

## Volunteers help students learn about technical jobs



*Best Robotics competition in Mobile.*

Attracting youth to technical careers can be challenging. But this past fall, 11 Mobile Division Alabama Power Service Organization (APSO) members volunteered to help with a spirited robot-building competition, showing students technical fields can be interesting and fun.

"It's pretty neat," said Ben Doughman, Mobile Division market specialist, of the Jubilee Best Robotics competition. "The schools have a team of students that build a robot that can perform tasks. The teams learn how to work together. I like encouraging them to do something engineering-related."

For the fourth consecutive year, Alabama Power was a premier sponsor of the Mobile Jubilee Best Robotics with a \$10,000 donation. Jubilee Best Robotics is a six-week nationwide program in which industry and education work together to encourage students in grades K-12 to pursue engineering, science, math and technology.

Teams from 23 schools in south Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana designed and built a radio-controlled robot using identical kits with materials, such as batteries, motors and plywood. Kits are provided by the local Jubilee Best Robotics Hub – a community-based volunteer organization

that coordinates the program. The climax was a competition Oct. 28-31 where robots, controlled by students, were evaluated on ability to combine molecules and elements to form biofuels.

Mobile Division APSO volunteers helped judge student notebooks and oral marketing presentations, conducted game-day interviews and evaluated displays. "These kids know a lot and are so creative. It's unbelievable," said Mobile Division Market Specialist Khanh Nguyen, coordinator of APSO's participation in the project. "The students have to tell the judges how they built their robot and how it works. They have to convince the judges to use their product."

Similar to an athletic event, each team brought their school's cheerleading squad and band to provide support and add enthusiasm and excitement. More than 1,000 students, including team members and supporters, were on hand.

"I think I enjoy it as much as the kids," said Mobile Division Technician Scott Williams, who judged the presentations. "When you ask them a question, they all want to answer it. I love the feedback I get."

Several Barry Steam Plant employees participated. "It's fun to see the creativity and ingenuity at that age. I'm always impressed with their designs," said Joanna Hartsell, engineer, Barry Steam Plant. Hartsell, who has participated for two years, was a referee for the competition.

Robin Fenton, hub director for Jubilee Best Robotics, said the program prepares students for the future because it allows them to get an inside look at industries in their community.

"Alabama Power and Southern Company are substantial contributors in making this happen," Fenton said. "I can't thank your company enough for what you do for the program. It provides an opportunity for your employees to share what you're doing. That excites the kids and helps them know where they want to work when they get out of college."

*By Carla Davis*



*Front: Ann McCrory, Melanie Kern, Robin Fenton (Best Robotics director), Melissa Dean (Best assistant) and Khanh Nguyen. Back: Jeff Pike, Nadine Scheeff, Antoinette Madison, Scott Williams, Ian Baltzell and Myra Cochran.*

### *President's Message*

Dear APSO Members,

I hope everyone had a safe and blessed Christmas and New Year! We, as employees of a great company, are so blessed! Members of APSO, are blessed to have so many wonderful volunteers who want to fulfill the mission of APSO – to improve the lives of citizens in our communities, and to improve our communities. Thank you so much for the money you've raised and the hours you've worked. We've touched many lives during 2009!

As we begin a new year, I know we will continue to work to bring smiles to children's faces, tears to the eyes of seniors, or to hear the laughter of children and adults with special needs as they run, ski, play or throw in an event we sponsor. Schoolchildren will be helped by our educational activities, and those in need will benefit from our fundraising and volunteerism. Rivers and streams will continue to be cleaned so that others may enjoy them. The work you do is endless! And it's because Volunteers Have Heart!



***Mary Sue Cain***

*2009 APSO state president*

**ALABAMA POWER  
SERVICE ORGANIZATION**

**NOTICE OF ANNUAL APSO  
MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**FRIDAY, FEB. 12, 2010**

**RENAISSANCE  
Montgomery**

# Western Division game day parking project wins charitable dollars

There's nothing like a prime parking spot, especially on football game day in Tuscaloosa.

Thanks to Western Division's excellent real estate – near Bryant-Denny Stadium – that APSO chapter nets some \$22,000 yearly for local charities through its Alabama Game Day/Home Day parking-spot fundraiser. As approved by Western Division Vice President and APSO member Terry Waters, the group “rents” 141 division parking spots for seven college home day football games, for \$20 per car per game.

“We always sell out for the entire year,” said Power Delivery Distribution Engineer David Mayo, who with Risk Management Analyst Pete Pecorino, has overseen the program since its start in 2004. “Best of all, most spots are paid for ahead of time.”

Volunteers from different area charities help host and work each day's parking-lot fundraiser, which earns them nearly \$3,000.

“We make sure their members work on parking day,” Mayo said.

Western Division APSO members present a check to each charity the week after its members help run the parking event. In the past few years, recipients have included Caring Days, a nonprofit organization that provides adult daycare, and Lions Club of Northport.

“We're glad this is so popular because the chapter gets to help several groups,” Mayo said.

• *By Donna Cope*



*Volunteers rent parking spaces near Bryant-Denny Stadium.*

## Chapter News

### PLANT BARRY

Plant Barry APSO volunteers hosted an inaugural Bikers Ride and Rally for St. Mary's Home Aug. 29. Motorcycle riders and passengers enjoyed a police-escorted 29-mile ride, which started at St. Mary's Home and ended at Creola Park. A check for \$3,520 was presented to St. Mary's Home at a luncheon Sept. 21. An additional \$1,400 was earmarked for the monthly birthday parties Barry APSO holds for children at the home.

In October, volunteers coordinated the E.R. Covington Memorial Golf Tournament, raising an impressive \$25,000. These funds helped nonprofit agencies, schools and purchased Christmas for 50 underprivileged children.

Plant Barry volunteers were extremely busy during the holidays. The season was officially kicked off with a roadblock coordinated by Maintenance Specialist Wayne Browning. Donations collected through the roadblocks were used to purchase Christmas dinners to be delivered to needy families by volunteers on Christmas Eve. More than \$1,800 was raised in less than two hours – the most ever collected!

APSO volunteers were busy shopping for toys to brighten the day of children throughout the Mobile area. Most of the recipients were from the Salvation Army's Angel Tree program, but toys were also given to children submitted by the Department of Human Resources



*Barry APSO members Kyle Thompson, Kevin Lynch, Walter Rigsby and Jeremy Duke at E.R. Covington Golf Tournament.*

and the Toys for Tots program sponsored by the U.S. Marine Corps. More than \$7,000 was spent to make Christmas mornings magical for children.

Plant Barry's Partner in Education George Hall Elementary School was visited by Plant Barry's own Santa and Mrs. Claus, along with several of their most helpful elves. The children talked to Santa and told him what they wanted for Christmas, then enjoyed a special treat of being read Christmas stories by elves.

The holiday season culminated with a Contributions Breakfast sponsored by Barry APSO at the Salvation Army headquarters in Mobile. More than \$20,000 was distributed to charities.

All of these events were sponsored and completed by Plant Barry employees in addition to their everyday workloads. People may not realize the amount of time, effort and dedication put into the holiday events, but in the end, it is all worth it because needy families and children have a better Christmas. To see a smile on one child's face is thanks enough for all involved.

### EASTERN DIVISION

Eastern Division APSO volunteers were busy with many events during the holiday season. Anniston members volunteered for the Salvation Army kettle drive, as they do each year. They also adopted 30 angels ranging in age from 6 months to 13 years of age. These angels are part of the Christmas Clearinghouse. The conference and storage rooms were a sight to see when gifts started coming in. The faces of the families when they picked up their Christmas gifts made it well worth all the work, as they were absolutely overcome with gratitude.

Gadsden volunteers donated \$9,058 to the Gadsden/Etowah Salvation Army to support the organization's Christmas efforts. The money was raised through the Charity Skeet Shoot in partnership with Power Delivery and the Magic City APSO Chapter.

Eastern Division APSO used money raised during the APSO Softball

Tournament and from its coffers to help feed the needy across the region. Nearly \$5,000 was donated to 11 food banks across the division.

### PLANT GASTON

Plant Gaston APSO volunteers definitely had a busy year with two clay shoots, two softball tournaments, a golf tournament, a motorcycle ride, a bicycle ride, a card tournament, doughnut, food, bake and jewelry sales, to name some of the projects. The end result was well worth the extra effort to help overcome hardships of a struggling economy.

On Oct. 30, volunteers manned the gates to collect canned food for the needy and to raise money in support of our troops. The canned food drive was a success with more than 1,600 pounds collected, which was delivered to the Harpersville food bank.

Several volunteers dressed in military fatigues to increase awareness for the cause, raised \$1,670 to buy supplies to send to our soldiers serving in Afghanistan and Kuwait. Several thank-you notes were received from the troops. One e-mail sent to Melissa Williamson read, "We were so blessed by the outpouring of love and generosity. Please express our gratitude to everyone there. The soldiers here, as well as a few other FOBs where our Alabama boys are located, are truly blessed by your giving. You all will never know this side of Glory how much your giving enhanced our living."

A chili lunch raised \$436 while offering employees some delicious treats. Justin Bailey made a couple of pots of chili and Lance Crowe (well, actually his wife) baked a pan full of super rich brownies. Debbie Williams donated beautiful hand-woven scarves – not edible, but certainly attractive.

More than \$36,000 was raised to spend on our Christmas Wish, not to mention giving over \$8,000 to other favorite charities. Wish



*Cindy Vincent collecting a donation for Support Our Troops.*

lists are received from the five surrounding counties' Departments of Human Resources. In addition, funds were donated to the Childersburg Toys for Tots and the Sylacauga Boy's Club. APSO provided Christmas for 258 children. Volunteers were proud to say that more money was spent on each individual child than ever before.

### PLANT GORGAS



*Hungry participants take time to enjoy lunch at the charity clay shoot hosted by Gorgas APSO volunteers this past fall at Tannehill State Park.*

### MAGIC CITY

Magic City APSO volunteers continued their tradition of serving those less fortunate as they shopped until they dropped Nov. 19. The shopping spree purchased Christmas gifts for Salvation Army Angels with money raised at the Power Delivery Clay Shoot in May 2009. An impressive \$25,000 was raised and volunteers numbered about 140 for the clay shoot and about 75 for the shopping day. Gifts were bought for more than 650 angels!

Nov. 16-20, South Region employees teamed up with the Magic City APSO volunteers to collect food for those facing financial challenges during the holidays.

On Sept. 26-27, a bike event in Mooresville raised \$18,879. In addition, a silent auction raised another \$10,651, bringing the total to \$29,530.

Proceeds benefited the National Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society, Alabama Chapter, and the 7,500 people living in Alabama who are affected by MS, including friends, family members, caregivers and professionals.

Participants were allowed to ride up to 175 miles over two days. Routes of 45, 75 and 100 miles were available to ride the first day and routes of 45 and 75 miles were available to ride on the second day. Many participants on the Power Pedalers team broke their personal records for longest distance ridden during this event!



*Kneeling: Luke Stafford, Adam Swafford, Pam Boyd, Randy Glover. Standing: Rich Mandes, Charlene Robb, Tony Smoke and Darryl Dykes.*

### PLANT MILLER

Miller APSO volunteers continued their tradition of working to improve the quality of life in surrounding communities. One of their projects focuses on those who are sometimes forgotten at Christmas: senior citizens. Members put together goody bags for 167 senior shut-ins identified by Meals on Wheels. The bags included toiletry items, calendars, candy, stamps and envelopes.



*Hand In Hand Chief Development Officer Jennifer Ellison, Bubba Sorensen, Shane McCrary (Miller APSO), Hand In Hand Children's Services Director Tina Shaddix, and Cherie Hill (APSO) holding Baby Bird William Bradley.*

Volunteers shopped to fulfill Christmas wish lists for more than 300 children in their Adopt-A-Child program. The children's names and wish lists came from the Jefferson County Salvation Army Angel Tree, Walker County DHR, Alabama Youth Home and ARC.

Volunteers worked hard during Miller's Can Hunger Drive, collecting 840 pounds of food that was donated to the food bank in Walker County.

The chapter also supports UCP and its Hand in Hand facility. A \$5,000 donation was given to purchase new and specialized equipment for the Baby Birds room for infants. The Baby Birds showed their appreciation by presenting the chapter officers a footprint of each baby.

Miller APSO members are proud they volunteered more than 3,250 hours in 2009 and contributed an amazing \$159,000 in financial aid to at least 35 different nonprofit organizations.

### MOBILE DIVISION

Mobile APSO Chapter volunteers raised \$1,500 hosting a golf tournament, with proceeds going to Emma's Harvest home. Fifteen volunteers set up the tournament and many others played. It was a wonderful day to raise money for a fabulous charity.

In September, nine volunteers participated in the Dauphin Island Coastal Cleanup. Other volunteers participated in the McKemie Place Project, the Purse with Purpose project, which is a fundraiser for Our Sister's Closet, and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital Walk.

Eight huge boxes weighing a total of 219 pounds were mailed in November to U.S. troops. The amazing effort of more than 100 employees packaging, paying postage, sending items, donating money or purchasing items for the boxes was truly a blessing. It was a wonderful way to show how Alabama Power Service Organization volunteers support our troops. One of the airmen sent volunteers a warm thank-you note.



*Front: Christina Nix, Khanh Nguyen, Melanie Kern, Jennaffer Bunce (Barry Steam Plant) and Myra Cochran. Back: Jake Walker and Kris Williams – Career Day at Burns Middle School.*

Volunteers worked together on National Weatherization Day, partnering with ADECA and Mobile Community Action to assist weatherizing and making over the home. They did a wonderful job bagging leaves, working in flower beds, painting and beautifying the home. More than 20 volunteers assisted the project.

On Dec. 4, seven volunteers participated in Career Day at Burns Middle School. The principal asked them to talk to eighth-grade students about Alabama Power and what the company is doing to encourage students to think about their future. The “Wouldn’t It Be Cool” project where Mobile APSO partners with MCPPS allows employees to speak to fourth-graders about the company and their own careers. Part of the agenda is to encourage students to take as many classes of math, science and writing as possible.

### SOUTHEAST/FARLEY

Southeast/Farley volunteers had a great time Oct. 30, taking part in National Weatherization Day in partnership with ADECA and the Organized Community Action Program agency. Volunteers worked hard to give a “face-lift” to the home selected by OCAP.



*Jan Gardner (ladder), Mary Sue Cain and Rodney Robinson work together on home’s face-lift.*

APSO members continued their hard work with projects during the holiday season, such as Santa for Seniors. This fundraiser is one of the chapter’s larger projects as volunteers assist seniors in the area by working with other community volunteers to fill holiday wish lists for the area’s low-income seniors. This year, through APSO member support, the chapter was able to sponsor multiple seniors through the South Alabama Regional Council on Aging. Other projects, such as Toys for Tots, bell ringing for the Salvation Army kettle campaign, Angel Tree, SOS Animal Shelter food drive and a gift-wrapping fundraiser, allowed plenty of opportunities for Southeast/Farley volunteers to give of themselves.

The House of Ruth poinsettia sale was once again a huge success! Volunteer Robert Johnson volunteered his time to assist in the unloading and delivery of these plants for the Eufaula offices. After the poinsettia display in local offices, they were donated to nursing homes prior to Christmas for the residents’ enjoyment.

This past fall, APSO members participated in the Buddy Walk supporting children with Down syndrome. Other Southeast/Farley volunteers worked hard to get items donated for the Ozark Rotary Auction to benefit the Vivian B. Adams School, as well as for the Eufaula Rotary Auction to benefit Rotary International and the Joel P. Smith Scholarship fund. Other projects included the Coffee County Special Olympics, RSVP of Eufaula food drive and the March of Dimes Blue Jeans for Babies.

Eufaula warehouse personnel participated in a canned food drive coordinated by the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) by donating money raised through snack sales. RSVP is comprised of retirees who want to remain active in their communities by service to non-profit agencies.

Southeast/Farley APSO is excited to start the new year with projects

including volunteering for Make a Wish and assisting Girl Scouts with their cookie sales.

### SOUTHERN DIVISION

Southern Division volunteers were busy during the holidays. Plant Harris’ Can Hunger food drive was successful with more than 4,800 pounds of food donated to the Autaugaville food pantry. Volunteers at the senior center in Autaugaville played bingo, cards and spent time with the residents Dec. 17. Volunteers had a Christmas lunch with the seniors, presenting each a gift bag filled with needed items.

Plant Harris volunteers spent the week before Christmas finishing their Joy of Giving Projects for 2009. Throughout the year fundraisers helped provide items to the Autaugaville School and the Autaugaville Senior Citizens. On Dec. 16, volunteers delivered 435 blankets to students and teachers at Autaugaville School. Plant Harris Operation Technician Ellis Young greeted students dressed as Santa during an assembly. The students gave Santa a standing ovation and a loud greeting! Each grade performed Christmas carols and after their performance the kids came to meet Santa and get their blanket and candy cane.



*Santa Claus (Ellis Young) gets ready to hand gifts to children and teachers at Autaugaville School.*

Volunteers in Selma helped the Salvation Army as bell-ringers. Wetumpka volunteers worked on a favorite project by sharing with foster families in Elmore County. On Dec. 4, APSO volunteers served dinner to about 50 families and gave gifts to the children. They were pleased to give back to their community.

APSO volunteers in Tallassee and Prattville collected coats for children during the holiday season. Volunteers purchased several new coats this year, and after used coats were cleaned, all were given to the local food and clothing banks for distribution to underprivileged children. All of the clothing and food banks were very thankful to have these coats prior to the colder weather!

### WESTERN DIVISION

The Western Division APSO Chapter was busy during the holidays with projects to ensure everyone had a great season. The Haleyville Office participated in the Toys for Kids program, distributing gifts for more than 800 children.

On Nov. 13, volunteers in Fayette purchased and donated 32 cases of laundry detergent to the Christian Center of Concern, for low-income residents in Fayette County. Each year the organization gives gift bags of nonfood items to clients in addition to their food allotment. The director of the organization said, “In these difficult times, it was a blessing Alabama Power Service Organization was able to provide this help, especially since the Christian Center of Concern is assisting more clients than ever due to the economy. You don’t know what this will mean to the people we serve.”



*Stockings for the Troops*

Parrish Elementary School Head Start was granted an early Christmas wish, receiving 18 bikes from the APSO group in Parrish.

In December, Western APSO sent 146 stockings filled with much-needed items to our men and women serving in the Armed Forces. Volunteers were happy to make the Christmas season more special for soldiers serving away from family and friends.