

Delta Council

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The Delta Council Review

Vol. 7, Issue No. 2

THE NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS AND MEMBERS OF DELTA COUNCIL

April 2011

76th Delta Council Meeting to be Held May 6

Barksdale to Keynote

The 76th Annual Delta Council Meeting will be held Friday, May 6, 2011, and will include a featured address by businessman and philanthropist Jim Barksdale. The Annual Meeting of the Delta's regional business and agriculture organization will be at Delta State University's Bologna Performing Arts Center, in Cleveland, Miss.

"I am so pleased that Jim Barksdale will join us as our featured speaker," said Dr. Cass Pennington of Indianola, President of the Stoneville-based organization. "In his career, he has excelled as a businessman and innovator, but just as impressive is his commitment to education. Jim Barksdale hasn't just given a lot of money to education and other priority issues in Mississippi, but he has taken his

valuable time and keen intellect to design programs and efforts that create tangible outcomes."

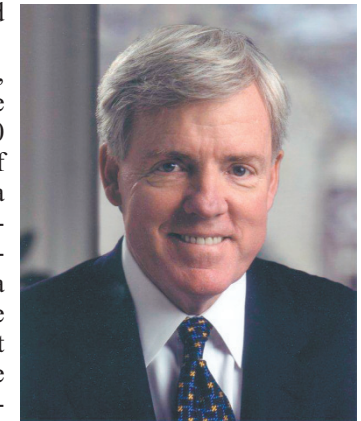
Jim Barksdale is President and Chairman of Barksdale Management Corporation, a philanthropic investment company. He has over 35 years of operational experience. Prior to founding The Barksdale Group in 1999, he served as President & CEO of Netscape Communications Corp. from January 1995 until the company merged with America Online in March of 1999. Prior to Netscape, he worked at AT&T Wireless Services (formerly McCaw Cellular Communications) as their Chief Executive Officer. From April 1983 to January 1992, Barksdale served as the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for Federal Express Corporation and prior to that, he served as their Chief Information Officer

for four years. Barksdale also held various management positions, including Chief Information Officer with Cook Industries and started his career at IBM.

In January 2000, Barksdale and his late wife, Sally, gifted \$100 million to the State of Mississippi to create a statewide reading institute, The Barksdale Reading Institute. This is a joint venture with the Mississippi Department of Education and the state's seven public university schools of education.

He sits on the boards of several companies and foundations, including AOL

Time Warner; Federal Express; Mayo Foundation; Sun Microsystems, Inc., and TechNet. Barksdale was also appointed to the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board by President George W. Bush. He is also a Special Advisor for General Atlantic Partners. He is also currently serving as co-chair of the Markle Foundation Task Force on National Security in the Information Age, which recently published their report, "Protecting America's Freedom in the Information Age." Barksdale



Barksdale

ANNUAL MEETING continued on page 6

Barbour Presents Award to Coahoma County Board of Supervisors for Standard Industrial Project

The Coahoma County Board of Supervisors was one of sixteen communities and organizations that received the Governor's Community Projects of Excellence Awards in various categories. Coahoma County's award was for the Best Community Development Block Grant (Economic Development division) in the state and the award was presented recently by Governor Barbour at a ceremony in Jackson. The Coahoma County Board of Supervisors, the Clarksdale-Coahoma Economic Development Authority, and MS Development Authority representatives discovered during routine existing industry visits with Standard Industrial that their business was very good, but they were hampered by the lack of space to expand their operations in




From left: Representative John Mayo; Ron Hudson, Coahoma County Industrial Foundation; Hugh Jack Stubbs, Coahoma Special Projects Coordinator; Chris Overton, Coahoma County Board of Supervisors; Steve Hays, Standard Industrial; Paul Pearson Coahoma County Board of Supervisors; Larry Young, MDA Regional Specialist.

its existing facilities. Ultimately, their discussions led to the company's interest in

Building. While the building was in poor condition, the group felt it could be upgraded utilizing a combination of CAP Loan funds, a CDBG Grant, and substantial company financial resources to develop it into a quality facility that would allow Standard Industrial to have a straight-line production process that would create huge efficiencies and allow them to compete with the ever increasing influx of foreign made machines. Standard Industrial makes huge press breaks and shears commonly used in many manufacturing facilities associated with the automotive and petroleum industry. The company is currently in the process of moving into the newly renovated Waterfield Building.

expanding and relocating to the then-empty 92,000 square foot Waterfield



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Deputy Secretary Merrigan Visits Mississippi

In a two day visit to the Mississippi State University campus, Delta Council leaders met with USDA's second-ranking official.

"It was a privilege for us to have the opportunity to join with MSU President Mark Keenum in meetings with Secretary Kathleen Merrigan, in order to convey the priorities which we foresee as timely and important to the future of our region of the State," stated Cass Pennington, the current Delta Council President. "In addition to

rule affecting catfish inspection, which is before USDA at this time, we were pleased to have the opportunity to talk with the Secretary about the importance of the Stoneville Agricultural Research complex, the work of the Delta Health Alliance, the efforts to bring broadband connections to the Delta and the importance of Farm Bill reauthorization," added Pennington.

In addition to establishing dialogue with Secretary Merrigan about priorities in the

Delta Workforce Training Pilot Project Extended Norquist, Bailey, Bryant and Clarke Champion Effort

Following the unanimous vote at the last Cabinet meeting in Yazoo City to ask for a five-year extension on the Delta Workforce Training Pilot Project, legislation doing just that passed the Mississippi Legislature. The language, which was included in a larger bond bill, allows the pilot project to continue its work in enhancing workforce delivery in the Mississippi Delta region.

"The Workforce Training Pilot Project

has been a critical piece of Delta Council's work in economic development in order to ensure that our existing businesses have the tools to succeed," said Delta Council Development Department Chairman Tom Gresham, who serves as the Chairman of the Cabinet and was appointed by Governor Haley Barbour. "Many legislators were key to the effort, but special thanks go to Rep. Willie Bailey and

WORKFORCE continued on page 7



DELTA COUNCIL

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Vice-President: CLAY ADCOCK, Holly Bluff
Vice-President: BUCK CLARKE, Hollandale
Vice-President: ANGELA CURRY, Greenwood
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Layout and design of The Delta Council Review
Coopwood Communications
Cleveland, MS

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Outlook

Message from the President



**Cass Pennington, President
Delta Council**

I am delighted and privileged that Jim Barksdale, possibly one of the most successful Mississippi businessmen of our era, will give the keynote address to the 76th Annual Meeting of Delta Council. Of all the Delta Council meetings I have attended over the years, those which

I have enjoyed most were the ones when Mississippians have played a central role in the Annual Meeting program. The Friday, May 6, meeting of Delta Council on the Delta State University campus will be a great reunion for Delta people and our out of town guests.

In addition to Mr. Barksdale addressing the audience, we look forward to participation of parents and high school students who are our **Delta Honor Graduates** for 2011. These students across the 18-County region have worked hard to achieve high levels of recognition through their leadership and academic standing in the local school districts. I have personally participated in this event on behalf of Delta Council in past years and if you are one who believes the challenges of the Delta are just too overwhelming for us to overcome, you need to attend this event with these young people at 9 a.m., under the tent on the East side of the Bologna Performing Arts Center. You will find that these

young people represent the future of the Delta, and they are smart, aggressive, and full of confidence in their ability to meet the challenges of our future.

Also, in keeping with the timing of our May 6 meeting, which is only 3-4 months before we go to the polls to elect a new slate of statewide officials in Mississippi, notable figures with statewide recognition in Mississippi politics will serve on a panel to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of various candidates vying for statewide office. Dr. Marty Wiseman, the oft-quoted professor of Political Science at Mississippi State University will moderate the 40-minute program which begins at 9 a.m. in the tent, on the DSU quadrangle. Delta 1000 members, Delta Council Board of Directors and guests are invited.

The Good Middling Lady recognition will be disclosed at the Annual Meeting and I am very pleased

PRESIDENT *continued on page 3*

USDA Agricultural Landscapes Forums

By Trey Cooke

Delta F.A.R.M. & Delta Wildlife

Four Regional USDA Agricultural Landscapes Forums were held this spring to solicit input in preparation for the 2012 Farm Bill. On March 22nd, Trey Cooke, Executive Director of Delta F.A.R.M. and Delta Wildlife, was invited to offer comments and consideration to the USDA and its Blue Ribbon Panel at the Southern Regional Forum in Columbiana, AL. The following are excerpts from the Delta F.A.R.M. and Delta Wildlife testimony:



Cooke

The USDA offers the most versatile and effective suite of tools to address natural resource concerns on private-working lands throughout the United States. With this being said,

the first consideration I would offer is to stay true to what has helped the Conservation Title of the Farm Bill become the titan it is in the field of conservation. Continue to focus on working lands. Working lands are where the greatest environmental benefits can accrue. However, those lands must remain “working lands” in order to sustain the economic engine of rural America while meeting an ever-growing demand for food and fiber.

Another strength of existing Conservation Title Programs stems from the States and regions’ flexibility to adapt national programs to better address local resource concerns. Conservation practices with firm goals and flexible specifications translate to success across the country. This also touches on the critical importance of a locally lead process of stakeholders balanced with the technical expertise of Area and State USDA agency staff.

In other words, problems are often best resolved by those closest to them.

The Lower Mississippi Valley has some of the most fertile soils in the world. But without water during the growing season, the value of that fertility is not realized. This makes it mandatory for producers to supplement rainfall with irrigation in order to remain profitable in the long-term. A majority of this irrigation water has historically come from a shallow alluvial aquifer that is completely separated from deeper drinking water aquifers. The vulnerability of this water supply for agricultural purposes has become exceedingly obvious when careful study is made of long-term monitoring data.

It is critically important for the region to more aggressively pursue water conservation methods, the development of alternative irrigation

COOKE *continued on page 6*

News

Diabetic Shoppe’s Grand Opening

The Diabetic Shoppe of Charleston, which is a 16-year-old mail-order diabetic supply business that today, also sells customized diabetic footwear and devices for the treatment of sleep apnea, recently celebrated the grand opening of their 21,000 square-foot spacious facility where the company employs close to 60. The company has more than doubled its workspace in the new location on Highway 32 East of Charleston and has plenty of room to grow.

The Diabetic Shoppe was forced to relocate after the June 2009 fire that swept through the previous location and destroyed nearly all of the inventory of the

business. Less than two days after the fire, Robert Salmon, CEO, and his employees met in one of the three adjacent company buildings left standing and made a commitment to make the Diabetic Shoppe even better. They did not let the tragedy defeat them. “As far as we know, not a single diabetic patient had to do without testing supplies because of that fire,” stated Salmon. Skip Scaggs, director of the Mississippi Development Authority’s Existing Industry and Business Division, likened The Diabetic Shoppe to “the phoenix, rising from the ashes,” and reminded the crowd of the company’s devotion to its

employees even in the wake of the fire.

During the celebration, Mitzi Woods, director of the Delta Workforce Investment Area and Cindy Martin, Mississippi Department of Employment Security, surprised Salmon with the “Governor’s Excellence in the Workplace Award”, which is bestowed upon an employer that is “committed to investing in the training and development of their employees in the Mississippi workforce.”

The Mississippi Delta Developers Association, Delta Council, MDA, and Delta Workforce Investment Area have worked with the Diabetic Shoppe over the



Performing the ribbon-cutting ceremony during grand opening festivities at The Diabetic Shoppe near Charleston are (from left) Sharon Salmon, Charleston Mayor Robert Rowe, Michael Boone, Robert Salmon, Peyton Boone, and Leslie Heafner.

years on some workforce and shop floor flow issues, and that working group enlisted the MSU CAVS Center to help them with the latter issue. Congratulations to The Diabetic Shoppe!

Delta Health Alliance Partners with WhyHunger!

Delta Health Alliance (DHA) is all about access — access to better health care, access to education, access to a better life. Now, DHA is helping to increase access to better food sources in the Mississippi Delta. Delta Health Alliance, in a partnership agreement with WhyHunger — an anti-hunger organization based in New York is committed to increase access to fresh, healthy foods — particularly fruits and vegetables through the Delta Fresh Foods Initiative.

Since 1975, WhyHunger has been a leader in the fight against hunger and poverty in the U.S. and world-wide. In the Mississippi Delta, WhyHunger has been working with communities to promote a new local food system. They developed a network of stakeholders through the Delta Fresh Foods Initiative who have committed to building local assets such as community resource maps, nutrition education

programs and school gardens. Participants including health workers, educators, community organizers, legislators, youth, and growers are carrying these projects to fruition.

Delta Health Alliance has joined the initiative through its community garden projects. The 21st Century Garden Project and Church Garden Project were created for grassroots organizations and local residents to have access to sustainable food sources for healthy foods. Delta Health Alliance staff, Jane Calhoun, Ryan Betz, and Deborah Moore, all serve on the Delta Fresh Foods board and the Delta Fresh Foods Initiative. This affiliation between the two organizations lead to the partnership. According to WHY, “What makes DHA such a logical partner for WhyHunger is its core emphasis on community-based programs that work to not just deliver services, but fundamentally trans-



Josh Davis, DHA, and Jesse Tyler, Leland Health Council, discuss upcoming plans for spring planting during the WhyHunger tour.

form communities to address critical healthcare issues and overcome wellness gaps in the Delta — of which there are plenty.”

WhyHunger has made several visits to the Delta — the last to kick off phase two of the Building Community Power to Eliminate Food Deserts project through Delta Fresh Foods Initiative. During their

WORKFORCE *from page 1*

Rep. David Norquist on the House side and Sen. Buck Clarke and Lt. Governor Phil Bryant on the Senate side.”

In addition to Gresham, members of the Cabinet include; Cobie Collins of Yazoo City (appointee of Lt. Governor Phil Bryant), Al Rankins of Greenville (appointee of Speaker Billy McCoy)

Butch Scipper of Marks (appointee of Speaker Billy McCoy), Kent Wyatt of Cleveland (appointee of Lt. Governor Bryant), Dr. Larry Bailey of MS Delta Community College, Dr. Glenn Boyce of Holmes Community College, Dr. Vivian Presley of Coahoma Community College, Les Range of the Mississippi Department of Employment Security, Leland Speed of the Mississippi Development Authority,

Dr. Gary Spears of Northwest Community College, and Mitzi Woods of the Delta Workforce Investment Area.

“In a short amount of time, the Pilot Project has amassed an impressive body of work, and we are grateful that the Legislature saw fit to extend this innovative project another 5 years. None of this would have been possible, however, without the guidance and cooperation of all of

our partners. While it sometimes can be fashionable to say that the Delta is not focusing on creative and fruitful strategies for economic development, we feel this project is a testament to the regional spirit of meeting the needs of business and industry among business and civic leaders, development officials, and workforce delivery specialists,” concluded Gresham.

News

2011 Mississippi Women for Agriculture Annual Conference

April 12-14, 2011, Bost Conference Center, Mississippi State University Campus

The Mississippi Women for Agriculture association is a continuation of the Mississippi Women in Agriculture educational program initiated by the Mississippi State University Extension Service and its partners. Through educational and networking activities such as the annual conference, MWA provides Mississippi women the chance to form friendships, share ideas and develop new ways to make the state's production agriculture and agribusinesses more profitable.

Conference Topics (subject to change)

- Mississippi Voices of Agriculture
- Managing Your Farm in Today's Economic Environment
- Managing Your Family Finances
- Mississippi Commissioner of Agriculture & Commerce Candidate Forum
- 2012 Farm Bill Overview
- The U.S. Economy and Mississippi Agriculture
- Market Maker

- Interactive Ag/Forestry Tour
- Dianne Evans Lecture
- Mississippi Women for Agriculture Organizational Meeting

For further information, contact:

Alan Barefield, MS Women in Ag Director
662.325.7995
womenforag@ext.msstate.edu
http://msucares.com/womenforag

Rice Farmers Gather for MS Rice Council Annual Meeting



Mississippi rice farmers (left to right) are Mike Wagner, Bubba Simmons and Tom Hollingsworth at the Mississippi Rice Council Annual Meeting.



Dr. Gary Jackson (right), Director of the Mississippi State University Extension Service and Dr. Joe Street (center), Associate Director for the MSU Extension Service, visit with Mike Wagner (left), President of the Mississippi Rice Council during the organization's annual meeting in Cleveland. Dr. Jackson was a guest speaker.

Mississippi rice farmers recently gathered in Cleveland for the Annual Meeting of the Mississippi Rice Council. Expected rice acreage production was a constant theme of discussion, typical for this time of the year but more significant considering the current market conditions

ANNUAL MEETING *from page 1*

received his B.A. in Business Administration from the University of Mississippi.

Barksdale's keynote address will follow a full morning's activities, including a salute to Delta Honor Graduates by Lt. Gov. Phil Bryant and Delta State University President John Hilpert, and an annual report on the region's activities and priorities. Delta Council will also recognize those who have made significant contributions in other critical areas of Delta life. Also, a trio of state political pundits will speak in the Quadrangle earlier that morning to members of Delta 1000 about the outlook for Mississippi political races in this statewide

election season.

Barksdale'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 76th Delta Council Annual Meeting will begin at 10:30 a.m. This year's meeting is sponsored by BankPlus, Land Banks of Mississippi, Jimmy Sanders, Inc., and five organizations representing "Voices of Mississippi Agriculture;" Catfish Farmers of Mississippi, Corn Promotion Board, Cotton, Inc., Rice Promotion Board, and Soybean Promotion Board.

COOKE *from page 2*

water supplies, and implement more advanced surface water management scenarios to ensure a more economic and environmentally sustainable future for agriculture.

The Conservation Title of the Farm Bill and the USDA is already actively engaged in addressing this regional concern through AWEF and EQIP. The importance of practices that are afforded to landowners through these programs have and will continue to go a long way towards addressing this issue. And in addition, we have discovered that many of these practices go a long way towards addressing water quality issues.

The USDA has always played a major role in erosion programs, but through the authorization and adequate funding of EQIP

in the 1996, 2002 and 2008 Farm Bills, Mississippi and other Lower Mississippi Valley States were provided with the tools they needed to more aggressively attack sediment loading. Significant and measured gains have been recorded in Mississippi in our fight to reduce sediment loading. However a new issue has arisen throughout the Mississippi River Basin...nutrient loading.

In Mississippi, and to some degree, other Lower Mississippi Valley States, a tremendous Federal, State, NGO, and stakeholder partnership has evolved through the development and implementation of a regional Nutrient Reduction Strategy. This strategy, a consensus-based strategy, capitalized on opportunities through EQIP programs such as CCPI, CIG, and MRBI to implement the plan and actively reduce nutrient loading into the Mississippi River. This has all been done through a proactive-voluntary effort to

76TH ANNUAL MEETING

Friday, May 6, 2011

9:00	Delta 1000 Political Roundtable Jere Nash, Arnie Hederman, Marty Wiseman Quadrangle Lawn
9:30	Salute to Delta Honor Graduates Lt. Gov. Phil Bryant and Dr. John Hilpert, Presiding Tent Outside Bologna Center
10:30	Business Session Bologna Performing Arts Center
	Welcome and Opening Remarks Dr. Cass Pennington, Presiding
	Keynote Address The Honorable Jim Barksdale Chairman and President Barksdale Management Corporation
12:00	Catfish Luncheon Quadrangle Lawn



News

Doing Good Things...

Rice Promotion Board

The Mississippi Rice Research and Promotion Board, composed of 12 farm leaders appointed by the Governor, administers the producer funded program aimed at production research and market development for Mississippi rice growers.

"Over the years, our funds have been utilized to open new markets for U.S. long grain rice, and therefore, Mississippi rice has experienced strengthened demand, and increased prices for rice," stated Donald Gant of Merigold, the current Chairman of the Mississippi Rice Research and Promotion Board.

Individual problem-solving research projects at Stoneville have brought technology to the farm which has result-

ed in reducing costs and increasing yield for Mississippi rice production.

"The per-bushel check-off which my neighbors and my family have paid to the Mississippi Rice Research and Promotion program is one of the best expenditures we make toward the future sustainability of the Mississippi rice industry," stated Travis Satterfield of Benoit, Chairman of the Delta Council Rice Committee.

"I know all of the 12 members of the Rice Board and we are fortunate to have the caliber of individuals serving on our Rice Board, as they confront tough issues and make wise investments with our funds," added the Bolivar County rice grower.

RICE BOARD MEMBERS

RONNIE AGUZZI – CLEVELAND
JAMES ALLISON – SARAH
CURTIS BERRY – ROBINSONVILLE
NOLEN CANON – TUNICA
GIP CARTER – ROLLING FORK
MARVIN COCHRAN – AVON
GARY FIORANELLI – CLEVELAND
DONALD GANT – MERIGOLD
TOM HOLLINGSWORTH – HOLLANDALE
RANDY HOWARTH – BOYLE
DOUG SIMMONS – LELAND
GIBB STEELE – HOLLANDALE

CATFISH *from page 1*

Delta, Delta Council leaders were able to stress the Food Safety aspects of carrying out food safety inspection for domestic and all foreign-produced sources of catfish sold in the United States. Additionally, with Farm Bill debate projected for 2012, Delta Council took the opportunity to re-state its position in support of the basic principles of the current farm law, including the marketing loan.

USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has a web site where anyone can comment on the catfish rule. (Many people have left comments at the site.

One individual stated, "I was employed for 5 years doing receiving in a [big box] store's meat department. I can tell you that I complained many times to my MGR about rotten and slimy catfish, tilapia, and salmon. Every time I was vetoed and told to put the product out.) Even fish that was outdated, I was told to repack, refreeze, and sell it!! During my employment I was told by many transferred and management employees that this IS COMMON AT ALL OF THE [BIG BOX] OWNED STORES!! I AM VERY WILLING TO GO UNDERCOVER AND HELP THE USDA, FDA CLEAN UP THESE COMPANIES THAT ARE IN FACT POISONING AMERICAN PEOPLE. I AM ALSO WILLING TO MEET AND HELP TO REWRITE THE HANDLING RULES."

This was just one of many comments posted on USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) comment site regarding the catfish rule.

If you would like to make a comment or for more information, comments must be received on or before June 26 through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at www.regulations.gov or by mail to USDA, FSIS Docket Clerk, Room 2-2127, Mailstop 5272, George Washington Carver Center, 5601 Sunnyside Ave., Beltsville, MD 20705. Submissions may also be received through e-mail at fsis.regulationscomments@fsis.usda.gov. All comments must identify FSIS and the docket number FSIS-2008-0031.

PRESIDENT *from page 2*

with the committee's selection of a very deserving person for this award.

And finally, I want to express appreciation to our sponsors and those who cause this meeting to happen in a way that makes it enjoyable, festive, and an opportunity to visit with friends that we see only once a year. The catfish-

cooking team from Stoneville is the best that can be found for a

crowd this size. Our sponsors are people of and from the Delta. This event is yet another way that they show their support for Delta Council. The meeting simply could not be the event it is without the staff at Delta State University that has served as host for 73 out of the 76 years that Delta Council has been meeting.

I look forward to seeing each of you there.

Deltan On The Move:

Lyn Arnold

PERSONAL INFORMATION

A native Mississippian, Lyn graduated from high school in Sardis, Mississippi and received a Bachelor of Science Degree from Christian Brothers University in Business Administration and Finance. She is also a graduate of the Economic Development Institute in Norman, Oklahoma. Lyn is active in many economic development organizations throughout the Southeast.

Active in the community, Lyn has many affiliations with local organizations including local Rotary Clubs, United Way, Crimestoppers, and Tunica County Education Foundation.

She was awarded the Paul Harris Fellowship by the Robinsonville Rotary Club in 2002. Lyn and her husband, Jimmy, have two sons and six grandchildren. They are active in the Presbyterian Church. Lyn enjoys golf and reading when she is able to locate any spare time.



embarked on an ambitious program of Chamber realignment, creating an industrial development and recruitment program and aggressively pursuing the diversification of Tunica County's economy. Prior to entering the field of economic development, Lyn worked with Entergy Corporation as a District Manager.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

"I have an incredible job that I love. There are new challenges and opportunities every day. Realizing that what I do each day will impact my community, increase the number and quality of jobs, and raise the standard of living for many people is wonderful motivation. Working with local leadership and our economic development

team and seeing Tunica County become diversified economically provides great satisfaction."

CURRENT JOB TITLE & RESPONSIBILITIES

Lyn Arnold currently serves as the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Tunica County Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Foundation. Having previously served with the DeSoto County Economic Development Council and Herndon Chamber of Commerce/Main Street, Lyn joined Tunica County in 2000 and has

WHAT DOES THE DELTA SAY ABOUT LYN?

"Lyn is one of the most talented developers we have ever worked with. She is thorough, engaging, a team player, and always moving forward with the best interests of Tunica County. Her development skills have paid big dividends over the years, and Delta Council has enjoyed working with her," said Frank Howell, Delta Council staff.

76th Annual Delta Council Day SPONSORS

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UPDATE

Entire MS House Delegation Supports Crop Protection Measure

Delta Council Chairman Travis Satterfield praised the entire Mississippi House Delegation in Congress for their unanimous support of House Bill 872 (Regulatory Burden Act of 2011). The bill has been introduced to alleviate the burdensome and duplicative permitting of applying crop protection materials.

Representatives' Bennie Thompson, Gregg Harper, Alan Nunnelee, and Steven Palazzo, have joined over 120 members of the U.S. House of Representatives in announcing their intent to vote for both a rules suspension to allow for a vote on the legislation, and the legislation itself in the coming days.

"The Environmental Protection Agency is currently proposing additional permitting provisions that we feel are nothing more than a regulatory paperwork exercise accompanied by the increased risk of litigation and its associated costs," said Satterfield. "We appreciate their support of this measure."

Hunter Engineering Company Expands

Hunter Engineering Company, which is a world leader in automotive service equipment, has three manufacturing plants in Mississippi, one of which is located in Durant. They are launching the next generation of the Hawkeye automotive alignment products called the "Hawkeye Elite." Plant Manager Wayne Bowling stated, "The initial sales meeting went very well. Hunter Engineering started shipping March 15th and sales have exceeded expectations. Hunter is currently hiring 12 employees at the Durant location, with the potential to hire up to 18 more. We had strong sales in 2010 and we are projecting an increase in overall sales for 2011 for all of our Automotive Service Equipment."

MDDA Announces Wage and Salary Survey

In response to queries from existing industries, the Mississippi Delta Developers Association is undertaking a comprehensive Wage and Salary Survey with manufacturers around the Delta region. The survey, which was piloted by manufacturing leaders in Montgomery and Bolivar Counties, is being done by the Delta Project, a joint economic development initiative between Delta Council and Mississippi State University, and spearheaded by Dr. Roberto Gallardo of the Southern Rural Development Center at MSU.

Faurecia Purchases Nissan Supplier

Faurecia recently announced its intentions of purchasing a Nissan supplier, Johnson Controls of Madison, making this its second location in Mississippi. Stacie Tong, director of communications for Faurecia North America, said, "Faurecia's plan to purchase a facility in Madison does not impact our Cleveland loca-

tion, as each facility will supply different customers." The Cleveland plant currently employs approximately 350 and is a supplier of automotive seating for multiple automakers.

Dion Brown Hired as the Executive Director at the B.B. King Museum

Dion Brown is the new Executive Director of the B.B. King Museum & Delta Interpretive Center in Indianola. He comes to the B.B. King Museum by way of the Exploration Place in Wichita, Kansas where he served as the Chief Operating Officer. "I'm looking forward to working with the excellent team at the B.B. King Museum," said Brown. "It's an incredible museum and it has a remarkable reputation, and I hope to help lead it to even greater successes."



Brown

Horne Announces Retirement at Delta WIA

Marie Horne, Delta Workforce Investment Area Youth Coordinator, has announced she will be retiring March 31, 2011. DOL official, Winston Tompoe told Marie, "I am really glad for you but at the same time, we will be missing a true partner in you. You have been a source of questions, discussions, ideas, and strategies about program administration that we have used to design a number of our technical assistance programs we deliver to the rest of the local areas." The DWIA Board recently commended Horne at the February Board meeting.



Horne (middle)

2011 Legislative Update

SB2702 – MS Rice Promotion Fund; delete the repealer on assessment on rice grown in the state and records and reporting requirements.

Author: Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith

Status: Approved by the Governor

SB 2871 – Agricultural aviation; require safety markings on certain towers.

Author: Senator Perry Lee

Status: Passed; pending action by Governor

SB 3100 – Extend by five years the Delta Workforce Training Pilot Project

Author: Included in comprehensive bond bill package and program championed by Rep.'s Bailey and Norquist, Sen. Clarke, and Lt. Governor Bryant

Status: Passed; pending action by Governor

Andrew Grobmyer

Andrew Grobmyer, a former legislative assistant for U.S. Senator Mark Pryor, has accepted the position to succeed Don Alexander as the Executive Director of the Agricultural

Council of Arkansas.

"The Agricultural Council of Arkansas is one of our most important and effective allies in matters impacting Southern agriculture and Delta Council views this selection of Andrew as a wise move on the part of our friends in Arkansas. Don Alexander has served in an extremely effective manner and we will forever remain grateful for his friendship and service," stated Dan Branton, Chairman of the Delta Council Farm Policy Committee.



Grobmyer

Entergy Names Arledge VP of State Public Affairs

Entergy Mississippi, Inc. has announced that Mississippi native John Arledge has been named vice president of state public affairs for the electric utility. Arledge will lead a newly-formed department created to drive and focus strategic oversight of governmental and public affairs.



Arledge

This position replaces the former vice president of governmental affairs position, effective with the April 2011 retirement of Will Mayo, who served the company for 32 years.

Tackett Visits Indianola Promise Community

Larkin Tackett, Deputy Director of the U S Department of Education's Promise Neighborhood Initiative received a briefing about Indianola Promise Community partnership organizations and a tour of the targeted South Gate Community during his visit to Indianola on Tuesday March 22. IPC (Indianola Promise Community) is one of the 21 U.S. Department of Education's Promise Neighborhood Planning Grant Recipients which includes only 2 rural sites.



Tackett



Scaggs

Scaggs Visits the Delta Region

Mississippi Delta Developers Association recently played host to Skip Scaggs here in the Delta. Scaggs is the new Existing Industry and Business

Director for Mississippi Development Authority and comes to MDA by way of East Mississippi Business Development Corporation in Meridian where he served as the manager of business development.

Oil and Gas Paper Available

Jack Moody of the Mississippi Development Authority recently wrote an article on oil and gas exploration in Issaquena and Sharkey Counties. Oil and gas leasing opportunities may be a new experience for some landowners in Issaquena and Sharkey Counties. If you, as a landowner who owns the mineral rights to your land, are contacted by an oil company representative interested in leasing your land (minerals) for oil and gas exploration, there are certain points to keep in mind. To access the full article please go to www.deltacouncil.org.

Johnson Presented CFA Lifetime Achievement Award

At the recent Catfish Farmers of America (CFA) Convention in Mobile, Alabama, Mississippi catfish farmer Seymour Johnson was presented with the CFA Lifetime Achievement award, becoming the 4th ever recipient of the esteemed award. The impromptu standing ovation that took place when the award was announced showed exactly how much those in attendance agreed with the selection.

"The Lifetime Achievement Award is the pinnacle of the U.S. catfish industry's awards," said CFA Executive VP Roger Barlow. "This one represents the highest of the high of contributions to the U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish industry. There is no more deserving candidate than Seymour Johnson."

Seymour's journey in the catfish world, or in the farming scene as a whole, over the last 50-plus years has encompassed a wide range of local and national activities. Whether it be his service near his hometown of Indianola or his efforts on behalf of the catfish industry in Washington D.C., Johnson has managed to tirelessly work year after year, facing a broad range of challenges and tackling them head on.

Along the way Seymour has served as President of such organizations as the Mississippi Soybean Association, Delta Council and the Mississippi Soybean Promotion Board. He has served as Director of the Cotton Board, the Food Defense Fund, Agricultural Council of America, Federal Reserve Bank and others. He currently is on the Board of both TCI and CFA, having previously served as Chairman of CFA.



Johnson



Good Middling Ladies recently held a meeting in Stoneville. Seated from left: Bobbie Jean Hill, Betty Parker, and Margaret McKee.



Dr. Gary Jackson recently met with Delta farm leaders to outline his mission to make the Extension Service a more important part of their operations for a meeting chaired by advisory committee chairman, George King of Glen Alan. Jackson told the group that the State needs more capacity in irrigation specialty, corn, and soybean production support. Pictured from left to right are Donald Gant, Merigold; Steve Martin, DREC-MSU; Chip Morgan, Delta Council; George King, Committee Chairman; Gary Jackson, MSU; Joe Street, MSU; Dan Branton, Leland; Bill Kennedy, Inverness; and Bubba Simmons, Tribbett.



MDDA members Sue Stidham, Montgomery County Economic Development, and Henry Cote, Yazoo Development District, visit during Scaggs reception.

The 3rd Annual Future Delta Event Recently Held



From left: Charles Rocconi; Steve Rochelle, President and CEO of First South Farm Credit; Heath Millwood; John Maguire, Senior VP, Washington Operations, National Cotton Council of America; Carlisle Clarke, Legislative Aide for Senator Thad Cochran; Hank Reichle, VP of Stapicott.

The 3rd Annual Future Delta Event, which was sponsored by First South Farm Credit and Delta Council, was recently held in Tunica. The conference brought together young (under 45) producers and agri-businessmen from across the Delta to address key issues facing the agriculture climate of the region. Steve Rochelle of First South Farm Credit presented Heath Millwood of Leland with a check for \$1,000. Millwood was the lucky raffle winner at the Future Delta Event in Tunica.



Dr. Cass Pennington was presented a plaque by Carlean Horton to show appreciation for speaking at the USDA African American History Program.



Governing Board members at a recent Delta Heritage Area meeting.



While in the Delta region, MDA Existing Industry Director Skip Scaggs visited the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission and the Greenville Port Commission. From left: Tommy Hart, Greenville Port Commission; Charlie Bevil, Greenville Port Commission; Skip Scaggs, MDA.



Dr. Connie Shimmel, Fairview Learning Center, recently met with the Greenwood-Leflore-Carroll Economic Development Foundation to discuss the Delta Council Adult Literacy program.