

Women on the Move

Becoming an Outdoors Woman



brings together women from different age groups and parts of the country with its annual Baja trip. BOW is a national organization founded in 1991 that is comprised of statewide chapters and organizes trips to various destinations around the world each year.

This year's trip will take place April 14 to 20. Participants meet at the airport in San José del Cabo and are transported by the program to the tent camp on the beach on Espiritu Sanctu Island. The provided camp comes with full amenities and a full-time staff. During the week, opportunities to learn snorkeling, free-diving and kayaking are available, as well as learning the local environment through hikes led by local guides. All equipment is provided, and no previous experience in these areas is required. Learn more at dcnr.state.al.us.
—Clair McLafferty



Artistic Renovations

Only a year ago, 60 percent of the structures in Woodlawn's commercial district were vacant. During the '60s and '70s, the demographics of most Birmingham neighborhoods were reshaped by social and economic changes. Many of those who could afford to left the community for the suburbs outside of the city.

That trend is being reversed in Woodlawn, thanks in part to the 55th Place Arts Restoration Project. The organization is housed in one historic building on the street and has acquired the building next door. That



acquisition will add 8,600 square feet of office space for individual businesses to move in once the remodeling is complete. The fundraising drive has raised 66 percent of its goal, and Main Street Birmingham has started to remodel individual spaces in the new building. "We are looking to improve the community through real estate," says project manager David Fleming. "Bringing in arts and art-oriented businesses help to change a place's image and revitalize the community."

Another restoration goal is to help resident artists with the business aspects of the art world. "We would like to incubate artists as small business owners," Fleming says. "New artists can often use guides within the commercial sector."

The renovation timeline is different for each individual space, but one space has been cleaned out, gutted and is ready to show. "This project is a wonderful example of how a small-scale project can have a big impact on the community," Fleming says. —Clair McLafferty ●