

# Catfish Food Safety is a Good Trade

Delta Council Aquaculture Committee Chairman Lester Myers of Inverness, stated that the proof is in and food safety equivalency standards must be implemented by USDA if the U.S. consumer is to expect the same level of quality control in catfish that consumers currently enjoy with beef, poultry, and pork.

"The Congress passed a law in 2008 requiring the inspection of our domestic catfish industry and foreign imports, but the Administration has been dragging its feet in implementing the final rules to support the law which Congress passed that we believe is due to a fear of trade retaliation by Asian countries with a track

record of sending contaminated fish to the U.S.," stated Myers.

"Why should the American consumer be able to get beef, poultry and pork at the marketplace, whether a restaurant or grocery store, that has been inspected by USDA, but farm-raised catfish grown in the United States and abroad doesn't meet the same equivalency standards in terms of food safety," Myers exclaimed.

Since passage of the 2008 Farm Bill, which stipulated that catfish inspection must be implemented within 180 days of passage, the implementation of food safety inspection has been indefinitely delayed and bogged down in bureaucratic

stonewalling, according to Delta Council, the economic development organization which represents the Mississippi Delta catfish industry.

In 2008, 2009, and 2010, Asian catfish have experienced import bans in Europe and the United States due to illegal drugs and preservatives found in imported catfish.

"The bottom line is that the Congress passed a law, the Administration is flatly refusing to implement the law due to pressure by the Washington lobby for foreign countries, and the food safety issues associated with these imported fish is being swept under the rug," the catfish

leader from the Delta stated.

Senator Blanche Lincoln (AR), Senator Thad Cochran (MS), Congressman Bennie Thompson (MS), Congressman Marion Berry (AR), and Congressman Travis Childers (MS), have been urging USDA and the White House to implement the rules which enforce inspection of all domestic and foreign catfish sold in the U.S. Delta Council leaders will discuss the status of the catfish inspection at its Annual Meeting on May 28. Senator Thad Cochran will give the Keynote address to the business and agricultural organization.

# The Delta Council REVIEW

Vol. 6, Issue No. 3

THE NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS AND MEMBERS OF DELTA COUNCIL

May 2010

## 75th Delta Council Annual Meeting to be held May 28

*Diamond Anniversary to Feature Cochran*

The 75th Annual Delta Council Meeting will be held Friday, May 28, 2010, and will include a featured address by U.S. Senator Thad Cochran of Mississippi. The Annual Meeting of the Delta's regional business and agricultural organization will be at Delta State



Cochran

University's Bologna Performing Arts Center, in Cleveland, Miss. "It is supremely fitting that Thad Cochran is the featured speaker as we celebrate 75 years of progress in the Mississippi Delta region through the work of Delta Council," said Travis Satterfield of Benoit,

President of the Stoneville-based organization. "There has been no one who has impacted the landscape of the Delta region more than Thad Cochran during this generation and perhaps in our current history."

Satterfield said that picking a speaker for this noteworthy anniversary was easy.

"If a person is from the Mis-

MEETING *cont., on page 6*

## U.S. 82 Bridge to open for 4-Lane traffic this summer

The largest transportation infrastructure project initiated in the past decade of Mississippi's history will open to traffic during the summer of 2010. The Mississippi approaches to the 4-lane, interstate-standard Mississippi River Bridge will interconnect with a 4-lane, bypass scheduled to be open between the U.S. 82 Bridge and Highway 61 in Leland by 2012.



"Commerce and safety will be enhanced due to these major improvements to Highway 82, and these two combined projects, the bridge and the bypass, will conclude a 25-year effort to 4-lane U.S. 82 from the Arkansas Stateline to the Alabama Stateline throughout North Mississip-

pi," stated Tom Gresham, the Sunflower County convenience store owner who serves as Chairman of the Highways and Transportation Committee of Delta Council. Commissioner Dick Hall has announced that the offi-

82 BRIDGE *cont., on page 6*



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**75th ANNUAL DELTA COUNCIL DAY**  
75th ANNIVERSARY

*75th Annual*  
**Delta Council Day**  
10:30 a.m. • May 28, 2010  
Bologna Performing Arts Center  
Delta State University

**Stu Rothenberg - "Lay of the Land"**  
Analysis of the 2010 Election Cycle  
9:00 a.m.  
Delta State University - Under Tent on Quadrangle

**2010 Salute to Delta Honor Graduates**  
Lt. Governor Phil Bryant, Host  
9:30 a.m.  
Southeast side of Bologna Performing Arts Center in Tent

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## DELTA COUNCIL

### 2009-10 Delta Council Officers

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**Vice-President:** PETER JACKSON, Rolling Fork  
**Vice-President:** LISA PERCY, Greenville  
**Vice-President:** JIM ROBERTSON, Indianola  
**Vice-President:** DANNY WALKER, Greenwood  
**Vice-President:** MATTSON FLOWERS, Clarksdale  
**Vice-President:** DAVIS OWEN, Robinsonville  
**Treasurer:** GARY GAINES, Senatobia

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## Message from the President



Travis Satterfield, President  
Delta Council

As my year as President of Delta Council approaches its twilight, I can reflect on many good things that have occurred, during an otherwise, very challenging year for the U.S. and State economy.

Behind the leadership of Delta

State University and Mississippi Valley State University, the Delta Heritage Area, designed to promote heritage and cultural tourism, is advancing in a way which will make a difference in the Delta.

The Delta Workforce Cabinet, which was established by an act of the Mississippi Legislature, is off and running. **David Norquist, Willie Bailey, Phil Bryant and Buck Clarke** deserve the credit for making workforce development a higher priority and a more efficient delivery system in the Mississippi Delta.

At the time of this draft, 2009 agricultural disaster assistance has not yet been acted upon by the Congress of the United States. However, it is my view that the Mississippi Delta has been a prominent player in keeping this issue at the forefront of every leg-

islative act that has been considered by Congress since the 2009 fall harvest. We continue to focus on this matter and it is not over.

The largest public works highway project in the Mississippi Delta, and the largest bridge and bypass project in the entire State of Mississippi, is advancing toward completion across the U.S. 82 river crossing at Greenville, combined with the multi-million dollar corridor being built around the City of Greenville. Transportation Commissioner **Dick Hall** made this project his highest priority and the entire Commission on Transportation and the top staff people for the Mississippi Department of Transportation have been committed to its completion. Commerce and safety will be improved due to

SATTERFIELD from page 6

## Goal to offer Quality Education Must Remain Intact

By **Hank M. Bounds**  
Commissioner of Higher Education  
Guest Column



Bounds

Mississippi universities face serious financial challenges over the next several years, but there are also unique opportunities for us to use higher education to move our state forward. Like other sectors of the economy, our universities are feeling the effects of a national recession. Since last July, universities' operations budgets have been cut \$37.6 million, or 9.5 percent. Beginning this July, IHL projections show that universities will be funded nearly \$49 million, or 12 percent, from what they received last year.

The news appears worse when looking ahead to the 2012 fiscal

year, when federal stimulus funding ends. IHL projections show that universities face a \$109 million, or 27 percent, drop in funding from what they received last year.

Making this shortfall even more significant is the fact that enrollment has grown and continues to increase. Two years from now, because of declining state dollars and increasing enrollment, universities will likely have \$1,000 less to spend per student than they did 12 years ago.

To address these challenges, the IHL Board of Trustees and university presidents are taking a proactive approach by streamlining operations and becoming more efficient. In an effort to protect academic integrity, our institutions are taking a hard look at where to direct limited resources. While our presidents are doing everything they can to save jobs, there is no doubt that there will be major changes at all of our universities over the next several years.

And, like other universities across the nation, Mississippi institutions are raising tuition. By taking a multi-year approach to tuition increases and adopting any increases earlier in the year, students and parents will hopefully have more time to plan for college expenses.

Higher education remains a bargain in Mississippi – our rates are still the lowest in the southeastern region. Several of our universities are implementing programs to ensure low-income students can afford to go to college.

Also, several new IHL policies have the potential to save students' money. The Board recently adopted new textbook regulations that will increase the buy-back market. A new articulation policy will ease the transfer process for students moving from community colleges to our universities.

As we tackle these enormous

BOUNDS from page 6

## Rothenberg to Address Delta 1000 Members on Delta Council Day

Stu Rothenberg, one of the most respected political analysts from Capitol Hill, will address Delta 1000 members at 9:00 a.m. before the Delta Council Annual Meeting on May 28, 2010 in the Quadrangle outside the Bologna Performing Arts Center in Cleveland.

"Stu Rothenberg is a longtime friend to Delta Council and our members and guests have enjoyed — and sometimes marveled at — his uncanny ability to dissect and handicap political races," said Delta Council President Travis Satterfield of Benoit. "2010 is a watershed election year and we look forward to his visit and insights again this year."

Rothenberg is the editor and publisher of the *Rothenberg Political Report*, as well as penning his bi-weekly Roll Call column and a contributor to *The Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, and the *New York Times*. He has served as a political analyst for several news networks. He has appeared on NBC's "Meet the Press", ABC's "This Week" and "Nightline," and "The McLaughlin Group." He served as a political analyst for CBS News, and has served as a CCN pundit for over a decade.

Rothenberg holds a B.S. from Colby College in Waterville, Maine, and a Ph.D. from the University of Connecticut. In addition, he taught political

science at Bucknell University and the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C.

The Diamond Anniversary Meeting of the Delta's regional development organization will begin at 10:30 a.m. following Rothenberg's address and the recognition of the Delta's Honor Graduates. The sponsors of this year's event include **BankPlus, Jimmy Sanders, The Catfish Farmers of Mississippi, The Corn Promotion Board, Cotton Inc., The Rice Promotion Board, The Soybean Promotion Board, Southern AgCredit / Mississippi Land Bank, and WABG.**



Stu Rothenberg

## Dixon Completes Congressional Fellowship, Hired By Cochran

*Clarksdale Native Will Work in D.C. Following Graduation from Delta State*

U.S. Senator Thad Cochran recently announced that he has hired Darrell K. Dixon, Jr., a native of Clarksdale, as a staff assistant in his Washington office.

Dixon, a Delta State University senior, last week completed a semester-long Congressional Fellowship with Cochran's office. The fellowship was sponsored by the V.F. Smith Foundation and is endowed by StaplCotn. Dixon, a political science major, will graduate this spring and begin his

work in Washington after graduation.

"During his fellowship with my office, Darrell has shown himself to be a bright and diligent young man. I look forward to having him formally join the staff of my Washington office," Cochran said.

At Delta State, Dixon is a President's List Scholar and a member of the Phi Kappa Phi and Phi Gamma Mu honor societies. He is the son of Darrell and Evelyn Dixon of Clarksdale.



Senator Thad Cochran and Darrell Dixon



## Massingill and Marshall Nominated for DRA Posts

President Barack Obama on Thursday nominated Arkansas Gov. Mike Beebe's chief policy advisor on economic development to be the federal co-chairman of the Delta Regional Authority.

Christopher A. Massingill, now serving as Beebe's recovery implementation director for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the state's official liaison to the DRA, would have to be confirmed by the Senate.

The DRA invests its funding in economic development initiatives in the 252



Massingill

counties or parishes in the parts of eight states within the Mississippi Delta, including Shelby, Fayette and Tipton in Tennessee, Crittenden in Arkansas and DeSoto in Mississippi.

The federal co-chairman

is currently Patrick H. "Pete" Johnson of Clarksdale, Miss., who took office in September 2001. The rotating state co-chairman is currently held by Gov. Bob Riley of Alabama.

Last week, Obama nominated Michael Marshall, the former mayor of Sikeston, Mo., to be the alternate federal co-chairman of the Clarksdale, Miss.-based agency.

Marshall is a farm manager and former president of the First State Bank and Trust in Sikeston.

Mississippi Delta, you can thank your lucky stars that Thad Cochran has placed a priority on agriculture since the day he arrived in Washington, in 1972."

"The footprint of Thad Cochran stretches across every single county in the Mississippi Delta and as we celebrate the 75th anniversary of Delta Council, we look forward to hearing Senator Cochran's keynote address. More than anything else, on behalf of Delta Council and all of the citizens of this 18-county region who call the Delta their home, we want to thank him for all that he means to us, our communities, and our livelihoods."

Cochran's keynote address will follow a full morning's activities, including a salute to Delta Honor Graduates by Lt. Gov. Phil Bryant, and an annual report on the region's activities and priorities. Delta Council will also recognize those who have made significant contri-

butions in other critical areas of Delta life. Also, Washington political pundit Stu Rothenberg will speak in the Quadrangle earlier that morning to members of Delta 1000 about the outlook for the Senate and House races in this watershed election year.

Cochran's address is scheduled to conclude at noon, when the Delta Council members and guests will move to the University Quadrangle for a fried catfish luncheon.

The 75th Delta Council Annual Meeting will begin at 10:30 a.m. This year's meeting is sponsored by BankPlus, Southern Ag Credit/Land Banks of Mississippi, Jimmy Sanders, Inc., WABG, and five organizations representing "Voices of Mississippi Agriculture;" Catfish Farmers of Mississippi, Corn Promotion Board, Cotton, Inc., Rice Promotion Board, and Soybean Promotion Board.

## PRESIDENT *cont. from page 2*

these infrastructure improvements.

Delta communities have drawn together to attempt to re-open the "rate maker" freight line between Greenville and Columbus. Every community along the four-county area (Washington-Carroll) and non-Delta counties have filed their letters of support for re-opening the C & G Railroad (Genesee and Wyoming) from the Port of Greenville and Rosedale, to the Tennessee-Tombigbee. While this railroad revitalization effort has gone virtually unnoticed by many, as a regional organization, Delta Council views that this rail service is absolutely vital to the competitiveness of our communities and our river ports, in terms of attracting new private investments. Special thanks go to Representative Warner McBride and Representative Willie Bailey for their work on behalf of this legislative support.

The effort to bring about USDA inspection and a higher standard for catfish food safety has been a priority of Delta Council. Working in cooperation with Catfish Farmers of America and Catfish Farmers of Mississippi, Delta Council is hopeful that the current Administration will realize that

## 82 BRIDGE *from page 1*

cial opening of the bridge will occur later this summer. The bridge project received a significant boost when then-Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott infused \$100 million into the project approximately 8 years ago.

"Eventually, we are hopeful that the State of Arkansas will complete the 4-laning of U.S. Highway 65 to Little Rock and U.S. 82 to El Dorado, open-

## PARTON *from page 4*

in receiving free books for preschoolers in the designated counties, please contact Delta Health Alliance at (662) 686-3520 for a brochure/registration form.

Delta Health Alliance is a nonprofit organization that supports community-

the inspection of domestic and foreign catfish is equally as important as the inspection of beef, poultry, and egg products which are currently exposed to the same level of government-inspection standards. Without food safety standards of USDA applied to U.S. and foreign catfish production and processing, Delta Council views that the public trust is being violated and the quality product which Delta farmers are producing is compromised.

I hope that each of you will mark your calendars for the May 28, Annual Meeting of Delta Council. As I reflect on the past year, and the many challenges which still face the U.S. and State economy, I think each of you will enjoy the Annual Meeting, where we will talk about a positive Delta.

And finally, we invite you to join Nancy and me for the Annual Meeting to salute the individual who will be our keynote speaker, and the one who has contributed so heavily to the positive things which are so important to us as businessmen in the Delta. Thad Cochran will reflect on the positive attributes and activities of the Delta as our Keynote Speaker for the 75th Annual Meeting.

Nancy and I look forward to seeing you there.

ing up 4-lane commerce between Dallas and Atlanta, straight through the heart of the Mississippi Delta," speculated Gresham.

Reports on progress toward the completion of the U.S. Highway 82 bypass, the 4-laning of Highway 6 between Batesville and Clarksdale, and I-69 will be given at the 75th Annual Meeting of Delta Council on May 28, at the Delta State University campus.

based healthcare initiatives that target critical health and wellness issues in the Mississippi Delta. Located in Stoneville, MS, Delta Health Alliance currently funds 35 community-based programs that are spread throughout the Delta region.

## Tasha Bailey Named to Delta Council D.A.R.E.® Program Team



Bailey

Delta Council has newly employed Mrs. Tasha Bailey as the D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) Community Educator. The Delta Council D.A.R.E. project is instrumental in answering the problem of alcohol, drug and tobacco usage of youth in the Mississippi Delta communities. D.A.R.E. project staff work with local law enforcement and school administrators throughout the eighteen Mississippi Delta counties to setup, implement and

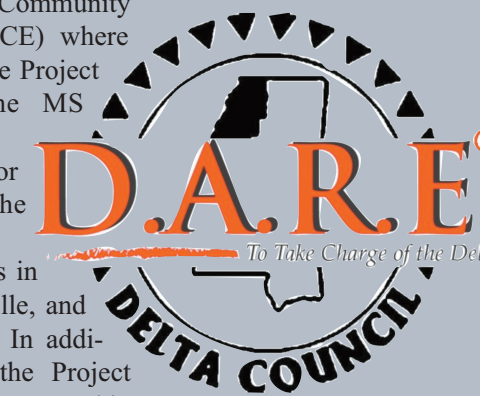
maintain D.A.R.E. classes, along with providing training to law enforcement and school personnel, in middle school classrooms in the region.

"Tasha's experience in education, substance abuse, community education and partnership attest to the fact that she will be a great asset to Delta Council," said Delta Council leader Al Rankins of Greenville.

Bailey, a Greenville, MS native, comes to Delta Council by way of Mississippi Action for Community Education (MACE) where she served as the Project Director of the MS Tobacco-Free Coalition. Prior to MACE, she taught school for several years in Leland, Greenville, and Rosedale, MS. In addition, she was the Project Director for the Partnership

for a Healthy Mississippi.

Bailey graduated from Coahoma Community College with an Associate of Arts degree in Medical Technology. She then transferred to MS Valley State University and completed her undergraduate studies with a Bachelor of Science in Biology. She obtained a Master's of Science in Environmental Health Science also from MS Valley State University in 1999. She currently holds MS teacher certification.



## BOUNDS *from page 2*

financial hurdles, it is just as important that we do not allow quality to suffer, particularly since more people continue to seek higher education.

Over the past 10 years,

enrollment has increased nearly 16 percent at our institutions. The number of degrees has also grown substantially — by 8.5 percent during that same period. This is wonderful news that can only help drive

our state's economic recovery.

No matter the financial circumstances we face, our goal must remain the same: To offer all Mississippians a quality education that is accessible and affordable.

## Selection of Board Underway — Procedure Outlined

As Delta Council embarks on a new term for officers and directors, we thought it would be good to provide a refresher on how they are elected. The 1935 bylaws spell out how they are selected.

The officers of the Delta Council shall consist of a President, up to 6 Vice Presidents, an Executive Vice President, and a Treasurer. The Nominating Committee shall elect officers, with the exception of Executive Vice President. The Nominating Committee shall be composed of the current President and Past Presidents. Vice Presidents serve 1 term; Treasurer may serve 2 consecutive 1-year terms. Term runs from Annual Meeting to Annual Meeting.

As for the directors, the 1935 bylaws state:

*Each county in the 18 Delta and part-Delta counties will have two directors. All communities with a population of 10,000 and over will have two directors, and be known as Type A communities. All communities with population of 3,000-10,000 will have one director, and be commonly referred to as Type B communities.*

The ballot procedure is also spelled out:

**1. A ballot shall be sent to every member of Delta Council, consisting of an alphabetized listing of members in good standing from each county, respectively. Two directors**

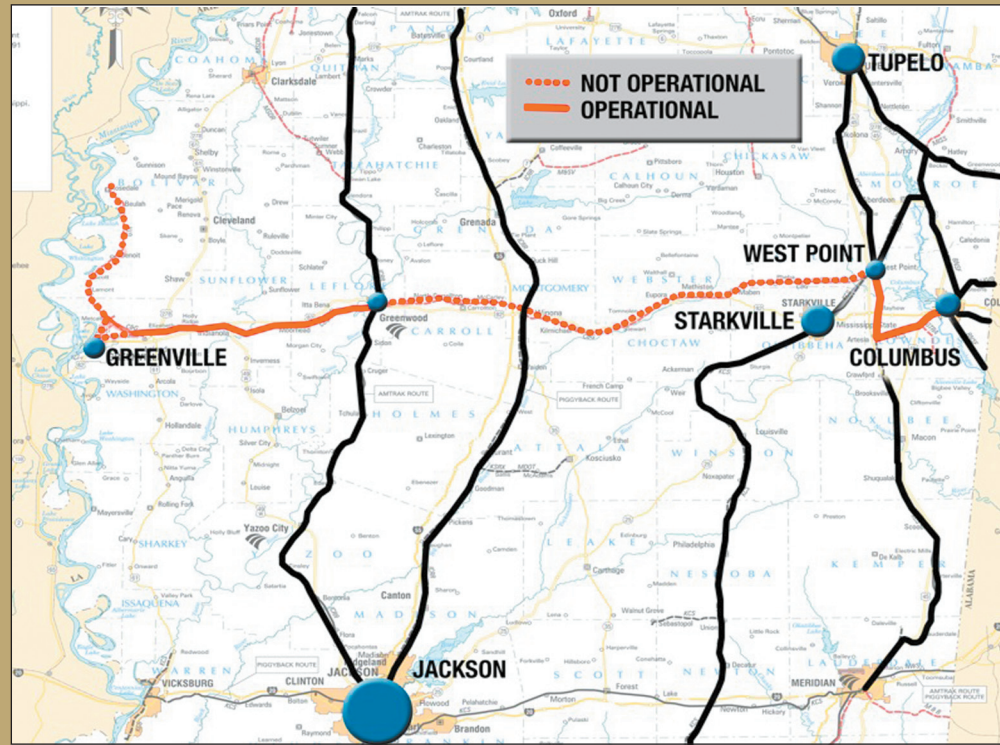
**shall be elected from Type A communities, by tabulating the two members who a) receive the most votes and b) hold residency from Type A community(ies).**

**2. The member who receives the most votes on the ballot from a Type B community will serve as a community director for all Type B communities in the respective county(ies).**

**3. On the same ballot, two remaining directors will be selected as county directors, by tabulating the ballot results and identifying the two members who receive the most votes from the county at-large, after eliminating eligibility of those members who were elected to represent Type A or Type B communities.**

**4. Additionally, sixteen directors-at-large will be elected by the outgoing Board of Directors. The President of Delta Council may appoint up to 10 additional directors from the 18 Delta and part-Delta counties to serve as Executive Appointments to the Board for a term concurrent with the President. Any Delta Council member who has been elected to serve as a director for 10 terms and who has reached the age of 65 shall be designated as a Senior Director, with life status as a member of the Board of Directors. Additionally, all past presidents of the organization shall automatically serve on the Board of Directors indefinitely.**





## Railroad Revitalization Gets Nod from State Legislature

Behind the strong leadership of House Transportation Committee Chairman Warner McBride (Oakland) and State Senator Tom King (Petal), the Mississippi Legislature adopted a measure to provide up to \$15 million in State funding for rehabilitation of 92 miles of the Genesee-Wyoming Railroad (formerly the C & G), which is the first step toward reopening the rail line across North Central Mississippi.

“Chairman McBride made this a priority two years ago and with the strong local work of Representative Willie Bailey and Representative John Hines, the railroad revitalization measure gained support of the House and Senate Transportation Committees,” stated Tom Gresham, Chairman of the Delta Council Highways and Transportation Committee. Long a priority of Delta Council, the east-west rail line currently operates between Greenville and Greenwood, but suspended operations between Greenwood and West Point several years.

“The Genesee-Wyoming is committed to serving the entire expanse of the North Central Mississippi rail needs between the Mississippi River and our termini in Columbus,” stated Roger Bell of the Genesee-Wyoming. Bell, the Government Relations Officer for Genesee-Wyoming and former CEO of the C & G Railroad, served as the principle advocate for the revitalization funds adopted by the Mississippi Legislature. “Delta Council looks forward to working with the Genesee-Wyoming, the North Mississippi Rail Authority, and other advocates for railroad revitalization to make certain that the economic development potential of this vital transportation artery is restored to full capacity,” stated Gresham, the Sunflower County businessman.

## Delta Health Alliance Partners with Dolly Parton and MS Valley State University to Provide Free Books to Preschoolers

The Delta Health Alliance has launched a four week ad campaign to inform Delta citizens of an exciting new program to encourage parents to read to their children during their preschool years. Partnering with Mississippi Valley State University and country music sensation Dolly Parton, the Delta Health Alliance is providing free books to preschoolers through Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library.

To gain support for their initiative, the Delta Health Alliance is advertising this program by television commercials on all major cable networks, newspaper ads in counties that offer this program, and informative brochures to encourage parents to begin reading to their children in the first years of their lives. This program is designed to increase literacy levels in children, starting from their early years. Preschoolers who are signed up for the program will receive a new free book each month until they are five years old, as long as they are residents of the counties that the Delta Health Alliance designates for the program. Parents can sign their children up as early as birth. Currently, this program provides free books to preschool children in Coahoma, Humphreys, Leflore, Sunflower, and Washington counties; and Bolivar county preschool children will be eligible in the upcoming months.



Oliver

says, “There may be many reasons why parents do not read to their children, but we are eliminating one of them: cost. The books are no cost to the parents. All parents have to do is sign their children up. It is that simple!”

To receive free books for preschool children, parents or guardians with preschoolers living in the designated counties must submit an official registration form to Delta Health Alliance. Once the registration form has been approved by Delta Health Alliance, books will begin arriving at homes in eight to ten weeks. If you or someone you know is interested

According to Dr. Karen Fox, president and CEO of Delta Health Alliance, “Delta Health Alliance is excited about working with MS Valley State Uni-

**PARTON** continued on page 6



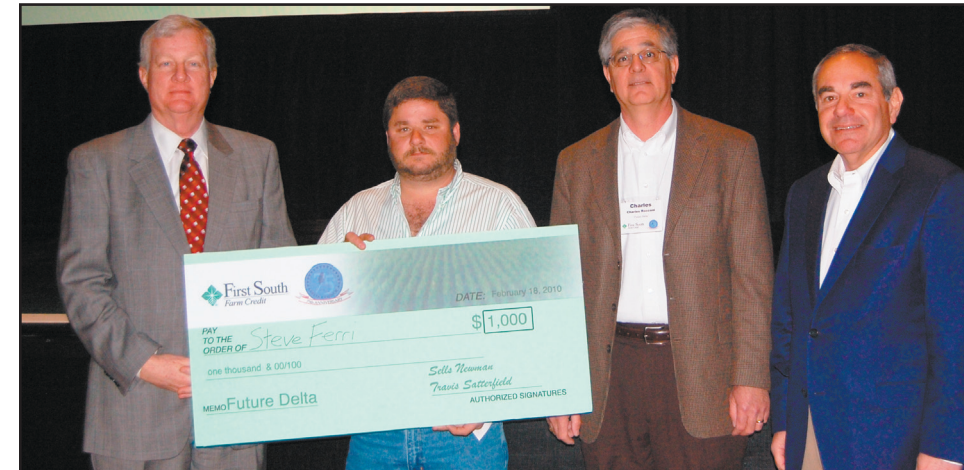
Jackie Kerr of Rolling Fork, Emily Carter of Glen Allan, Louis Thompson of Tchula, and Paul Dees of Greenville at a recent Delta Wildlife Board of Directors meeting.



Steven Wall, Legislative Director for U.S. Senator Thad Cochran, visits with Michael Arneemann, Richard Allen, and Kevin Magee of the Mississippi Department of Transportation about Delta transportation projects in Stoneville.



Greenwood Mayor Carolyn McAdams and Walton Gresham of Indianola visit before an MEC Early Childhood meeting in Greenwood.



Steve Ferri (second from left) of Bolivar County was the winner of the raffle at the Future Delta event in Tunica. Also pictured is John Maguire of National Cotton Council, Charles Rocconi of FirstSouth, and Bruce Scherr of Informa.



A large crowd of over 200 young professionals engaged in agriculture attended the 2nd Annual event, sponsored by FirstSouth and Delta Council, at the Horseshoe Resort in Tunica.



Judith Mitchener of Sumner, Betty Hood of Gunnison, and Maggie Parker of Inverness, review materials at the Delta Council Arrangements Committee meeting.



DSU President John Hilpert recently hosted the Officers and Executive Appointments of Delta Council on the Cleveland campus and he talked to them about funding issues and successes related to education and health care.



Aven Whittington of Greenwood (left) shakes hands with Bobby Carson of Marks at the Delta Council Executive Committee meeting as Tom Gary of Greenwood looks on.