



The Delta Council Review

Vol. 14, Issue No. 7

THE NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS AND MEMBERS OF DELTA COUNCIL

November 2020

DELTA COUNCIL TO HOLD VIRTUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTED BY FORMER SENATORS TRENT LOTT AND JOHN BREAUX REGARDING POST ELECTION GOVERNANCE



Sen. Breaux



Sen. Lott

Delta Council President, **Paul Hollis** of Rolling Fork, is pleased to announce that an exclusive virtual meeting of Delta Council will be held November 12, 2020 at 10:30 in the morning. Due to State and Federal guidelines regarding the coronavirus pandemic, the traditional Annual Meeting of Delta Council has been postponed until 2021.

Keynoting the meeting will be former Senators **Trent Lott** of Mississippi and **John Breaux** of Louisiana. The two will offer their perspective on the outcome of the 2020 Election (which will be held a week before) and what it means for governance going forward.

"It is an unfortunate reality in 2020 that we cannot meet in person, but this format will allow for us to convey the Delta's policy and issue priorities," said **Hollis**, a farmer in Sharkey County. "We hope that our members and friends will join us, and we look forward to Senators **Lott** and **Breaux's** analysis of the 2020 elections."

Lott and **Breaux**, one a Republican and the other a Democrat, served in Congress together for decades, first in the House and then in the Senate. **Lott** rose to become Senate Majority Leader, and **Breaux** was an architect of many Senate measures, such as Medicare reform, from his position as the key centrist Democrat in

Congress. After their Congressional careers, their "across the aisle" friendship solidified into a business relationship as **Lott** and **Breaux** started their own lobbying firm. They are currently with Crossroads Strategies.

In addition to the Keynote speakers, Delta Council will highlight leadership transitions of the Officers and Board, review current policies and resolutions, and highlight priorities for the regional development organization, among other business.

Delta Council invites all members and friends to join the online Zoom meeting. Participation will be limited on a first come, first serve basis. Those who would like to attend the meeting will be able to access the event via Zoom website, Zoom app or conference call. To ensure your participation, please contact a staff member at info@deltacouncil.org or call 662-686-3350 to receive the meeting access code or dial-in number.

Sponsors for the meeting are BankPlus, Cspire, Catfish Farmers of Mississippi, Cotton, Inc., Mississippi Corn Promotion Board, Mississippi Land Bank, Mississippi Rice Promotion Board, Mississippi Soybean Promotion Board, Simplot, and Southern Ag Credit.

MEETING AGENDA

November 12, 2020
10:30 A.M.

- I. **PRESIDENT'S OPENING**
Paul Hollis, President
Delta Council
- II. **INVOCATION AND PATRIOTIC MUSIC**
Rev. Trey Skaggs
Senior Pastor
Indianola First United Methodist Church
Indianola, MS

Michelle White-Davis
National Anthem
- III. **PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AND HIGHLIGHT OF DELTA ISSUES**
Paul Hollis
- IV. **RESOLUTIONS**
Tom Gresham, Chairman
Executive Committee
Delta Council
- V. **KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**
Former Senators
Trent Lott and **John Breaux**
Post Election Governance



MAKE WEEDS BEG FOR MERCY. FOR UP TO 8 WEEKS.



FIERCE HERBICIDE 999



DELTA COUNCIL

2020–2021 Delta Council Officers

President: PAUL HOLLIS, Rolling Fork
Vice-President: PIERCE BROWN, Schlater
Vice-President: CARTER MURRELL, Avon
Vice-President: ANDY PROSSER, Yazoo City
Vice-President: HENRY REED, Belzoni
Vice-President: KIRK SATTERFIELD, Benoit
Vice-President: JIMMY WALKER, JR., Clarksdale
Treasurer: KEITH MITCHELL, Grenada

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Send all address changes to
Delta Council
P.O. Box 257, Stoneville, MS 38776

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY PAUL HOLLIS



Hollis

As I write this, it is only a few short days before the 2020 election. If you are like me, you are looking forward to no more wall-to-wall election coverage and constant political advertising and analysis. The reality, however, is that the outcomes of next Tuesday's vote will have huge implications for those of us who live and do business in the Delta. When we decided to hold a special virtual meeting, we wanted to highlight some of these implications at the federal level. We asked two very good and old friends of the Delta – former Senators **Trent Lott** and **John Breau** – to give us insight on what next Tuesday's results will portend for the governance of the country.

Lott and **Breaux** exemplify a seemingly outdated notion that people with different ideologies and parties can work together to achieve outcomes and compromise to make things better. They did that when they served in the U.S. Senate and they do that still today in their thriving government relations business with Crossroads Strategies. We

look forward to hearing their thoughts on what the 2020 election will mean for 2021 and beyond.

It is unfortunate in these pandemic times that we had to postpone the 85th Annual Meeting of Delta Council in person, as well as the Mid-Year Board Meeting. However, it is important that we gather to deliberate the policies of Delta Council and get an update on some of the issues affecting our region.

So, we blended items of both meetings into next Thursday's special Zoom presentation from the organization, which **Lott** and **Breaux** will highlight as the keynote speakers. We will not be able to properly recognize a lot of people that we would normally at both meetings – whether it be Achievement Award winners, the Good Middling Community Service Award, those who have retired, those who have passed away and other such special recognitions – because there is no way that you can properly recognize people through a computer screen. I am sure people of a younger generation would challenge me on that, but it just does not seem like the way we do things in the Delta.

It is unfortunate and we look forward to the day that a vaccine for COVID-19 will free us from these shackles of not being able to gather together.

I want to thank all of the men and

women who represent the companies and entities who have stepped up to serve as sponsors for this special virtual meeting and they include the following: BankPlus, Catfish Farmers of Mississippi, Cotton Incorporated, CSpire, Mississippi Corn Promotion Board, Mississippi Land Bank, Mississippi Rice Promotion Board, Simplot Grower Solutions and Southern Ag Credit. These companies are outstanding friends to the Delta and Delta Council, and I hope that you will thank them for their sponsorship.

In addition to Senators **Lott** and **Breaux**, an overview of Policies and Resolutions, and other business, we will introduce the new Director of Delta Strong. I want to thank **Wade Litton**, Chairman of the Development Department, and a host of other Delta leaders for finding **Jerry Chavez** in Indiana and we are confident that he will enhance the activities of this regional industrial development entity.

In closing, I would hope that all of you will make your comments heard on the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement that was recently released by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. This new plan, the details of which you can find in this newsletter, show what we have known all along – that a pumping plant is the only way to

PRESIDENT *continued on page 3*

CORPS ACCEPTING 2ND ROUND OF COMMENTS ON YAZOO BACKWATER AREA PUMPS

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released a new Environmental Impact Statement on October 16 recommending completion of the Yazoo Backwater Area Pumps. Comments on the document and the Pumps can be submitted until November 30, 2020. This second comment period is similar to the prior comment period that ended in June. All who submitted comments and letters for the first round are encouraged to submit a comment in this second round in support of the completion of the pumps.

“It is very important that we receive as many comments as possible,” said Delta Council President **Paul Hollis** of Rolling Fork. “We know that the extreme environmental organizations are going to be generating comments, and it is important that we stand toe to toe with them. We have got some great mechanisms to receive comments (see below) and I hope Deltans, former Deltans, and friends will share how to comment on their social media platforms.”

There are multiple avenues to submit your comment digitally or via post mail.

- To submit a comment through your smart phone, text PUMPS to 50457. A link will then be texted to you that will lead to a submission page to fill out your

information and submit a comment with the option to add a personalized message if you wish. This link may also be forwarded via text to your other contacts.

- To submit a comment via website for tablets or computers, please visit www.forgottenbackwaterflood.com where a digital submission form can be found.
- To submit a comment via email, please email your comment directly to YazooBackwater@usace.army.mil
- To post mail a comment or personalized letter, please mail to

District Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Vicksburg District
4155 Clay Street
Vicksburg, MS 39138-3435

- To post mail a postcard (similar to the first comment period) visit one of the following locations:
 - Valley Park Elevator, Valley Park, MS
 - Toney's Grill, Vicksburg, MS
 - Lo-Sto, Eagle Lake, MS
 - Yore Store, Eagle Lake, MS
 - Mississippi Ag, Rolling Fork, MS
 - Chuck's, Rolling Fork, MS
 - Mississippi Levee Board, Greenville, MS
 - Delta Council, Stoneville, MS

TEXT
PUMPS
50457

If you would like postcards and a drop box at your business or office, please contact Delta Council staff at 662-686-3350.

There will be out-of-state opposition working to submit comments as well, so it is imperative that everyone who supports the completion of the pumping plant submit a comment or letter to the Corps within this time frame. For additional information or questions please visit www.forgottenbackwaterflood.com or contact forgottenbackwaterflood@yahoo.com or the MS Levee Board. Follow Forgotten Backwater Flood on Instagram and Facebook for updates. #finishthepumps

MEMBER FOCUS | PARKER ENGLAND



OCCUPATION: President of Planters Bank, Greenville

HOMETOWN: Parker is a Greenville native and graduated from Washington School in 1997. He attended Mississippi State University where

he earned a bachelor's degree, then an MBA, graduating in 2002. After spending some time in Jackson working as an accountant, Parker married Frankie Stallings of Leland and moved back home to begin working for Planter's Bank and Trust. He furthered his banking education by graduating from the Mississippi School of Banking in 2010 as well as Graduate School of Banking in 2014. Parker and Frankie reside in Greenville and have two children, Mary Wright (13) and Miller (10).

AFFILIATIONS: First Presbyterian Church (Session Member), Washington County Scholarship Classic, United Way of Washington County, Washington County Economic Alliance, Delta Council, Local Youth Activities, and Rotary Club

WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT PARKER: "Parker is a great asset to the Delta," said Tom Gresham, Chairman of the Delta Council Executive Committee. "He is a thoughtful leader giving much of his time to helping improve the Delta, Greenville and Washington County. Parker is insightful and was very helpful in his service on the search committee for our new Director of Delta Strong and the Delta Council Economic Development Department, Jerry Chavez."

USDA FSA DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR PEGGY BROWNE VISITS STONEVILLE



(L to R) Administrator Peggy Browne, MSU DREC Interm Director Steve Martin, FSA MS State Director Bobby Carson, Aquaculture Researcher Dr. David Wise, USDA Geneticist Dr. Brian Bosworth.

Thursday, October 14, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Deputy Director of Farm Operations Peggy Browne, her assistant Gabrielle Rossi and Mississippi State FSA Director Bobby Carson visited Stoneville for a tour and meeting with local producers. Pictured above, Administrator Browne toured the Mississippi State University and USDA aquaculture farm where MSU aquaculture researcher Dr. David Wise talked with them about the recently developed catfish

vaccination feeder, and USDA geneticist Dr. Brian Bosworth addressed breeding research. Mississippi State University Delta Research and Extension Center Interim Director Dr. Steve Martin toured the trio throughout the Stoneville campus. Browne, Rossi and Carson returned to the Delta Council offices to meet with producers Lawrence Long of Indianola, John Rogers Braslier of Indianola, Delta Council President Paul Hollis of Rolling Fork, Bubba Simmons of Tribbett and Carter Murrell of Avon.

DELTA COUNCIL WELCOMES DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR JERRY CHAVEZ



Laura and Jerry Chavez

Delta Council Development Department Chairman Wade Litton is pleased to introduce the new Delta Council Development Department Director, Jerry Chavez.

Jerry comes to the Delta from Plymouth, Indiana, where he served as President and CEO of the Marshall County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDEC) since 2014. Prior to that, Jerry spent over twenty years working in economic development in North Dakota, Montana, and in his home state of Arizona.

"Jerry exhibits great strength and character as a leader in economic development," said Wade Litton of Greenwood. "We feel very confident in his ability to lead the Development Department and Delta Strong, especially as it relates to recruiting and retaining industry, as well as improving workforce opportunities. He has an extensive background working in rural communities, and he has demonstrated effective

DELTA STRONG

strategies for producing results in all of them."

During his tenure at MCEDEC, Jerry successfully developed and implemented the first strategic plan supporting business attraction, business retention and expansion, workforce development and creating an entrepreneurial ecosystem. He was able to more than double MCEDEC's annual budget, captured \$147,000,000 in capital investment and helped develop 7 of the 11 Marshall County Regional Cities Initiative projects.

"We hate to see Jerry go. He has transformed economic development in Marshall County, and through his vision, the economic development program is well respected in the region for being cutting edge and very productive", says Jim Condon, Chairman of the Board Marshall County EDC. "His thumbprint will be long lasting in North Central Indiana".

"I feel honored and blessed to be selected to lead the industrial development effort for the Delta," said Chavez, who grew up on a cattle farm in North Arizona. "The Delta presents a strong business case that matches well with expanding businesses working to maximize their profitability through market reach, access to a workforce through recent ACT Work Ready Community programing in the Delta, and the many other business cost saving advantages available in the region. I look forward to working with Delta leadership to chart a new course in industrial development for the benefit of the Delta Region and the State of Mississippi."

Jerry will begin his position beginning November 1, 2020. You may reach him at 662-686-3366 or jchavez@deltacouncil.org.

PRESIDENT *from page 2*

evacuate flood waters from the South Delta in times of high flows on the Mississippi River. This plan was promulgated in the 1940's based on sound engineering, and it remains the only effective way in which to reduce the economic damage, harm to the environment, suffering of animals, and lessen the impact on public infrastructure such as roads, national parks, state parks, and businesses in the South Delta Region.

The extreme environmental groups will once again be poised to try to spread their disinformation about this project, and it is critically important that every man and woman in the Delta and those who love

it, make their voice heard in support of the Corps of Engineers Environmental Impact Statement. While we appreciate your prior comments, it is even more critical that we remain steadfast in our support of this project by submitting comments to combat the extreme environmental groups and show our overwhelming dedication to finish the Yazoo Backwater Pumps. With this 45-day comment period, we are working hard to get to a Record of Decision by mid-January.

I hope you will join us next Thursday, November 12, for our first, and hopefully last, Zoom Virtual Board meeting.

MARS FOOD CHANGING UNCLE BEN'S BRAND TO BEN'S ORIGINAL AND \$2.5 MILLION DOLLAR INVESTMENT IN GREENVILLE, MS



The MARS Food Brand announced it's rebranding, moving from Uncle Ben's to Ben's Original in an effort to become more inclusive and involved throughout the community while continuing to produce the world's best rice. Along with this new and exciting change, MARS Food has committed to making a \$2.5 million investment within Greenville, focusing on education and having more access to healthy foods for our residents. Ben's Original has been a part of the Greenville community for 42 years.

USA RICE CONFERENCE WILL NOT BE HELD IN-PERSON



The 2020 USA Rice Outlook Conference, scheduled for December 9-11, in Austin, Texas, will not be held in-person due to the impossibility of putting on a large trade show and conference in compliance with public health safety guidelines and regulations. Yesterday, the USA Rice Board of Directors met, via conference call, to discuss other options including a full virtual conference, but reluctantly decided the best plan for this year was to not hold the conference at all.

"No one is happy about this decision but after looking at all possible scenarios, the Board felt it made the most sense to forego the conference this year but still undertake some of the traditional conference sessions and awards by other means. We will be announcing the schedule for those events soon," said USA Rice President & CEO **Betsy Ward**. "The next live, in-person Outlook will be in New Orleans next year and we will be sure to include time to recognize 2020 award recipients in-person. We will return to Austin for Outlook 2022."

The annual USA Rice Outlook Conference brings together rice farmers, millers, merchants, and representatives of allied businesses from all rice-producing states and beyond for information and interaction. The conference features exciting speakers, outstanding learning sessions, and a trade show bringing the newest and most promising innovations to attendees.

"Unprecedented times call for

unprecedented measures, and this is definitely one of those times," said **Ward**. "We're certainly disappointed at having to cancel this year's event but will conduct some of the Outlook Conference activities through other platforms like podcasts, social media, and webinars so watch this space for more details."

VICKSBURG FOREST PRODUCTS TO ADD 60 FULL-TIME JOBS AND INVEST \$40 MILLION



"I'm proud to see Vicksburg Forest Products adding 60 full-time jobs and investing \$40 million in our community. Their willingness to make such an important investment in Vicksburg is a testament to the pro-business environment of our City. These 60 jobs will be a blessing for 60 families that can get back to normal through the dignity of work."

MAYOR GEORGE FLAGG, JR.
VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI

The Vicksburg Warren Economic Development Partnership announced that Vicksburg Forest Products is expanding its operations to respond to market opportunities and accommodate new customers. The expansion will create 60 direct jobs and invest \$40 million dollars in corporate investments.

The City of Vicksburg is supporting the project with infrastructure improvements including drainage and rail expansions on the site through grants provided to the City by the Mississippi Development Authority

CHRIS WELLS NAMED MDEQ EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Wells

Governor Tate Reeves announced that **Chris Wells** will serve as the Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality. **Wells** served as the Chief of Staff at MDEQ for six years, and

the Senior Attorney for the department prior to that. He has served as Interim Executive Director since the Governor's inauguration. Wells is a graduate of Mississippi State University and the Mississippi College School of Law.

"We thank **Governor Reeves** for selecting **Chris** as the Executive Director of MDEQ," said **Chat Phillips, a MDEQ Commissioner**. "His experience at the

Department of Environmental Quality as well as private sector experience will both serve the citizens of the State and the Delta well."

LT. GOV. DELBERT HOSEMANN TOURS DELTA HEALTH ALLIANCE, LOCAL HEAD START

LT. GOV. DELBERT HOSEMANN RECENTLY VISITED WITH DELTA HEALTH ALLIANCE LEADERSHIP ON SOME OF THEIR EARLY CHILDHOOD AND HEALTH OUTCOMES. BELOW IS A STORY FROM THE ENTERPRISE-TOCSIN, USED WITH THEIR PERMISSION.

By Bryan Davis, Publisher of The Enterprise-Tocsin



Lt. Gov. Delbert Hosemann walked room-to-room at Indianola's Head Start building last week.

It was the second stop of three scheduled for the day, which included a tour of Leland Medical Clinic and a mental health agency in the Delta.

Hosemann was on a fact-finding mission, looking closely at Delta Health Alliance and how it operates its multiple centers.

"This really is a template for other areas around the state," **Hosemann** told The E-T during his stop in Indianola. "I had heard the news about it, and I was interested to see how it is working."

Hosemann said that DHA's multifaceted approach to its services could be replicated throughout the state and could be the eventual answer to many problems, particularly when it comes to early childhood education.

DHA has been involved in Sunflower County education system for years, but this is the second full year the nonprofit has operated the Head Start program locally.

It is also set to take over Head Start in Warren County.

Hosemann toured several classrooms, asking pointed questions to DHA leaders, making sure that every child who qualified for the Head Start program was able to get in.

On top of that, **Hosemann** was told there was one teacher for every four students in the facility.

Education has become one of **Hosemann's** chief concerns over the past few months, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic struck in the spring and forced many kids out of the classroom and into distance learning.

"I'm very concerned," he said. "I'm getting numbers between 2% and 10% of children who are students who were registered before, last year, and are not registered this year. We

don't know where they went. They didn't all go to private school. They're out here somewhere, but they haven't registered for distance learning or they're not in school."

Hosemann said the Legislature budgeted more money for education this past year than in years past, thanks largely to hundreds of millions of dollars in CARES Act funds, plus an additional \$75 million investment into rural broadband.

The youngest students are the only ones getting to experience in-person classes this fall in Sunflower County because of COVID-19. **Hosemann** hopes that all students, especially ones who are facing the third-grade gate this year, are back in the classroom soon.

"In my opinion, distance learning is a stop-gap measure," **Hosemann** said. "It is not a permanent solution. The solution is to have our children in front of a competent teacher. That's where children will continue to learn in an extradited fashion. Our goal is to get our kids back in school."

WICKER, HYDE-SMITH ANNOUNCE \$6.22 MILLION GRANT FOR GRENADA RAILROAD PROJECT

Federal Grant Will Strengthen Cargo Rail Service Between Grenada and Memphis



U.S. Senators Roger Wicker and **Cindy Hyde-Smith** announced the award of a \$6.22 million grant to Grenada Railroad, LLC, to complete the final phase of a project to refurbish a rail line between Canton and Memphis, Tenn.

Wicker and **Hyde-Smith**, strong supporters of the Grenada rail line, wrote letters of support for this grant, which will focus on work on northern segments of the line. Improvements to a 90-mile segment between Canton and Grenada have already been completed.

The project will rehabilitate the remaining segment of the rail line from Grenada to Memphis, including upgrading 25 bridges, replacing 88 miles of railroad ties, installing cross ties in 84 curves, and improving 11 bridges and track conditions on the Water Valley Spur Line. This project would also repair three tracks in the Durant rail yard and construct a locomotive pit for employees working under the locomotives. Once complete, the project will restore full speed service on the line, improving safety, transit times, and congestion issues that arise from reduced speeds.

AROUND DELTA FIELDS

DELTA LEADER MERLIN RICHARDSON PASSES AWAY



Merlin

Longtime Delta Council leader **Merlin Richardson** of Anguilla passed away peacefully October 6.

“Merlin was a great man that loved his family, his community and the Delta,” said **Delta Council President Paul Hollis** of Rolling Fork.

“His leadership in all aspects of his life were exemplified by the success he had with anything he was involved with. His smile and warm welcome will be missed by so many of us. God blessed us with one of the great ones.”

“Merlin Richardson was highly respected throughout the Delta and the cotton industry for his business acumen and integrity,” said **Frank Mitchener** of Sumner. “Perhaps the best indication of that respect is how long the people of his community of Anguilla entrusted him as their Mayor.”

“Merlin was the most fine gentleman and a longtime leader of the compress in Rolling Fork and as Anguilla Mayor. He was always a big supporter of both Delta Council and the National Cotton Council and will be sorely missed,” said **Tom Robertson** of Indianola.

WICKER, HYDE-SMITH URGE TRADE REPRESENTATIVE TO END SPECIAL TREATMENT FOR FOREIGN RICE

Highly Subsidized Foreign Rice Imports Disadvantage Miss. Rice Producers



Wicker

U.S. Senators Roger Wicker and **Cindy Hyde-Smith** are encouraging the **Trump** administration to level the playing field for American rice producers by reforming the nation’s largest and oldest trade preference program, the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP).

The Mississippi Senators joined a letter to **U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer** that supports a USA Rice Federation petition to remove all rice tariff lines from the list of commodities eligible for

duty-free import under the GSP.

“We understand GSP is meant to be a win-win for both the U.S. and our trading partners,

but unfortunately in the case of rice, our biggest competitors on the world stage have taken advantage of the program for far too long,” the Senators wrote.

“Over the past several years, we have seen an annual uptick in rice imports from countries that have GSP eligibility. Coupled with our competitors’ high and rising domestic subsidies, these unfair advantages are having negative implications for our rice farmers, millers, merchants and allied businesses, who are losing domestic market share,” the letter said. “As you continue your efforts to promote fair and free trade, we encourage you to remove rice from the GSP eligibility list.”

The GSP program provides duty-free treatment to goods from developing countries to promote economic growth in those nations. Under the current program, highly-subsidized rice growing competitors are increasing rice exports to the United States at the expense of American producers. The Mississippi rice producers harvested more than 8.3 million hundredweight in 2019, a decrease from the 10.1 million hundredweight produced in 2018.

Senator John Boozman authored the letter, which was also signed by **Senators Tom Cotton, Bill Cassidy, M.D., John Kennedy, and John Cornyn.**

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION AWARDS CONTRACTS THROUGHOUT STATE INCLUDING HOLMES AND LEFLORE COUNTIES



The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) will oversee 13 projects, which will maintain and enhance transportation infrastructure across the state.

“These projects will make our highways safer and make Mississippi a better place to live and work,” said **Melinda McGrath, P.E., MDOT Executive Director.** “All of our projects, whether pavement overlays or bridge replacements, help ensure the businesses and people of Mississippi have efficient and reliable infrastructure for travel and transport of goods and services.”

Among the awarded contracts for the Central Transportation District was a \$300,119 contract awarded to Gibson & Associates, Inc., of Balch Springs, Texas, for a bridge repair project on U.S. Highway 49 over Abiaca Creek in Holmes County.

An awarded contract for the Northern Transportation District was a \$367,706 contract to Shackelford Construction & Hauling, LLC, of Yazoo City, for railroad crossing improvements on State Route 706 in Sidon in Leflore County. The projects were funded by lottery proceeds.

INFLUENTIAL CROP PRODUCTION ASSOCIATION GOES THROUGH LEADERSHIP CHANGE

By Southeast FarmPress



Kennedy

Bucky Kennedy has been with the Southern Crop Production Association for 15 years, most recently as its state affairs director. **Kennedy** is now transitioning to take over the association’s day-to-day operations as

the new executive vice president, stepping in to replace **Jeff Cassady** who has held the post for several years. **Cassady** will retire Jan. 31, 2021. **Cassady** took over the executive duties from **Colonel Ed Duskin**, the well-known face of the association for more than four decades before retiring in 2016 at the age of 87.

“Bucky has been a great friend to the allied agricultural industry and to the Delta,” said **Frank Howell**, Delta Council staff. “We look forward to continuing our strong relationship with him and SCPA and applaud his selection.”

LT. GOV. HOSEMANN URGES PRODUCERS TO APPLY FOR CARES ASSISTANCE



Hosemann

In a recent letter to **Delta Council President Paul Hollis** from **Lieutenant Governor Delbert Hosemann**, farmers who experienced loss due to COVID-19 are encouraged to apply for CARES assistance. All funds must be dispersed

no later than December 15, 2020, so it is critical for producers to apply immediately, as the money is first come, first serve. Producers may apply at www.mscaresact.com.

FRIARS POINT AWARDED USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDS



The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has approved loans and grants totaling \$9,317,500 in twenty-five Mississippi communities.

The Community Facilities Programs offer direct loans, loan guarantees and grants to develop or improve essential public services and facilities in communities across rural America. These amenities help increase the competitiveness of rural communities.

“Our community facilities program can be used to help fund schools, libraries, health clinics, and the purchase of public safety equipment,” said **John Campbell**, State Director for Rural Development in Mississippi. “Access to modern community facilities and essential services is vital to attracting and retaining residents and businesses, ensuring rural prosperity.”

Town of Friars Point - This Rural Development investment of \$46,900 will be used to purchase a sewer jetter and ditching machine. The town currently has no machines that will do this work, so the town contracts the machines, increasing response time and costs. Purchasing the machines will allow the town to address sewer emergencies and local flooding issues in a timelier manner and with reduced costs.

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov.

\$7.7 MILLION AWARDED TO THE CITY OF GREENVILLE



(L to R) **Greenville Mayor Errick Simmons**; **Kevin Preskenis, Chief of Staff, Office of the Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce**; **Henry Reed, Chairman of South Delta Planning and Development District and Delta Council Vice-President**; **Congressman Bennie Thompson.**

\$7.7 Million Dollars has been awarded to the City of Greenville by the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration to make infrastructure improvements needed to reduce flooding as well as make sanitary sewer system improvements in the city.

Sponsors

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Bill Allen
*BankPlus President
Belzoni Branch*

BankPlus began as a community-focused bank in 1909 in Belzoni, Mississippi. After more than a hundred years of serving communities throughout the state of Mississippi, BankPlus has grown to operate 57 locations in 34 communities. The bank also employs more than 700 people throughout the state and has donated millions of dollars to local charities as part of its core mission.



Catfish Farmers of America is a non-profit trade association that was formed in 1968 and is the United States strongest aquaculture organization. CFA is an association of U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish producers, suppliers, processors and marketers. The purpose is to develop, stimulate and encourage harmony, goodwill and understanding among catfish farmers and to promote the general welfare of the U.S. catfish industry.



Andy Jones
*Chairman
Moorhead*

Chris McGlawn
*President
Swifton*
Houston Battle
Tunica
Dan Bradshaw
Yazoo City
Bobby Jones
Glen Allan
Shorty Jones
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Moorhead
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Hu Meena
*CEO
C Spire*



Cotton Incorporated



Lawrence Long
*Cotton Inc. State
Support Committee
Chairman
Indianola*

Cotton Incorporated, funded by U.S. growers of upland cotton and importers of cotton and cotton textile products, is the research and marketing company representing upland cotton. The Program is designed and operated to improve the demand for and profitability of cotton.

Lonnie Fortner
*Port Gibson
Alternate*

Bernie Jordan
*Yazoo City
Member*

Michael Thompson
*Tibula
Alternate*

Kendall Garraway
*Bolton
Member*

Richy Bibb
*Tunica
Alternate*

Coley Bailey III
*Grenada
Member*

Bill Walker
*Marks
Alternate*



The Mississippi Corn Promotion Board, established in 2006, is supported by a corn checkoff of \$.01 per bushel. The 12-member appointed board oversees research and promotion efforts that help farmers increase yields, reduce production costs, and grow a healthier crop.



Turner Massey
*Corn Board Chairman
Clarksdale*

Preston Arrington
Inverness
Jake Dornbusch
Louise
Philip Good
Macon
Mike Graves
Ripley
Jan Hill
Meridian
Larry Killebrew
Lexington
George King
Chatham
Will Long
Indianola
Danny Murphy
Canton
Jack Phillips
Yazoo City
Todd Williams
Olive Branch



MISSISSIPPI LAND BANK

For more than 100 years, Mississippi Land Bank has offered financing and refinancing solutions to North Mississippi. Part of the Farm Credit System, we are cooperatively-owned by our customers, or stockholders, who receive a portion of our profits each year through our patronage program. We make loans to meet all of your rural living, part-time and full-time farm needs. Whether it is a home in the country, a livestock unit, cropland, timberland, equipment upgrades, or some other rural living venture, we offer many flexible loan programs to try and meet your needs. Loan terms are available from short-term up to 30 years. We have fixed and variable rate loans available. No matter what type loan you may need, the payment due dates can be arranged to meet your cash flow schedule.



Abbott Myers
*MS Land Bank
Board Chairman*



The Rice Promotion Board is comprised of 12 members nominated by three nominating organizations (Delta Council, Farm Bureau, Mississippi Rice Council) and appointed by the Governor to 4-year rotating terms. The Rice Promotion Board was established for the purpose of using funds assessed from rice producers for research, education, and advertising to promote the rice industry.



James Allison
*Rice Board
Chairman,
Sarah*

Ronnie Aguzzi
Cleveland
Curtis Berry
Robinsonville
Nolen Canon
Tunica
Marvin Cochran
Avon
Larry Davis
Shaw
Gary Fioranelli
Cleveland
Donald Gant
Merigold
Randy Howarth
Boyle
Carter Murrell
Avon
Gibb Steele
Lake Village
Patrick Swindoll
Hernando



Mississippi Soybean Promotion Board is made up of 12 farmer-leaders who oversee the investments of the soy checkoff on behalf of all Mississippi soybean farmers. These volunteers work to increase soybean farmer profitability by investing checkoff dollars in ongoing public research and extension programs that address Mississippi production challenges and driving the adoption of best management practices developed through research and ensuring the sustainability of Mississippi soybean production.

The soy checkoff is supported entirely by soybean farmers with individual contributions of 0.5 percent of the market price per bushel sold each season. Fifty percent of contributions collected in Mississippi remain in the state. The Mississippi Soybean Promotion Board invests these funds in research, promotion and education to improve the profitability of soybean production on behalf of all Mississippi producers. The remaining 50 percent of funds are sent to the national soy checkoff, directed by the UNITED SOYBEAN BOARD. Composed of 78 volunteer farmer-leaders, USB invests soy checkoff funding to conduct research and drive demand for U.S. soybeans.



Bill Ryan Tabb
*Soybean Board
Chairman
Cleveland*

Tim Clements
Greenville
Paul Dees
Leland
Wayne Dulaney
Clarksdale
Jan DeRegt
Hollandale
Louis Guedon
Natchez
Keith Morton
Falkner

Reese Pillow
Greenwood
C. D. "Bubba" Simmons
Arcola
Jerry Slocum
Coldwater
Jimmy Sneed
Hernando
David Wansley
Valley Park



The J.R. Simplot Company is one of the largest privately held food and agribusiness companies in the nation, though at heart we're as small as a single farmer. We pioneer innovations in plant nutrition and food processing, research new ways to feed animals and sustain ecosystems, and strive to feed a growing global population. At Simplot, we're in the business of Bringing Earth's Resources to Life.



SOUTHERN AGCREDIT



Phillip D. Morgan
*Chief Executive
Officer
Southern AgCredit*

Southern AgCredit is a full-service, locally owned cooperative lender that specializes in helping people buy and enjoy land in the country. This land is often used for agriculture, such as crop, cattle and poultry farming as well as timberland and other uses related to agribusiness and recreation. Likewise, we often finance land improvements as well as country homes, farm structures, equipment, poultry houses, tractors and a wide variety of other agricultural equipment. We are proud to hold the largest portfolio of rural real estate loans in Mississippi where we serve the southernmost fifty of the state's eighty-two counties, in addition to the eleven parishes of Northwest Louisiana.

Delta Council

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