual Sales Less Than \$1 Million

11

AISHA TAYLOR

Bridge + Root, Birmingham
GEE Emerging Retailer of the Year

12

DAVID CHRISTOPHER'S

David and Jennifer Smith, owners
Customers' Choice Award
976 votes of 10,445 votes cast
(Pictured with their team)

 *Find stories about these outstanding Alabama retailers at alabamaretail.org/news/2023-retailers-year/*



More photos at [f AlabamaRetail](#)

CENTENNIAL RETAILER

Same Two Families Have Operated Montgomery Furniture Store for 100 Years

BISHOP-PARKER FURNITURE COMPANY
REACHES CENTENNIAL MILESTONE IN 2023

Story by Nancy King Dennis. Photos by Brandon Robbins and Nancy Dennis.



Charles Parker III and John Parker represent two-thirds of the third-generation owners of Bishop-Parker Furniture Co. in Montgomery.

“Our founders built this business with the intention for it to last a long time,” said John Parker, current president of Bishop-Parker Furniture Co., a century-old business with two stores in Montgomery. “That’s why we’re still here. They just did things the right way.”

Matthew Borum Bishop and Charles Daniel Parker, who had worked well together in a local hardware business, founded Bishop-Parker Furniture in 1923 at 9 Monroe St. in downtown Montgomery. Their venture has endured for 100 years, 50 years in downtown and 50 in midtown.

The Bishop and Parker families remain the company owners. The current principals are the grandsons of the founders – Matt Bishop, John Parker and Charles Parker III.

Throughout this year, the Bishop and Parker families have been celebrating 100 years of selling furniture in Montgomery. On social media, they have shared stories about the three generations of their families and their longtime employees – like how the founders became movie stars when their portraits were used for the bank scene in the movie *Big Fish*.

Under the original M.B. Bishop’s and C.D. Parker’s leadership, the company moved in 1933 to a much larger and visible downtown location on Commerce Street.

The second-generation leadership consisted of:

- Borum Bishop, who started working at Bishop-Parker in 1942, serving in advertising, sales, banking and finally as president. He retired in 1987.
- Charles Daniel Parker Jr., known as Charlie, who founded Bishop-Parker’s interior design program and was vice president of the company when he died in 2007.
- Jimmy Parker, who worked at the business from 1955 until the day he died in 2021. Jimmy worked in sales, advertising, and as a buyer. He became president after Borum Bishop.

The second-generation owners moved the Bishop-Parker Furniture main showroom and retail space to midtown

Montgomery in 1973 to its current location at 3035 E. South Blvd. They also opened a warehouse discount store in 1993 on Coosa Street, which existed until 2016.

In 2016, the third generation moved the warehouse discount business to McGehee Road, just across the road from their showroom.

Matt Bishop has been working the longest of the third-generation owners. He started working full time in 1971. He worked in

sales and administration, semi-retiring a couple of years ago. He said his first job though was at age 15 in the warehouse. “At 16, I started driving a delivery truck. I enjoyed those years immensely!”

All the current generation grew up in the business.

“My first job was dusting furniture,” said John. “I was probably seven years old.” John began his full-time furniture career in 1998.

Charles started working full time in 1991, seven years before

John, but his child apprenticeship didn’t begin as early as his cousin.

“I got started a little later,” said Charles, who now manages the design part of the business. “I was 12.”

Charles recalled his dad, Charlie, “would make me sweep the entire warehouse.” The downtown warehouse “had those old wood, heart pine floors.” First you had to sprinkle “sweeping compound to keep the dust down,” he added.

The Bishops and the Parkers through the years kept meticulous records. “We have two old safes,” said John. “When I went through one a few years ago, I found the paper records of the very first sale.”

In honor of its 100th year, the company is sharing that document as well as ads and sales records from the 1920s and 1930s in a miniature museum inside their retail space.

Sale No. 1 occurred Oct. 5, 1923, for a mahogany bed, box springs and a mattress totaling \$30. ■

See other Centennial Retailers on Page 17.



The portraits of Bishop-Parker Furniture founders Matthew Borum Bishop, left, and Charles Daniel Parker, right, which hang in the East South Boulevard store in Montgomery, also can be seen in the bank scene of the movie Big Fish. Visit bishopparker.com

"I would not have started Ashley Mac's, if it wasn't for Andy," said Ashley McMakin of her husband, Andy McMakin. "He is the visionary and the risk taker."

From Her Kitchen to Yours

By Nancy King Dennis

AN INTERVIEW WITH

Ashley McMakin, founder and CEO,
Ashley Mac's Kitchen

Photo By Brandon Robbins

Ashley McMakin enjoys cooking for friends and family. Always has.

At first, though, "I had no plans of (cooking) becoming a career," she said.

With a degree in marketing and her husband with one in accounting, each was busy in 2005 with their chosen careers when Ashley started catering. She crafted the home-style food her mother and grandmother taught her how to make in the tiny kitchen of the newlyweds' Homewood condominium.

"My friends wanted to hire me to cook for their events, and we just thought this would be something fun to do until we had kids," she said.

Two years later, Ashley's husband, Andy, convinced her to open a storefront. "People love your food so much. I just think it would be a shame to stop," he told her.

In 2007, Ashley Mac's catering opened in the Bluff Park community of Hoover. Ashley Mac's Kitchen today has one café each in Cahaba Heights, downtown Birmingham and Homewood plus two in Hoover. Each location has a dine-in menu, family meals to-go and a market that offers pints and quarts of chicken salad, pimento cheese and more, plus frozen entrees, sides, soups and breads. Ashley Mac's Kitchen also still offers catering services.

Ashley McMakin is founder and chief executive officer of Ashley Mac's Kitchen, a fast-casual café, catering and market business with five Birmingham area locations.

"We would like to expand in and outside of Birmingham over the next few years. We'll see what happens."

- ASHLEY

Ashley Mac's Kitchen's wholesale arm sells select products in most Piggly Wiggly's in Birmingham, Star Market in Huntsville and at NorthRiver Cattle Co., a butcher shop in Tuscaloosa.

In March, "Ashley Mac's Kitchen," the cookbook, came out, featuring a mix of Ashley Mac's classics – like her strawberry cake and baby bleu salad – along with dishes she cooks at home.

Family Grows with Business

Early in their marriage, the McMakins struggled with infertility. "I see God's hand in allowing us that time to build Ashley Mac's Kitchen," said Ashley.

Continued on page 12

THE ESSENTIALS

Founded
2005

Number of Employees
65

Mentors
Many people have poured into me over the years, and I'm so grateful. I credit my husband as my business mentor. He has a lot of experience in various fields of business and leadership. I look to him when I make difficult decisions or need a listening ear. I also have a whole crew of unofficial mentors in my Les Dames

d' Escoffier ladies. It is a group of women in the hospitality industry, and I lean on many of them for advice from staffing to vendors to other food business related issues. They have a wealth of knowledge and many have been doing this much longer than myself. They are also some of my greatest encouragers and cheerleaders!

Smart Move
Investing in good talent from the beginning and continually seeking to add great members to our team. I'm thankful for our team!

Learning Moment
2020 was an extremely hard yet also beneficial year for us at Ashley Mac's. Much came to the surface during the pandemic – some made us excel, and others opened our eyes to where we really needed to improve, such as our inventory processes.

Wisdom Shared
Your business is only as good as your people.

See more
of this story at
alabamaretail.org



They now have two sons, an adopted daughter and have fostered two other children.

Their first son was born in 2009. In 2010, they opened their first sit-down location in Cahaba Heights. Their second son came in 2011 followed by the Inverness café in Hoover in 2013. The McMakins adopted their daughter from China while opening their second Hoover café in Riverchase in 2015. Their Homewood (2018) and Pizitz Food Hall in downtown Birmingham (2020) cafés opened while they welcomed their first foster son into their home.

"To be able to raise a family and grow our business is a huge blessing," Ashley said.

The McMakins are hands-on parents who swap out taking their children to school each day. "One of us takes them to the junior high and one of us takes them to elementary, and then we flip flop every day, so that we have time with each of them," she said.

It Takes a Team

From the beginning, the McMakins "chose to invest in our people. We know we are only as good as they are," said Ashley.

"Each of our employees is critical," she added. "From the frontline staff to cleaning staff to those making the salads and sandwiches to those making deliveries."

The "key leaders run the show" and allow her to get her work done while her children are in school. "We have a great team of managers and upper level management."

Ashley as CEO and Andy as chairman oversee the management team that includes vice presidents of operations, finance and branding. Each location has a general manager, assistant general manager and shift leaders.

"We are always looking to add great people to our team and for ways to love and support our employees too, because we want it to be a great place for people to work."

Holiday Crunch Time

Having a good team in place is essential, especially in crunch times. "The holiday season is our busiest time at Ashley Mac's," said Ashley. "November and December are by far just our craziest months with people grabbing food for the holidays."

The Ashley Mac's Kitchen holiday menu "has the staples, items that have been on the menu since the beginning – cornbread dressing, sweet potato casserole, squash

casserole and our green beans," said Ashley.

"During COVID, we started doing a holiday bundle. We have a turkey bundle and a ham bundle. It all comes frozen; you bake it in your home oven so it's fresh," she said.

Cookbook is Business Expander

The cookbook, which makes a great holiday gift, includes the cornbread dressing recipe, but Ashley isn't too worried about home cooks using her recipes to replace her cafes.

"I want people to make the recipes from the cookbook at home, but most people are busy, even if they love to cook.

They might make the strawberry cake once or twice, but they're probably not going to make it for every occasion that they need it," she said.

"Over the years, when I've been asked to put a recipe in a newspaper, magazines or online, typically sales go up on that item because people see it and they're like, 'That sounds good. Maybe I'll make it one day or next time I'm in Ashley Mac's, I'll just buy it.' "

The cookbook has even brought in new business.

"People who have been gifted the cookbook, whether they're in Birmingham or somewhere else, have come to see us and said, 'It's my first time here.' ■



A ham holiday bundle at Ashley Mac's Kitchen includes sour cream biscuits, brown sugar bacon green beans and twice baked mashed potatoes. Find the hours for the five Ashley Mac's Kitchen locations or order online at ashleymacs.com. Photo by 83 Press.

Member News

JIMMY SMITH JEWELERS OBSERVES 50TH ANNIVERSARY



Jimmy Smith Jewelers in Decatur turned 50 this year. On Oct. 3, 1973, Jimmy D. Smith, a jeweler with almost 20 years of experience at the time, and his wife, Barbara, used \$10,000 they had saved, \$10,000 that a jeweler friend pitched in and a \$10,000 bank loan to open their jewelry store. They are pictured at their grand opening with Jimmy far left and Barbara far right. They started with a 2,000-square-foot space in Southland Plaza on Sixth Avenue SE. In 2016, the Smith family opened a free-standing store at 2306 6th Ave. SE. Their son, Jimmy Ray Smith, and his wife, Wendy Farris Smith, are the second-generation owner/operators. Visit jsmithjewelers.com

FORMER MANAGER IS NEW OWNER OF BIRD & BEAN



Bird & Bean Coffee House in Dothan has a new owner who helped manage the business for the first four years after its founding in 2017. Daniel Hogg, who was the shop's first assistant manager and second manager, purchased the business from its previous owner, Christy Keyton, in early July. "It never crossed my mind that one day ... (Christy) would offer to sell the business to me," Daniel said, adding he is "glad we continue to work alongside you as business neighbors!" Bird & Bean is next door to Christy's home décor and gift store, **Naomi & Olive**. (Pictured: Christy, Daniel and his wife, Madison.) Visit birdandbeancoffee.com

TUSCUMBIA SHOP WINS CONTEST TO OPEN POP-UP IN FLORENCE



Nellie Mae Boutique, which has a storefront in Tuscumbia, opened a pop-up shop for the holidays in the Florence Mall on Sept. 29. The boutique is Florence's winner in the Next Great Pop-Up Shop contest through the American Dream Project, a Hull Property Group initiative. "We are so excited to be chosen," said owners and cousins Meagan Richardson and Courtney Thompson. "We have been shopping at this mall all of our lives. Our grandfather had The Singer Sewing Store here in this same mall years ago." The pair opened their Tuscumbia store named for their great-grandmother in 2011. The store carries the latest trends in women's clothing, accessories and shoes. Visit shopnelliemaeboutique.com



IN MEMORIAM BARBARA JANE BONNER SMITH, 1935-2023

Jimmy Smith Jewelers' matriarch, Barbara Jane Bonner Smith, died Sept. 26 at her Decatur home. She was 87. Barbara and her husband, Jimmy Dean Smith, opened Jimmy Smith Jewelers in 1973 along with other family members. Barbara became a registered bridal consultant when the store expanded to include a bridal department. The Smiths had been married for 69 years at the time of her death. Barbara also had many volunteer roles serving with Parents and Children Together (PACT), Decatur Charity League, Decatur Assembly and Hospice of the Valley. Memorial gifts should be directed to Hospice of the Valley and PACT. Visit jsmithjewelers.com

MEMBER
SINCE
1984

AWARD-WINNING 'CUE

Tuc and Reese Wilson Carry on Their Father's Barbecue Legacy

CHILDREN OF SAW'S BBQ FOUNDER INHERITED THE BUSINESS UPON THEIR FATHER'S DEATH AND HOPE TO CARRY THE BUSINESS FORWARD FOR MANY YEARS TO COME

Story by Nancy King Dennis. Photos by Brandon Robbins.



Tuc, Jennifer and Reese Wilson pose in the original Homewood location of Saw's, "the heart and soul of the brand" created by the late Mike Wilson. It is the only of the six Saw's locations that is fully owned and operated by the Wilson family.

“Mike Wilson, you created a hell of a barbecue joint,” Jennifer Wilson said in September when accepting a Retailer of the Year award on behalf of the Wilson family.

Mike and Jennifer Wilson opened the first Saw’s barbecue restaurant in 2009 in Homewood, “Mike manned the store, while I handled the books, finances and ‘office’ work,” said Jennifer, who at the time was a full-time teacher. “Over time, we grew the Saw’s brand through partnering with others to open Saw’s Soul Kitchen in Avondale and Saw’s Juke Joint in Crestline.” A franchise company oversees three other Saw’s in Hoover, Leeds and Southside.

While the rapid expansion eventually led to an end of their marriage, “the business continued to thrive,” Jennifer said.

Then the unexpected happened in September 2020. Mike Wilson, pit master and founder, died at the much-too-young age of 47. By then, the restaurants that shared his high school nickname had become nationally acclaimed for their Carolina-style smoked pulled pork, chicken and ribs. The founder’s business interests passed to his children, Tuc and Reese, while Jennifer, who has since retired from teaching, continues to handle business operations.

Next Generation

Tuc and Reese began working at the Homewood restaurant when they were both 16.

“Even at 15,” said Tuc, who is now a sophomore in college, “when I couldn’t drive yet, my mom would drop me off here.”

“I started working as cashier, then I started on the line,” he said. “A couple of mornings this summer I’d get here around 5:30 in the morning to start learning how to prepare the meat. Then I’d also go over to the Saw’s Juke Joint in Crestline and I would be a server there.”

Reese, a senior in high school, said, “I work like one day a week to help out.” She also has another summer job elsewhere and during the school year is a cheerleader.

Tuc is studying finance at Auburn University. “I’m going into the business management side of things,” he said after telling his Mom that he’d made a 93 on a recent supply chain test.

“Maybe a minor in culinary. We’ll see.” Tuc made a speech in a public speaking class about the best way to make ribs, which prompted his teacher to check out Saw’s.

“Entrepreneurship has always been my thing,” said Tuc. “Selling candy, doing pressure washing, mowing lawns, car washing.”

After he started working at the restaurant though, those pursuits fell by the wayside. “I could make a lot more money working as a cashier than scrubbing a car in the sun for four hours,” he said.

Tuc and Reese own Saw’s Inc., the original Homewood location. Jennifer is president, chief executive officer and manager

of Saw’s Inc. and managing member of Saw’s Juke Joint in Crestline. Besides Saw’s Juke Joint, the Wilson family also holds the majority ownership of Saw’s Soul Kitchen in Birmingham and owns the trademark and all the rights to the sauce and rub created by Mike Wilson.

Source of Pride

“He loved these two kids more than anything, and he is so proud of who they’ve become,” Jennifer said when asked what Mike would say about receiving a Retailer of the Year award. “He’s proud of the partners that we have at the other locations.”

Besides being recognized as a Retailer of the Year, Southern Living magazine in the spring dubbed Saw’s barbecue as “the best in Alabama.”

“We love our customers, and we want to continue to serve them for many, many years to come,” said Jennifer. ■



The Wilson family owns the trademark and all the rights to the sauce and rub created by Mike Wilson, the late founder and creator of Saw’s barbecue. To find the six Saw’s locations or to order Saw’s sauce and rub, visit sawsbq.com

Welcome New Members

FEATURED NEW MEMBER

BOTANIC LLC **OPELIKA**

Founded 2022

OWNERS

**Stacy Brown and
King Braswell**

LOCATION

**1702 Frederick Road,
Opelika, AL 36801**

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

150

MEMBER SINCE

Aug. 15, 2023

101 Chantilly 59 AL LLC
MONTGOMERY

3AZ Sports LLC
OPELIKA

Ace Hardware
of Linden LLC
LINDEN

Agave of Gulf Shores
Mexican Restaurant LLC
GULF SHORES

Alabama Orthopaedic
Sports Medicine LLC
DAPHNE

All Star Collision LLC
TROY

Annette Perry
HIGDON

Athens Alehouse
and Cellar LLC
ATHENS

Bansri Inc.
MERIDIANVILLE

Bay Area Oral Surgery PC
MOBILE



BC Companies LLC
LOXLEY

BFCB Restaurants LLC
MOBILE

Boggs Ventures LLC
BIRMINGHAM

BTB Wings Inc.
ENTERPRISE

Busy Bee Food Mart Inc.
ONEONTA

CABO Motorsports LLC
HANCEVILLE

Carson Davis Personnel
Service Corp.
MOBILE

CF NBC Inc.
MADISON

CF Zen Garden Inc.
MADISON

Charles Elijah
Dentistry LLC
DOTHAN

Complete Signs LLC
DOTHAN

Con Huevos LLC
TRUSSVILLE

Coosa Technologies LLC
CHILDERSBURG

Cullman Skate
Center LLC
CULLMAN

Cygnus Coffee
House LLC
DOTHAN

D & S LLC
DOTHAN

D&D Patel LLC
NORTHPORT

Diamond Mart #1 Inc.
EVERGREEN

Diamond Mart #2 Inc.
EVERGREEN

Diamond Mart #3 Inc.
MONROEVILLE

Diegmann & Henderson
OBGYN PC
FAIRHOPE

El Barrio Fairhope LLC
FAIRHOPE

Fairhope Burger Co. LLC
FAIRHOPE

Fannies II LLC
FAYETTE

First Baptist Church
of Foley
FOLEY

Flynns Arcade LLC
OPELIKA

Foley Auto
& RV Repair Inc.
FOLEY

Fore Alabama Kids
Foundation Inc.
BIRMINGHAM

Founders LLC
HOMEWOOD

Gaines, Gaines PC
TALLADEGA

Globalstar
Aerospace LLC
OZARK

Government Street
Baptist Church
MOBILE

Grover Processing Inc.
SUMMERDALE

Gulf Coast Cookie LLC
SPANISH FORT

Guntersville Tackle &
Outdoor LLC
GUNTERSVILLE

Gut to Go LLC,
dba Guthrie's
OPELIKA

Happiness
Nutrition 27 LLC
SELMA

Harris-Plott LLC
TUSCALOOSA

Harry Greenbaum
DVM PC
DECATUR

Hawkins Family
Coffee LLC
PINSON

Heards BBQ LLC
MAPLESVILLE

Heart of the
Valley YMCA
HUNTSVILLE

HF Sakura Inc.
SEMMES

Hillcrest Skate
Center LLC
MOBILE

Hilltop Seafood
and Meat Inc.
ANDALUSIA

ILS Foods Inc.
MADISON

Interiorscapes Inc.
BIRMINGHAM

James M. Sitz DDS PC
GRAND BAY

JC Licensing LLC
HUNTSVILLE

Joebachi LLC
DOTHAN

Joey's Carwash LLC
PRATTVILLE

JP's General Store LLC
ABBEVILLE

JRN Investment LLC
SARALAND

JS Hospitality LLC
MONTGOMERY

Juniper Garden LLC
BIRMINGHAM

Just Fun Adventure
Park LLC
ENTERPRISE

Kevin Brooks
Cleaners LLC
BOAZ

Krish 23 LLC
HEFLIN

Kyleigh Farms Inc.
CHANCELLOR

La Robe Boutique LLC
MOBILE

Little River RV Resort LLC
WEDOWEE

Local Insurance
Group Inc.
MONTGOMERY

Local Roots LLC
TUSCALOOSA AND BIRMINGHAM

Lux Labs LLC
AUBURN

M & R LLC
SCOTTSBORO

Matthew Five Service
Co. LLC
AUBURN

MGM 105 Inc.
MONTGOMERY

Mob Boss Pizzeria LLC
MOBILE

Natori Inc.
CHELSEA

NeSmith & NeSmith PC
MONTGOMERY

Niles Prestage
Tennessee Investment
Services Trust
HUNTSVILLE

O'Laire Health
Solutions Inc.
SARALAND

OM Enterprises Inc.
MOBILE

Om Shree 11 LLC
BIRMINGHAM

Omsai Krishna LLC
BIRMINGHAM

P. Swami Inc.
HUNTSVILLE

PLT Food Hall LLC
MOBILE

Professional
Auto Repair LLC
SCOTTSBORO

PSM 2023 Inc.
MADISON

RAMP Enterprises Inc.
ORANGE BEACH

Rangeline Cookie LLC
MOBILE

Revive Medical
Center LLC
HALEYVILLE

Rishivan Corp.
OZARK

S Meera LLC
MOBILE

Saki Sushi Inc.
ENTERPRISE

Saraland Cookie LLC
SARALAND

SB Hoover LLC
HOOVER

Schillinger Cookie LLC
MOBILE

Sebastians Fairhope LLC
FAIRHOPE

Semmes Asian
Buffet Inc.
SEMMES

Shri Ganesha LLC
MOBILE

SONlight Tans LLC
ELBA

Southern Pine Dental
Group LLC
DOTHAN

Taco Mama
Gardendale LLC
GARDENDALE

The Deli Press LLC
TUSCALOOSA

The Hotel Magnolia
Restaurant LLC
FOLEY

The Karat Patch Inc.
MOBILE

The Prinshiv LLC
TUSCALOOSA

The Sickle Cell
Foundation of Greater
Montgomery Inc.
MONTGOMERY

The Twisted Lime LLC
BAY MINETTE

Traditions Sports Deli LLC
RUSSELLVILLE

Tudhope BBQ LLC
AUBURN

TuscNY LLC
TUSCALOOSA

Urgent Care 59 PC
BAY MINETTE

V Nails Spa LLC
EUFAULA

Valiant Cross Academy
MONTGOMERY

Vapor Craft Inc.
MONTGOMERY

Vapor Wave LLC
BIRMINGHAM

West End
Marketplace LLC
DOTHAN

Whisenant Media LLC
ARAB

Wonderfully Made
Clothing LLC
TUSCALOOSA

World Liquor LLC
DOTHAN

Xtreme Air LLC
DOTHAN

Yapstix Group Inc.
HOOVER

Yinzers LLC
DAPHNE

Age of This Year's Centennial Retailers Ranges from 100 to 120 Years

The Alabama Retail Association this year identified six Alabama retail companies that have been in business in our state for 100 or more years. Bishop-Parker Furniture Co., featured on Pages 8-9, turned 100 this year. Those listed below have been around even longer.

Dalton Pharmacy, Slocomb

Founded in 1903 by J.P. Dalton;
Owners: Joe and Tyler Dalton
(Full story coming in February 2024)



MEMBER
SINCE
2013

Bryars-Warren Drug Co., Enterprise

Founded in 1912 by
J.O. Laney as Laney Drugs
Owner: Jeremy Willette
(Full story coming in 2024)



MEMBER
SINCE
2013

Grogan Jewelers by Lon, Florence

Founded in 1915 by Elisha A. Grogan
Owner: Lon Brown



[Learn more at alabamaretail.org/
news/grogan-jewelers-by-lon-centennial/](https://alabamaretail.org/news/grogan-jewelers-by-lon-centennial/)

Planters Hardware & Building Inc., Ashland

Founded in 1916
by Bruner Runyan;
Owner: Walt Runyan



MEMBER
SINCE
1998

[Learn more at alabamaretail.org/
news/planters-hardware-runyan-family/](https://alabamaretail.org/news/planters-hardware-runyan-family/)

UG White Mercantile, Athens

Founded 1917 by Ulysses Grant White as
U.G. White Hardware & Implement Co.;
Owner: Derrick Young



[Learn more at alabamaretail.org/news/
ug-white-mercantile-centennial-retailer/](https://alabamaretail.org/news/ug-white-mercantile-centennial-retailer/)

[Find those previously honored as Centennial Retailers
at alabamaretail.org/association/awards/
centennial-retailers/alabamas-centennial-retailers/](https://alabamaretail.org/association/awards/centennial-retailers/alabamas-centennial-retailers/)



Socially Speaking






THE POSTS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

"Never let go of the basics – excellent customer service, quality merchandise & a pleasant environment."




- SID, SHEA, BRIAN & GINA SCHROLL, THE NAME DROPPER/STORKLAND







Get social with us! Talk to us about the photos, resources, retail updates and member news we share.

-  /Alabama Retail
-  @AlabamaRetail
-  @ShopAlabama
-  /Alabama Retail Association
-  Stay informed at alabamaretail.org



Alabama's Retail Theft Crime Prevention Act, which makes retail theft and organized retail theft enhanced crimes, takes effect Sept. 1. Gov. Kay Ivey ceremonially signed the legislation today. Learn more at alretail.org/3qftEaD Photo by Hal Yeager/Gov. Kay Ivey Aug. 3 photo and link   

"We have worked hard these 46 years, along with our wonderful employees, to provide the highest quality merchandise and best customer service for our loyal customers," said the Schrolls, owners of The Name Dropper/Storkland, the Silver #ALRetaileroftheYear Annual Sales \$1M to \$5M: <http://alretail.org/483bwSF> #ShopAlabama Sept. 11 photos and link    






After 24 years in Cullman's Warehouse District, Monograms Plus has moved just a few blocks north to 802 Main Ave. NE. The store is the 10,000-square-foot anchor tenant for a retail center built and owned by Monogram Plus owners Lynsey and Tommy Todd. #RetailOpensDoors #ShopAlabama Aug, 9 graphic and photos    



Thoughtful expansion, marketing and community involvement earned Gold Alabama Retailer of the Year status for Christie Howell, owner of Wrapsody in Hoover, Auburn, Trussville and Homewood: alretail.org/44X2TX3 Sept. 8 photos and link    



Spiller Furniture & Mattress celebrates its 75th anniversary this year. The business includes 13 stores in Alabama and Mississippi and is owned by third-generation operator Shane Spiller.    

In just 12 years, JBT Power has transformed from a small lawnmower shop to a regional powerhouse. Today, Gregg and Ben Wood, the father-son duo behind this success story, received the 2023 Silver Alabama Retailer of the Year in the Annual Sales \$5 Million to \$20 Million category: <http://alretail.org/3KVKmmH> Aug. 30 photos and link    





RETRO RETURN

ALABAMA RETAIL COMP TO RETURN \$7.5 MILLION IN 2024

Alabama Retail Comp will return \$7.5 million in 2024 to participants as part of its annual retrospective return.

“We are pleased to make a significant return to participants,” said Rick Brown, fund administrator and Alabama Retail Association president. “Every dollar the fund returns lowers the cost of doing business for our members.”

Since its inception in 1984, ARC has returned **more than \$125 MILLION – 28% of all premiums** collected – to its participants through what is known as its Retro Return plan.

Each Retro Return is composed of excess funds ARC’s trustees have set aside from previous fund years. As the need to hold money in reserves decreases in a given year, that year’s participants receive money back as a credit on their next renewal. The retrospective rating plan uses an actuarial formula that takes into account individual participants’ experience versus the experience of the Fund as a whole. Lower losses return a higher retro credit at renewal, rewarding participants for providing a safe work environment.

Although a retrospective return is never guaranteed, Alabama Retail Comp is committed to conservative underwriting and aggressive claims handling to continue returning funds to participants.



“The first and primary pull to become a part of the Alabama Retail Association was the workers’ comp program, which is unsurpassed in all areas,” said **ANDY McCURRY**, owner of **McCURRY ENTERPRISES**, dba McCurry Furniture in Warrior.

More than 4,300 Alabama Retail members participate in the fund. ARC specializes in the retail industry, but also provides coverage to an array of business employers.

Fund Manager Brett Johnson said, “At ARC we love what we do – help protect businesses and employees by providing stable, affordable workers’ compensation coverage with unmatched customer service.”

To find out more, including the full Retro Return history, visit alabamaretail.org/comp/retrospective/

Retro Return History

All retrospective returns are given as a credit on renewal contributions.

Participants are eligible for a retrospective return if they meet the following requirements:

1. Having been a participant in the Fund during the fiscal year to which the return applies; and
2. Being a current participant in the Fund with continuous participation from the fiscal year that the return applies until the fiscal year of the distribution of the retrospective return; and
3. Having less than a 70 percent Loss Ratio for Fund Year(s) in which retrospective return applies.

Fax ACORD applications to Melissa Lamar at 334-263-0665 or e-mail to mlamar@alabamaretail.org ■

FUND YEAR	RETRO DISTRIBUTION
2024	\$7,500,000
2023	\$7,500,000
2022	\$8,100,000
2021	\$8,000,000
2020	\$7,000,000
2019	\$8,000,000
2018	\$5,500,000
2017	\$6,500,000
2016	\$7,600,000
2015	\$7,676,962
1984-2014	\$52,289,106
TOTAL	\$125,666,068

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Alabama Retail: The Leading Voice and Resource for Retailers in Our State

MORE THAN 4,300 BUSINESSES ALREADY KNOW WHY
#MEMBERSHIPMATTERS WITH THE ALABAMA RETAIL ASSOCIATION

Whether voicing the retail view when public policy is made, negotiating rates for benefits and services or communicating the retail story, the members of the Alabama Retail Association are better together.

These 2023 Retailers of the Year remind you to take advantage of all your association has to offer.

Teamwork

"The Alabama Retail Association is a true champion, promoter and protector of our great state's retailers and is a valued teammate to all its members." - **JENNIFER WILSON, SAWS INC.**

Education

"From great articles that offer insight and education to the benefits we receive from their advocacy work in Montgomery. We are very happy with our membership, the knowledge we have gained and the people who we have met." - **GREGG WOOD, JBT POWER**

Small Business Support

"The resources and education provided allow us to run our business while having a support system fighting for our best interests. Alabama Retail Association promotes networking, celebration of success and comradery among Alabama small businesses. We are thankful for their continued support." - **REEL HOWELL, WRAPSODY**

Connection

"It is important for our business to be a part of the Alabama Retail Association. The association provides a connection to other retailers in the state. We look forward to reading the magazine, which covers information about our industry." - **SHEA SCHROLL, THE NAMEDROPPER/STORKLAND**

 [Visit us at alabamaretail.org](http://alabamaretail.org)