

THE NORTHEAST MISSISSIPPI

# BusinessJournal

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF JOURNAL PUBLISHING AND THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

MARCH 2010



# Tourism industry hangs on in 2009

■ **The sector felt the effects of the recession, but a newly released report depicts a robust hospitality category.**

By **Carlie Kollath**  
BUSINESS JOURNAL

The state's travel and tourism industry in 2009 continued to generate millions of dollars and employ thousands of Mississippians.

Yet, it wasn't immune to the economic downturn.

Key economic indicators, such as direct employment, visitor counts, visitor expenditures and tourism capital investments, all slipped in fiscal year 2009, according to the travel and tourism economic report released last month from the Mississippi Development Authority.

The report covers fiscal year 2009, which was July 1, 2008, to June 30, 2009.

Mary Beth Wilkerson, the state's director of tourism, said 2009's "lackluster" economy had many challenges

for the state's tourism industry. Yet despite the declines, she said, the sector is far from bleak.

"To be a \$5.6 billion industry in Mississippi, we're still pretty robust," Wilkerson said. "We'll get through this and see it rebound."

Here are some of the highlights from the 50-page report that details tourism's economic impact in the state. Go to [visitmississippi.org/resources](http://visitmississippi.org/resources) to download a copy of the full report.

## Employment impact

■ Travel and tourism ranked fifth in FY09 direct private sector employment, behind wholesale/retail trade, manufacturing, health care & social assistance, and professional & business services.

■ The state's travel and tourism industry has 78,240 direct jobs, which is 7 percent of total statewide FY 2009 nonfarm employment. Travel and tourism activities added another 31,760 indirect and induced jobs.

■ Gaming (state-licensed), restaur-

ant and lodging jobs were the top three in direct travel and tourism employment in Mississippi. State-licensed casino hotel employment plus the casinos resulted in 27,160 combined direct jobs, or 34.7 percent of direct travel and tourism jobs.

■ The annual payroll for the direct jobs was \$1.63 billion, down 6.9 percent from FY08. Indirect and induced labor income equaled \$873 million.

## Millions of visitors

■ Mississippi had 19 million total visitors, a 5.9 percent decrease from FY08. This included 10 million domestic overnight leisure visitors, 1.5 million overnight business travelers and 1 million overnights for other personal reasons.

■ 2,964,425 people were served at the state's welcome centers.

■ 75 percent of the domestic visitors were from out-of-state. They accounted for some 84 percent of total FY09 travel tourism visitor expenditures.

■ 83 percent of domestic visitors came from 10 states: Mississippi,

Louisiana, Alabama, Tennessee, Texas, Georgia, Florida, Illinois, Arkansas and Missouri.

■ The average travel party size was 3.1. About 44 percent traveled in pairs. Another 27 percent traveled with children.

■ Visitors spent an average of three nights in Mississippi.

■ Average annual household income for all Mississippi visitors was \$62,500. Their average age was 47.

■ Travel and tourism visitor expenditures were \$5.6 billion, down 7 percent from FY08.

■ Out-of-state visitors spent an estimated \$4.7 billion or \$1,600 for every man, woman and child living in Mississippi.

## Falling revenues

■ \$407 million was collected in travel and tourism state tax revenues, a 6.8 percent decrease compared to FY08. The FY09 state taxes translated to \$374 per household in tax relief.

Turn to **TOURISM** on Page 6



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# Tomorrow's tourists could be **OUT OUT OF THIS WORLD**

**V**isitors spend about \$6 billion a year in Mississippi, a figure that local and state officials want to grow.

While \$6 billion is a lot to you and me, it's just a small piece of the overall tourism pie in the U.S.

According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, total tourism-related spending in the U.S. last year was \$1.3 trillion.

Of that, \$716.2 billion, or 57 percent, was direct tourism spending – goods and services sold directly to visitors. The remaining \$549.8 billion was indirect tourism-related spending – goods and services used to produce what visitors buy.

In Tupelo, it's all about Elvis. In Vicksburg, my hometown, it's all about the Civil War. Or the War of Northern Aggression, according to some folks.

But what does the future hold for tourism? What happens when Elvis' generation passes on? Will the Cult of Elvis continue trekking here? What will Vicksburg do to at-

tract the current generation, which has little interest in battlefields and old homes?

According to Ian Yeoman, who is billed as the world's "only futurologist dedicated to tourism," China and outer space are the next tourist hot spots.

Yeoman, a professor at Victoria University in New Zealand, predicts that by 2030, China will be the world's largest destination. He also says that holidays in outer space will be the ultimate luxury experience and "embedded technologies will be the norm in future tourists and skiing in the Alps will be no more."

Yeoman, who wrote the 2008 book "Tomorrow's Tourist – Scenarios and Trends," predicts that 1.9 billion people will take an international holiday by 2030. Tourists will spend \$2 billion a day



**Dennis SEID**

in Europe and \$1.5 billion a day on Asia, he says.

Yeoman, in an article published in November, said that tourist destinations need not get too complicated with their messages. While he was writing about New Zealand's "100% Pure" campaign, what he said might very well apply to places like, oh, Mississippi.

"In today's society, many consumers are feeling overwhelmed by the profusion of choices and 24/7 connectivity," he said. "So they tend to simplify and get back to basics."

But what are the basics?

I'm not sure what Yeoman's thinks, but for me, it's quite simple: Tourists want nice, clean places to eat and sleep and they want good customer service wherever they go. In other words, they just want to feel welcome.

And that's about as basic as it gets.

## Q&A **MARY BETH WILKERSON** Mississippi's tourism director



**WILKERSON**

Mary Beth Wilkerson in January became the director of tourism at the Mississippi Development Authority. She succeeded Craig Ray, who left after six years to pursue new opportunities in the industry.

Wilkerson, a Mississippi State University graduate, joined MDA in 1991 and had been MDA's deputy director of tourism since 2002. She directly coordinated Mississippi's domestic and international travel trade tourism efforts for more than nine years before becoming the division's sales and marketing bureau manager in 2000.

Before heading to the annual Governor's Conference on Tourism in Tu-

pelo, she answered these questions from business reporter Carlie Kollath.

**Q:** What are the goals for the tourism division?

**A:** Increase annual visitation and visitor

spending in Mississippi. Strengthen the Mississippi tourism brand. Foster development of new tourism product and tourism partnerships.

Develop and execute collaborative statewide marketing programs.


Educate communities, elected officials and key opinion leaders on the economic importance of tourism and film production.

Advance the use of technology in marketing Mississippi tourism.

Expand hospitality, film and creative economy work force.

Support existing tourism product of all sizes, including high revenue generating destinations and support the development of new tourism product.

Turn to **Q&A** on **Page 4**



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Bradley T. Golman is licensed to practice in Mississippi. Jonathan S. Masters is licensed to practice in Mississippi and Tennessee.



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## Q&A

Continued from Page 3

**Q:** How is the tourism industry faring in Mississippi?

**A:** These are challenging economic times for all of us, including the travel and tourism industry. The tourism economic scenarios vary across the state with some experiencing much greater downturn than others and some actually showing minimal increases in their tourism visitor expenditures.

Comparing FY08 (July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008) and FY09 (July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2009), statewide figures show there is about a 7 percent decrease in visitor expenditures and direct tourism employment.

**Q:** What sector in tourism (gambling, attractions, conferences, hotels, etc.) has been hit the hardest by the hard economic times?

**A:** Our FY09 research indicates that gaming revenues declined about 11 percent, which would be the tourism sector showing the greatest decline.

**Q:** How does Mississippi's current tourism industry stack up with our neighboring states? The rest of the country?

**A:** Mississippi's tourism industry is holding steady and doing fairly well compared to our neighboring states. The national numbers do

show a greater decline than Mississippi's numbers.

Mississippi benefits from the increase of tourists taking more driving vacations and from the fact that Mississippi provides a more affordable travel option.

**Q:** How does the condition of the tourism industry in Northeast Mississippi compare with the rest of the state?

**A:** Northeast Mississippi offers a great tourism product with attractions such as the Elvis Presley Birthplace and Museum, the Corinth Civil War Interpretive Center, Rowan Oak in Oxford and many other cultural and heritage attractions.

The Northeast Mississippi area is very focused on enhancing and promoting its cultural and heritage tourism offerings particularly through the Mississippi Hills Heritage Area Alliance and the designation of the area as a National Heritage Area. Today's tourism environment shows strong visitor interest and expenditures for cultural and heritage travel.

**Q:** Do you have any tips for tourism professionals, such as hoteliers or attraction operators, during these tough economic times?

**A:** We all must look for avenues to utilize our resources in a more efficient and effective ways. We must look at ways to stretch our marketing and advertising dollars and leverage the best return on our investments. Cooperative partnerships are key to doing just that in these tough economic times.

**Q:** How is the tourism division of MDA funded? What's your budget this year? Has it been cut?

**A:** The Division of Tourism of MDA is funded through the state appropriation made to the MDA. The FY10 budget for the tourism division was \$8.8 million. Yes, the MDA has incurred budget cuts in the current fiscal year.

**Q:** With the state's budget coming scrutiny, some people may argue that state money allocated for MDA/tourism would be better spent elsewhere. What type of impact do you think that move would have on the tourism industry and the state?

**A:** The tourism industry makes a tremendous impact to the state's economy. The tourism industry creates jobs and generates revenue for the state, and tourism development enhances the quality of life in our communities.

As noted in the FY09 MDA Tourism Economic Contribution Report, visitor expenditures were \$5.6 billion, over 78,000 people are employed in the Mississippi tourism industry and \$357 million - or 7.7 percent of the \$4.64 billion state general fund - can be attributed to tourism.

It is critical that MDA Tourism continues to receive funding in order to continue to make the significant impact that it does as referenced above. We must have sufficient resources and marketing programs to remain competitive in attracting visitors to our state, which in turn generates revenue. Also, through research we can show that for every \$1 we spend on domestic consumer advertising, there is a \$5.48 return on that investment.

**Q:** MDA has spearheaded the development of the Mississippi Blues Trail. Last year, several other trail ideas, such as culinary trails, were mentioned. Are those still on the table? Any other projects in the works?

**A:** The Mississippi Blues Trail has been a very successful project and has created a solid musical heritage tourism product for our state.

Yes, other trails are in the works. The rich heritage and cultural offerings of Mississippi afford us the opportunity to develop and promote numerous themed trails to highlight other musical genres, culinary offerings, Mississippi Civil War and Civil Rights history and our literary influence.

On March 1, we announced the 30 sites that will be marked on the Mississippi Country Music Trail.

Other projects are specific to promotion of our product through our digital marketing efforts. The goals of these efforts are to engage consumers in the Mississippi brand and use technology to differentiate Mississippi from its competitors.

The anchor of all our digital programs is the flagship site, VisitMississippi.org., which is a digital experience that combines rich information, flash imagery and our online radio station, Tune-In Mississippi. Soon we will be adding stunning 360-degree photography so visitors may surround themselves in Mississippi online. And today, we are live with a new photo library, SEEMISS.com.

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## NewsMakers

■ **Aubrey Patterson**, Chairman and CEO of BancorpSouth has been named to the board of directors of The Financial Services Roundtable.

The Financial Services Roundtable represents 100 of the largest integrated financial services companies providing banking, insurance, and investment products and services to American consumers.

Headquartered in Washington, D.C., The Financial Services Roundtable provides legislative and regulatory advocacy, enhances the industry's public reputation and promotes best practices and a strong infrastructure in technology.

Others joining the board with Patterson include John J. Degnan, The Chubb Corp.; Mark Fetting, Legg Mason Inc.; Laurence D. Fink, BlackRock Inc.; Edmund F. Kelly, Liberty Mutual Group; Kelly S. King, BB&T Corp.; James E. Rohr, PNC Financial Service



PATTERSON

Group Inc.; J. Michael Shepherd, BancWest Corp.; Frederick H. Waddell, Northern Trust Corp.; Thomas J. Wilson, Allstate Corp. and Larry Zimpleman, the Principal Financial Group.

Patterson's 36-year career with the BancorpSouth includes service as president and chief operating officer from 1983 to 1990, and as chairman and chief executive officer since 1990.

■ **Bradley Golmon** and **Jonathan Masters**, attorneys with the Oxford lawn firm of Holcomb Dunbar, have been named shareholders in the firm.

Golmon's primary areas of practice are commercial litigation, collections, commercial and residential financing, insurance defense and family law. He is a 1996 graduate of the University of Mississippi School of Law. He is licensed to practice in all state and federal courts in Mississippi, as well



GOLMON

as the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. He earned a B.A., magna cum laude, at Mississippi College.

Masters concentrates his practice in family law and litigation. In 2009, the cum laude graduate of the Mississippi College of Law was recognized for the second consecutive year as a "Rising Star" in the Personal Injury Defense category by Super Lawyers, a nationally recognized guide to outstanding attorneys. He is admitted to all state and federal bars in Mississippi and well as the U.S. Courts of Appeal for the Fifth and Eighth Districts.

■ **Benjamin West** has joined the Holcomb Dunbar as an associate attorney. West, a 2009 graduate of the University of Mississippi School of Law, focuses his practice on civil litigation.

While in law school he completed a judicial internship with Michael Mills,



MASTERS

chief judge of the Northern District of Mississippi. Before joining the Holcomb Dunbar, West interned as a special projects attorney for a major health care system.

He is admitted to practice in Mississippi and Tennessee. West also earned his undergraduate degree at the University of Mississippi.

■ **Laura Gillman** was named employee of the month for February at Franklin Collection Service Inc., in Tupelo. She has been employed with the company for a year and works in the I.S. Department.

■ **Kristi Beuckens** has been named vice president of commercial lending in the Oxford market for M&F Bank.

Beuckens, a native of Sioux Falls, S.D., has a B.B.A. in banking and finance and managerial finance from the University of Mississippi. She also earned an MBA from the University of Mississippi and has more than five



WEST

years of analytical and commercial lending experience.

■ **Dr. Richard Caron** of Tupelo has achieved accredited status in the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry. He joins 300 dental professional worldwide who have earned the designation.

AACD members who go through the accreditation program for dentists and dental laboratory technicians must undergo a three-part process consisting of a written examination, submission of clinical cases for evaluation and an oral examination. Each candidate also must attend a series of workshops as part of the program.

Caron is a 1986 graduate of the University of Mississippi School of Dentistry. He completed a two-year general practice at Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester, N.Y.

Caron practices family, cosmetic



BEUCKENS

Turn to **NEWSMAKERS** on Page 6

# For Employers Who Want Healthy Employees

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## Newsmakers

*Continued from Page 5*

and general dentistry at Tupelo Smiles.

■ **Cheryl Wheeler** has been named director of North Mississippi Medical Center's Child Care Center.

Wheeler joined the NMMC Child Care Center as a classroom teacher when the facility opened in October 1992. She was later promoted to team leader and then to assistant director in 2003.

A native of Soddy Daisy, Tenn., Wheeler has a bachelor's degree in sociology from Austin Peay State University.

Wheeler is a credentialed director by the Mississippi Forum on Children and Families.

■ **Mitch Beard** has joined accounting and business advisory firm Horne LLP.

Beard will work as a director of business development for the company.

With more than 25 years of experience in marketing, management and

human resources, Beard will be responsible for identifying and cultivating new health care business opportunities for Horne.

He earned a Bachelor of Arts in business administration from American College.

■ **Beth Craft**, physical therapist and owner of Fulton Rehabilitation Services, was recently awarded recertification as a board-certified clinical specialist in orthopedic physical therapy. To be eligible for recertification, candidates must hold a current certification from ABPTS and meet minimum eligibility requirements, including a current physical therapy license and a minimum number of direct patient care hours since the date of most recent certification. Craft received her original certification in February 2000.



BEARD



CRAFT

Candidates must complete a competency assessment to achieve recertification. Craft completed a Professional Development Portfolio, a documentation of professional development activities related to speciality practice. In the last 10 years, she has completed 141 hours continued education in orthopedic physical therapy. She also has consulted with several local industries regarding work risk management and presented several professional development programs.

■ **Catherine Derrick** has been named Magnolia Regional Health Center's 2009 employee of the year.

She has worked at MRHC for two years in the dietary department, where she is a Cook I.

The employee of the year is chosen from the 12 employees of the month nominated during the year. These individuals are chosen by their peers as the "star" employee who consistently meets and utilizes the customer service standards of behavior as well as promotes MRHC's mission,



DERRICK

vision and values daily.

MRHC's other employees of the month in 2009 were **Kristy Hopkins, Donna Huggins, Wayne Redwine, Jamie Hajek, Kerry South, Tila Johnson, Linda Dixon, Lynn Manus, Miriam Trullet, Tracy Wood and Vera Riddles**.

■ **FedEx Ground**, the small-package ground delivery service of FedEx Corp., recently recognized **Jamie Williams** and **Darryal Wooldridge** for safe driving without a preventable

Williams, a resident of Baldwyn, was honored for achieving nine years of safe driving. He has been a professional truck driver for nine years with FedEx Ground and works out of the company's Olive Branch facility.

Wooldridge, a resident of Mantachie, also was honored for achieving nine years of safe driving. Wooldridge has been a professional truck driver for nine years with FedEx Ground and works out of the company's Memphis facility.

FedEx Ground has more than 20,000 vehicles on the road. Three times, the American Trucking Association has recognized FedEx Ground with the President's Trophy, the industry's top award for safety.

## Tourism

*Continued from Page 2*

■ State-licensed casino taxes attributed \$146 million, 35.9 percent of travel and tourism state taxes collected.

■ Mississippi's gross state product was \$89.7 billion in FY08 and an estimated \$89 billion in FY09. Travel and tourism's added value to the GSP was \$4.2 billion, or 4.7 percent, in FY08 and \$3.54 billion, or 4.0 percent, in FY09.

■ Tourism revenues make up \$357 million, or 7.7 percent or \$1 of every \$13, of the \$4.64 billion State General Fund. The \$357 million was an 8.5 percent decrease from \$390 million in FY08.

■ City/county tourism tax revenues of \$111.7 million were generated from state-licensed casinos, special room/restaurant taxes, coastal seawall taxes, motor vehicle/petroleum taxes, TCI permit fees and ABC share of permit fees.

### Investment continues

■ Total estimated statewide tourism capital investment in FY09 was \$278.7 million, down 59.5 percent from \$687.6 million in FY08. About two-thirds of the FY09 investments were from private sources. The other third was public monies from federal, state, county and city sources.

■ The Mississippi Gulf Coast accounted for \$137.5 million or 49.4 percent of the state's total tourism capital investment.

■ Tupelo's \$13.6 million tourism capital investment covered retail, the regional airport, a state park, sports facilities, restaurants and hotels.

■ Oxford and Lafayette County reported tourism capital investment of about \$1.6 million.

■ Tishomingo County's \$1.9 million paid for extensive work on a harbor, renovations to state parks, etc.

■ Corinth's \$1.2 million went to retail, restaurants, a convenience store and infrastructure.

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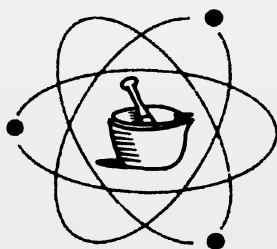
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# Chamber Connection

A publication of Journal Publishing and the CDF Chamber Division – March 2010



Pictured are Governor Haley Barbour making the MTD Products expansion announcement and Ted Moll, MTD Products chairman of the board.

## MTD Announces Expansion of Operations in Tupelo

Governor Haley Barbour, officials from MTD, and the Lee County Board of Supervisors announced March 2, the expansion of the company's Tupelo operations into a 525,000-square-foot, county-owned building adjacent to its current facility in the Tupelo Lee Industrial Park South. The expansion represents a \$6.25 million investment by MTD, a lawnmower manufacturing company, and will create 107 new jobs.

"MTD's decision to expand its Tupelo operations and increase its workforce is great news for north Mississippi," Governor Barbour said. "I commend company officials for creating more than 100 new jobs in Lee County at a time when job creation is so critical."

The company's expansion into the former Eljer Plumbingware Building includes the introduction of a new

mower platform and the addition of injection molding capabilities. Operations at the new facility are expected to begin this spring. MTD is continuing operations at its current Tupelo facility, as well.

"This lease of the Eljer facility would not be possible without the great cooperation and timeliness of the Lee County Board of Supervisors," said Ted Moll, MTD chairman of the board. "This facility will enable MTD to expand operations in Lee County that would previously have not been feasible."

The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) worked closely with MTD and local officials to help facilitate the expansion. The agency provided assistance to the county through the Community Development Block Grant Program to help with infrastruc-

ture improvements. Assistance from the Appalachian Regional Commission and the county also helped with the company's expansion.

"I am pleased that MTD is continuing to grow its operations in Lee County," said MDA Executive Director Gray Swoope. "This expansion further exhibits the company's commitment to Mississippi and its confidence in the state's workforce, and we look forward to working with MTD officials in the future to help this global company continue to grow and succeed here in Mississippi."

"It is always good to see one of our long-standing industries continue to expand in Lee County," said Darrell Rankin, president of the Lee County Board of Supervisors. "This is truly a testament to our business environment and capable workforce."

Headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, MTD was started in 1932 by German immigrants Theo Moll, Emil Jochum, and Erwin Gerhard as Modern Tool and Die Company. The company produced its first lawn mower in 1958 and is now a global manufacturer of outdoor power equipment for the residential and commercial markets.

The MTD family-of-brands includes Cub Cadet, Cub Cadet Commercial, Cub Cadet Yanmar, Troy-Bilt, White Outdoor, Yard-Man, Yard Machines, Bolens, Arnold, GardenWay, MTD Pro and MTD Gold. MTD products can be found in home improvement stores, hardware stores, mass retailers, independent dealers and farm supply stores. To learn more about MTD, please visit the company's Web site at [www.mtdproducts.com](http://www.mtdproducts.com).

# Chamber focus

Dear Friends:

Congratulations to Cindy Bryant with LSI Human Resource Solutions on her recognition as Ambassador of the Quarter. Cindy is a faithful ambassador, and we appreciate her service to CDF. The ambassadors assist with our ribbon cuttings and CDF events and are a vital link in helping CDF understand the needs of its membership.

Ad sales are underway for the 2010-2011 issue of *Images Tupelo*, scheduled to be published in August. The magazine is a quality magazine used to promote our area to potential newcomers, visitors, industrial prospects, and the community as a whole. If you have not seen a copy of last year's *Images Tupelo*, please come by the CDF office and pick up a complimentary copy. Past issues of the magazine are archived and available for reading online at [www.imagestupelo.com](http://www.imagestupelo.com).

You will not want to miss the April 9 First Friday program. This is the last program remaining before we recess for the summer. The April 9 program, which is actually on the second Friday, will be presented by Kay McDuffie from New York, on the history of



SMITH

the Mississippi Picnic in the Park. It will be an interesting story of how two women from Lee County, Mississippi, took an idea of organizing an event for Mississippians who are now living in the New York area. It is a story that has been so important to so many people through the years.

Don't forget to register for the Business Boxed Lunch & Learn series for Wednesday, April 7. The session titled "Office Ergonomics: The Fit Between People and their Work," will cover the components of ergonomics and why it is important in today's workplace. To register, call the CDF office at 842-4521.

Also, please mark your calendars for Thursday, May 6 for the CDF Annual Meeting. Details of the meeting will be announced later.

Vice President of Chamber Services

## Community Development Foundation's Board of Directors for 2009-2010

CDF is governed by a 59-member Board of Directors. The Executive Committee is composed of the CDF Officers and eleven additional members of the Board. CDF's goals and objectives are accomplished through the efforts of members appointed to committees operating under one of CDF's three divisions: Chamber Division, Economic Development Division, and Planning and Property Management Division.

### 2009-2010 Executive Committee

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David Rumbarger, President/Secretary	Chauncey Godwin	Tom Robinson
Mitch Waycaster, Past Chairman	Shane Hooper	Jeff Snyder

### 2009-2010 Board of Directors

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Byron Fellows	Jim Pate	Mary Werner
Lisa Hawkins	Fred Pitts	Ken Wheeler
John Heer	Jack Reed, Jr.	

## New CDF MEMBERS

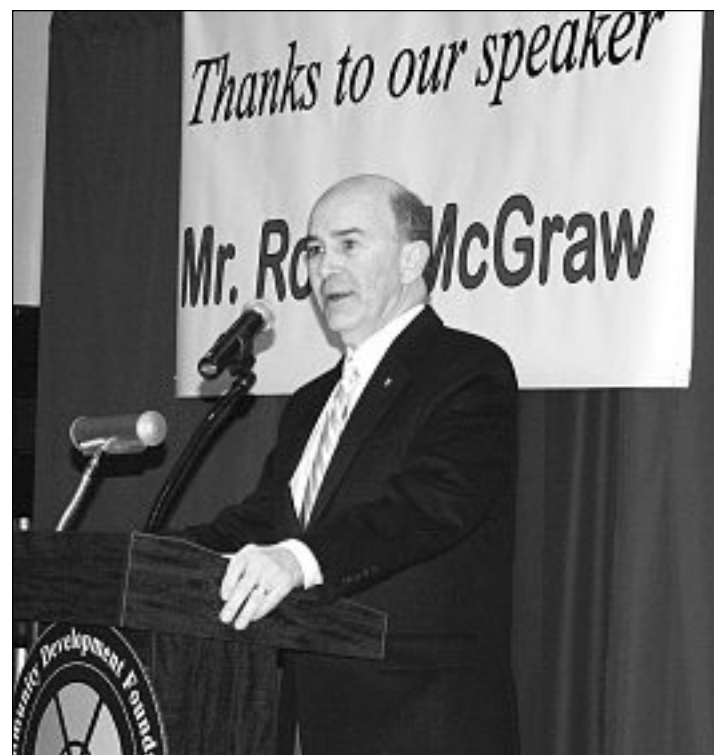
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## FIRST FRIDAY



The February First Friday networking breakfast featured Mr. Robin McGraw, president of the Mississippi Bankers Association. The monthly event was sponsored by the Yocona Area Council Boy Scouts of America.

Look for this sticker in the window of participating CDF member businesses to receive your special discount. To be a participating partner of ChamberAdvantage, call the CDF office at (662) 842-4521.

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[www.cdfms.org/chamberadvantage](http://www.cdfms.org/chamberadvantage).

**FRANKLIN COLLECTION**



A ribbon cutting was held to celebrate 30 years of business for Franklin Collection Service in Tupelo. Pictured with the CDF Ambassadors at the event are: Bill Yarbrough; Dawn Magers, Franklin Collection Service; Patrice Bryant, Franklin Collection Service; Sherri McClain, Franklin Collection Service; Councilman Mike Bryan; Charles Baker; Councilman Fred Pitts; Mayor Jack Reed, Jr.; Shelia Franklin, Franklin Collection Service; Dan Franklin, Franklin Collection Service; Gene Franklin; Luciana Franklin; Mike Armour, Appalachian Regional Commission; and Emily Addison, CDF. Franklin Collection Service is located at 2978 West Jackson Street in Tupelo and can be reached at (662) 844-7776. For more information, please visit <http://www.franklincollectionservice.com>.

**FRED'S (MCCULLOUGH BLVD.)**



A ribbon cutting was held to celebrate the re-grand opening of Fred's Super Dollar on McCullough Boulevard in Tupelo. Pictured on the front row at the event are: Terry Petty, Fred's; James Finley, Fred's; Joe Young, Fred's; Councilman Markel Whittington; David Gagney, Fred's; Earl Taylor, Fred's; Beth as the Fred's Bear, Fred's; and Jennie Bradford Curlee, CDF. Pictured on the back row with the CDF Ambassadors are: Kimberly Weaver, Fred's; Pastor Scott Nichols; Kelly Mills, Fred's; Lisa Todd, Fred's; Nathan Smith, Fred's; Ruby Guzman, Fred's; Jody Thompson, Fred's; Jeremy Wilson as Spiderman, Fred's; Ladietrich Bedford, Fred's; Robert Kendricks, Fred's. Fred's is located at 1776 McCullough Blvd. in Tupelo and can be reached at (662) 690-8292. For more information, please visit [www.fredsinc.com](http://www.fredsinc.com).

# Martinrea Automotive Structures Announces Phase IV Expansion



Pictured at the announcement are: Mayor Jack Reed, Jr., City of Tupelo; Supervisor Bobby Smith, District 2; Supervisor Tommie Lee Ivy, District 4; Mike Armour, Appalachian Regional Commission; Supervisor Phil Morgan, District 1; Supervisor Joe McKinney, District 5; Peter Chia, Martinrea Automotive Structures; Chris Rogers, CDF chairman; Chandler Russ, Mississippi Development Authority.

Martinrea Automotive Structures (USA), Inc. announced February 16 the Phase IV expansion to its automotive stamping facility in Tupelo/Lee Industrial Park South. The Phase IV project will mean an additional \$7.7 million investment and is expected to create approximately 50 new jobs for Lee County. The 53,000 square foot expansion will add additional crane bay capacity and tool and die storage for new production capacity.

"We appreciate the continued investment and trust in our labor force from Martinrea," said Darrell Rankin, president, Lee County Board of Supervisors. "Now, with their fourth expansion underway, Lee County is honored to have such a company like Martinrea, with their international status, as part of our family of industries in Tupelo/Lee Industrial Park South."

Northeast Mississippi's first tier-one automotive supplier, formerly known as Thyssenkrupp Fabco, initial production started at the facility in August

2003. The Phase II expansion in 2004 more than doubled their employment with an additional \$20 million investment. Phase III added a 46,000 square foot stamping press and crane bay building, with a \$15 million investment, bringing the total building size to over 146,000 square feet. In December 2006, Martinrea purchased Thyssenkrupp Automotive.

"CDF greatly appreciates Martinrea's confidence in our community and workforce to continue to add jobs for our region," stated Chris Rogers, chairman, Community Development Foundation.

Martinrea International, Inc., headquartered in Toronto, Canada, is a global leader in the production of quality metal parts, assemblies, and modules, and of fluid management systems. Martinrea is a tier-one automotive supplier, as well as a supplier to other industry sectors. The company employs over 5,000 people in 32 different divisions in Canada, the United States, Mexico, and Europe.

**EVENT RENTALS**



A ribbon cutting ceremony was held at Event Rentals in Pontotoc. Pictured on the front row of the event are: Kay Allison, Allison Wonderland Studios; Beth Waldo, Flowers by Redebe; Billie Robinson, Billie's Catering, Inc. and Mt. Vernon Place; Keith Henry, Allison Wonderland Studios; Anita Bryan, Taylor Grocery; Tracey Denham, Event Rentals; Jamie Denham, Event Rentals; Mayor Jeff Stafford; Susan White, Rita's Catering; Rita Robinson, Rita's Catering; Jamie Sappington, City of Pontotoc; David Miller, Event Rentals; Scott Burns, The DJ; Jennie Bradford Curlee, CDF. Pictured on the back row are: Kim King, City of Pontotoc; Karen Washington, City of Pontotoc; Butch Scott, Taylor Grocery; Danny Brown, DB's Floral Designs N More; Rosemary Gaines, Jody's Flowers and Fine Gifts; Summer Bramlett, Sydnei's Kitchen; Ryan Bramlett, Sydnei's Kitchen; Daniel Morgan, Event Rentals. Also pictured are members of the CDF Ambassador's Club. Event Rentals is located at 308 Highway 15 North in Pontotoc and can be reached at (662) 488-9633.

## Tupelo Newcomers Club to Host Ladies Luncheon

The Tupelo Newcomers Club will host a Ladies' Box Luncheon March 11 from 11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. at the Mississippi State Research & Extension Center in Verona. The mission of the Tupelo Newcomers Club is to help ease the transition for newcomers moving to Tupelo and Lee County, by hosting special events, offering community



information, and connecting them with area citizens and other newcomers.

The event will feature a program presented by Susan Harkness on "Natural Foliage Arrangements for Your Home." Harkness will demonstrate to attendees how to create

arrangements for every season by utilizing flora that can be found in your own backyard.

All ladies who are new to the Tupelo/Lee County area are invited to attend this no-cost event. To register for the event or to receive more information on the Tupelo Newcomers Club, please visit [www.tupelonewcomersclub.com](http://www.tupelonewcomersclub.com) or contact Angela Glissen at (662) 842-4521.

### FULGHAM'S



A ribbon cutting was held to celebrate the opening of Fulgham's, Inc. in the Renasant Center for IDEAs. Pictured on the front row of the event are: Tymple Blansett; Todd White; Nathan Taylor; Patty Fulgham; Councilman Nettie Davis; Bob Fulgham, Fulgham's Inc.; Micah Fulgham; Clayton Fulgham; David Fulgham, Fulgham's Inc.; Candice Fulgham with Sunshine Fulgham; Boyd Yarbrough, City of Tupelo. Pictured on the back row are: Ken Calloway; Rex Harrison; Wayne Averett, CDF; Debbie Brangenberg, Downtown Tupelo Main Street Association; Martha Swindle, CDF; and Dr. Frank Wiebe, Small Business Development Center. Fulgham's Inc. is located at 398 E Main St., Ste. 133 and can be reached at (662) 844-6191. For more information, please visit [www.nationaltreepreservation.com](http://www.nationaltreepreservation.com).

### THE BAKERY



A ribbon cutting was held to celebrate the opening of The Bakery in Tupelo. Pictured with the CDF Ambassadors are: Donna Kaufman, The Bakery; Anna Kaufman, The Bakery; Gwin Unruh, The Bakery; Councilman Nettie Davis; Misty Buller, The Bakery; Darin Buller, The Bakery; and Jennie Bradford Curlee, CDF. The Bakery is located at 704 N Gloster St. in Tupelo and can be reached at (662) 620-6323.

# TUPELO YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

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Please join us for two exciting TYP events in March!

## TYP AT HEALTH WORKS!

Thursday, March 18, 2010

5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

219 S Industrial Rd.

## TYP LUNCHTIME LEARNING SERIES

"Individual and Business Tax Updates"

Presented by:

Joe Cash, CPA - M.M. Winkler & Associates

Katie Stuart, CPA - Nail, McKinney, P.A.

Amanda Angle, CPA - Amanda Angle CPA, LLC

Thursday, March 25

11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

CDF Boardroom

300 W Main St.

Lunch will be provided for \$10

➤ Please RSVP to [ttyp@cdfms.org](mailto:ttyp@cdfms.org)

# SAVE THE DATE!

# CDF ANNUAL MEETING

THURSDAY,  
MAY 6, 2010



# Bryant Named Ambassador of the Quarter



Jennie Bradford Curlee, CDF, is pictured presenting Cindy Bryant, LSI Human Resource Solutions, with the Ambassador of the Quarter honor.

Cindy Bryant, branch manager with LSI Human Resource Solutions, was awarded the Ambassador of the Quarter honor at the third quarterly meeting of the CDF Ambassador's Club. The CDF Ambassador's Club is made up of a variety of professionals from the CDF membership who serve as official representatives of the Community Development Foundation. Bryant garnered this honor by attending 23 ribbon cuttings, mentoring five CDF member businesses, and recruiting a new CDF member.

"The best part of being an Ambassador is having CDF in my toolbox to network my company with other companies," said Bryant. "I have also made new friends for life."

Bryant serves as branch manager of the local LSI Human Resource Solutions office. Originally founded as a daily pay labor service, LSI Human Resource Solutions is a full service staffing organization that is locally owned and operated. With locations in Memphis, TN; Marion, AR; and Tupelo, LSI offers an umbrella of services that includes everything from staffing, training,

and employee assessments, to drug screening and background checks. Additionally, LSI Human Resource Solutions provides employees payroll services for companies who are unable to add an employee to their company payroll. As a full service staffing company, their goal is to not just send a body to do a job, but to send the most qualified person available to do the job.

The mother of two and grandmother of three, with one more on the way, Bryant is married to Bill Bryant and they reside in the Fawn-grove Community in Itawamba County. Bryant also finds time to volunteer apart from her work at LSI Human Resource Solutions and serving as a CDF Ambassador. She is involved with the local SHRM human resource management association, the Rotary Club of Tupelo, and is a Relay for Life team member.

For more information on the CDF Ambassador's Club or to learn how your business can have an Ambassador, please contact Jennie Bradford Curlee at (662) 842-4521 or [jcurlee@cdfms.org](mailto:jcurlee@cdfms.org).



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## BEAUTY MOTIF



A ribbon cutting was held to celebrate the opening of Beauty Motif's new location in downtown Tupelo. Pictured on the front row at the event are: Councilman Jonny Davis, Scott Reese, Beauty Motif; Sherry Reese, Beauty Motif; Debbie Brangenberg, Downtown Tupelo Main Street Association; and Ellen Kennedy, CDF. Pictured on the back row are: Shari Neely, Hilton Garden Inn; Daphene Hendricks, Downtown Tupelo Main Street Association; Allie West, Downtown Tupelo Main Street Association; Bernard Bean, Eat With Us Group; and Councilman Willie Jennings. Also pictured are members of the CDF Ambassador's Club. Beauty Motif is located at 337 E Main St., Ste. A-1 in Tupelo and can be reached at (662) 841-7811. For more information, visit [www.beautymotif.com](http://www.beautymotif.com).

## FRED'S (SALTILLO)



A ribbon cutting was held at Fred's in Saltillo. Pictured on the front row of the event are: Rose Holmes, Fred's; Barbara Smith, CDF; Alderman Scott Knight; Alderman Jewel Webb; Alderman Terry Glidwell; Roger Ewing, Fred's; Jamie Bell, Fred's; Pheaton Hall, Fred's; Haley Heavener, Fred's; Nicole Courier, Fred's; and Scooby Doo. Pictured on the back row are: Dalana Green, Fred's; Larry Culmo, Fred's; Lindsey Hodges, Fred's; Gladys Brasel, Fred's; Ashley Jackson, Fred's; Jamie O'Bar, Fred's; Shana Young, Fred's; Jennifer Page, Fred's; Ashley Martin, Fred's; Kim Terry, Fred's; and Jeff Burt, Fred's. Also pictured are members of the CDF Ambassador's Club. Fred's is located at 111 Willowbrook Dr. in Saltillo and can be reached at (662) 869-5948.

## Images Tupelo To Publish In Print And Online

Showcasing the best of Tupelo's people, places, and progressive business climate, *Images Tupelo* reinforces the area's favorable quality of life while also targeting prospective residents, employees, businesses, and visitors. The magazine will be distributed by the Community Development Foundation as well as through key local businesses, trade shows, conferences, and events throughout the year.

The *Images Tupelo* Web site, [www.imagestupelo.com](http://www.imagestupelo.com), will also feature fresh, new extended content, video, photo galleries, and more.

The annual magazine is a collaborative effort between the Community Development Foundation and Journal Communications ([jnlcom.com](http://jnlcom.com)), an award-winning custom publisher of community and specialty magazines with clients in more than 30 states.

"Forward-thinking communities like Tupelo are what every person considering a move, and businesses seeking to relocate, want to find out about," says Ray Langen, executive vice-president for Journal Communi-

cations. "What better way to get this information to this specific audience, than through a magazine and website containing the exact information they need? We are proud to partner with such a progressive area."

Visit *Images Tupelo* online and in-

**The annual magazine is a collaborative effort between the Community Development Foundation and Journal Communications ([jnlcom.com](http://jnlcom.com)), an award-winning custom publisher of community and specialty magazines with clients in more than 30 states.**

stantly enrich your website with engaging community content. Go to [www.imagestupelo.com](http://www.imagestupelo.com) and click on "Link to us."

For more information on becoming a part of *Images Tupelo* contact Blake Pettit at (662) 842-4521, toll-free at (800) 333-8842 or by e-mail at [bpettit@jnlcom.com](mailto:bpettit@jnlcom.com).

### Office Ergonomics: The Fit Between People & Their Work

Sponsored by CDF—Chamber of Commerce

Wednesday, April 7, 2010

11:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

CDF Boardroom  
300 West Main Street  
Tupelo, MS

Lunch  
will be  
Provided

Space  
is  
Limited

CDF  
Members  
\$15.00

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\$25.00

Presented by

Ms. Tzer Nan "T.Z." Waters

Workforce Specialist, Itawamba Community College

Ergonomics is a science concerned with the 'fit' between people and their work. Basic aspects of ergonomics include safety, comfort, ease of use, productivity/performance, and aesthetics. This seminar will cover the components of ergonomics and why it is important in today's workplace.

Please call (662) 842-4521 to reserve your space

Online registration is available at [www.tupelochamber.com](http://www.tupelochamber.com)



**TUPELO YOUNG PROFESSIONALS**



The February Tupelo Young Professionals event, sponsored by the TYP Service Projects Committee, featured a forum with local non-profit agencies entitled "An Opportunity to Serve: Meet Your Area Non-Profits." TYPs networked with representatives from the various agencies and listened to presentations on what the non-profit groups do and how young professionals can get involved.

# MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**First Friday**  
**Friday, April 9, 2010**

**Speaker:**  
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 30th Annual Mississippi Picnic in the Park

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Main Contact (will receive all chamber correspondence)

Contact Name

Title

Phone

Toll-free phone

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Additional Contact

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Title

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Areas of Interest (please circle your selections)

Ambassadors

Business Roundtable

Sponsorship Opportunities

Tupelo Young Professionals

Do we have your permission to use your photos in our chamber publication(s)?

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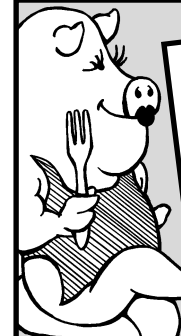
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