

February 2011



Building for the Future

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The DeSoto Council's mission is to facilitate, promote and provide effective, unified leadership for economic development and improved quality of life.

Census Shows Growth in Desoto County

New Census Bureau figures show that DeSoto County continues to be the fastest growing county in Mississippi. Only Hinds and Harrison counties have a higher population.

Desoto County shows a 50.4% Population Increase since 2000. This increase now ranks DeSoto County as the 3rd largest county in the State.

The current population for the county is at 161,252. Hernando grew from 6,812 in 2000 to 14,090. Horn Lake grew from 14,099 in 2000 to 26,026 in 2010. Olive Branch has 33,914 residents in 2010 and had 21,054 in 2000. Southaven is the largest city in the county with a population of 48,982. Southaven had 28,977 in 2000. Walls now has a population of 1,162. Walls was an unincorporated communi-

ty until 2004. Desoto County stands to gain two new House seats and one Senate seat in the state Legislature thanks to the growth.

Census results show the state of Mississippi has gained more than 122,000 residents since 2000, raising its total official population to 2,967,297. This population gain reflects a state increase of 4 percent since 2000.

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Economic Optimism for 2011

The Memphis Business Journal recently released results from a 2010 year-end survey that indicates an improvement in the business community's perspective on the local economy for 2011.

According to the survey, Exactly 50 percent of respondents to the survey are optimistic about economic prospects in 2011, compared to 38 percent the year before. The MBJ's survey was offered

online and had about 200 people participate in it.

Desoto County Optimism: A record setting number of company expansions and announcements of businesses choosing to locate in Desoto County in 2010, validates the sentiments of optimism towards the local economy.

Jim Flanagan, President and CEO of the Desoto Economic Council, agrees that the county has reason to be optimistic.

Flanagan says, "We had 20 new locations, 16 expansions, and approximately 1700 new jobs created, with a total of approximately \$300,000,000 in new capital investment for 2010."

The third and fourth quarters of 2010, included big announcements from: Soladigm, International Paper, Guardian Fiberglass, Hamilton Beach, Imperial Toy, Fiskars, Methodist Hospital, McKesson and Menlo Worldwide Logistics.

The Memphis Industrial Market: For 2010, Industrial leased space shows a turnaround of nearly three million square feet of space compared to 2009 when net absorption was nearly negative one million square feet. During 2010, the Southeast Memphis submarket and the DeSoto County, MS submarket both accounted for over one million square feet of net absorption.

Sources: Memphis Business Journal, CB Richard Ellis Memphis Industrial MarketView: Third and Fourth Quarters 2010.

GreenTech to Assemble Cars in Horn Lake

GreenTech Automotive Inc. plans to assemble cars from parts



imported from China in the former Dover Elevator Manufacturing building in Horn Lake. The company recently signed a 376,000 square foot lease at 6266 Hurt Road.

The plant will provide at least 100 new jobs for two to three years. This will serve as an introduction of GreenTech's cars to the market. In October 2009, GreenTech announced plans to build a \$1 billion hybrid automotive

facility on 1,500 acres in Tunica County. The announcement would create up to 2,000 construction jobs and hire 1,500 workers to start. The company expected to create about 6,000 jobs when the plant opened. Since the October 2009 announcement, the company has been silent about further plans.

While assembly will begin in Horn Lake, there is speculation that GreenTech still may build a

No green technology is truly green until it is *Affordably Green*. Chamber of Commerce has said

GreenTech is close to finalizing a lease for office space in Tunica.

GTA is a US-based company dedicated to developing and producing affordable, environment-friendly, and energy-efficient vehicles that will meet higher emission standards in the future.

www.wmgta.com

manufacturing facility in Tunica. The Tunica County Chamber of Commerce has said

Menlo Logistics Signs Lease in Olive Branch

Menlo Logistics Worldwide has announced it is expanding its Memphis-area operations with a new lease in DeSoto County.

The third-party logistics firm has signed a 181,000-square-foot lease at ProLogis Park DeSoto's Building One located in Olive Branch.

"ProLogis has proven to be a strategic business partner with a deep understand-



ing of our needs for modern logistics facilities," **Lonny Warner**, vice president at Menlo Worldwide Logistics LLC, said. "This facility is well located for our needs in the greater Memphis area and provides high-quality distribution space which will support effective and efficient service for customers."

Before this lease, Menlo leased 1.4 million square feet of distribution space in the Memphis area, according to the 2010 *Memphis Business Journal* Book of Lists.

The company, which has a local headquarters at 5215 Lamar, employs 420 people locally.

www.con-way.com/en/logistics

Desoto Council Will Continue to Partner in PriorityOne Program

The Mississippi Development Authority's Existing Industry and Business Division has partnered with the Desoto Council to participate in MDA's PriorityOne program for the past year and plans to step up the program over the next six months.

The PriorityOne program is based on face-to-face interviews which includes a series of questions for key business leaders in each county. The PriorityOne Program assists state and local economic development officials in Mississippi in determining the best business programs and solutions to assist our corporate citizens.

The Desoto Council and local industries benefit from the relationships built and the infor-

mation gathered throughout the program. With this information, local developers gain key insight into the issues and concerns of businesses in their communities and can evaluate their communities' strength and weaknesses and opportunities that may exist in their local markets. This information can be valuable in both supporting existing business and attracting new companies to the area.

Several Desoto County companies have already benefited from these visits including receiving: financial incentives, free technical assistance, and workforce training to help them grow their business and reduce their operating costs.

The PriorityOne program is a key component

of the Desoto Council's and the Mississippi Development Authority's Business Retention and Expansion efforts and are especially critical in today's economy. The interviews provide accurate information about the challenges and opportunities facing our state and nation. This information can be valuable in both supporting existing business, attracting new companies to the area, and developing new business incentives, programs, and legislation.

Over the next six months, industries in our area, will be contacted to participate in the Priority One interviews. If you have any questions please call the Desoto Council office at 662-429-4414 or the MDA's Regional Office in Senatobia at 662-562-0410.

Soladigm Secures \$30 Million in Funding

Soladigm, a developer of highly energy-efficient Dynamic Glass for next-generation buildings, has announced that it has secured \$30 million in Series C equity financing.

Combined with previously announced Mississippi state manufacturing financing and other arrangements, the funding will allow Soladigm to build and launch high-volume commercial operations and develop sales and marketing channels.

The Series C equity funding, led by DBL

Investors and Nano Dimension, includes GE (NYSE:GE) unit GE Energy Financial Services as well as existing investors Khosla Ventures and Sigma Partners. Concurrent with the financing, Cynthia Ringo, Managing Partner at DBL Investors, joined Soladigm's Board of Directors.

Last month, GE selected Soladigm as one of 12 business partners for investment and commercial partnerships through its [ecomagination Challenge](#), a \$200 million challenge for entrepreneurs, innovators and students to

share their best ideas on how to build the next-generation power grid. This investment by GE Energy Financial Services is part of the \$200 million Challenge, which selected Soladigm for its window technology that electronically switches glass from clear to tinted, enabling control of heat and glare. It can reduce HVAC energy usages by 25 percent and peak load by 30 percent in commercial buildings.

www.soladigm.com

Northcentral Opens New Facility in Olive Branch

Northcentral Electric Power Association has opened a new facility in Olive Branch. This new building is a \$14.5 million investment in the Olive Branch community. The new office located at 4600 Commerce Loop, replaces the former headquarters in Byhalia, and the branch office in Olive Branch.

The new building consists of an administration building, drive-through payment center, night drop, engineering and operations offices, mate-

rials warehouse, shop, equipment storage, and outside material storage.

The building was designed by architectural firm Fisher and Arnold and is a fruition of a decade of planning, designing and implementation. The new building is located in the center of Northcentral's consumer population base.

Northcentral has been serving the community for 61 years. Kevin Doddridge, general man-

ager for Northcentral, says, "This new complex has been designed to accommodate the association's office and warehouse needs for the next 40 years."

The new office is located just east of Bethel Road and Highway 178 in the Fairhaven community in Desoto County. (Commerce Loop is located off of Business Center Drive which is the entrance to Flying J.)

Olive Branch Company Offers Training Classes

Diamond Comic Distributors, created in 1982, is the world's largest distributor of English-language comic books, graphic novels, and related pop-culture merchandise.



Diamond Training

18; (9-11 am)

*Power and Influence—
March 9, 11, 16, or 18; (9-11am)

*Time Management, Goal Setting and Getting Organized— April 13, 15, 20, or

Diamond Comic trains their entire management team in house. They train Leads, Supervisors, and Managers in a wide range of leadership and management skills. And now, at a facility in Olive Branch, they are opening their doors to the public for training.

They offer affordable leadership development training for management teams. All training is offered in 2-hour increment classes with emphasis given to in-depth training on specific topics of high relevance.

22; (9-11 am)

For more information contact:
www.DiamondTraining.net

7485 Polk Ln.

Olive Branch, MS 662.892.6615

Upcoming training classes include:

*Foundations of Leadership— February 16, or

2011 Leadership Desoto Class Begins

The 2010-2011 Leadership Desoto Class is officially underway. The class began with a two-day orientation in November. On opening day, the class began to develop networking relationships, learned about their own leadership qualities, and working with others. Day two was spent at the ropes course at Parkwood Hospital where the class worked on team-work building skills. The class meets monthly on topics related to Desoto County until graduating from the program in May. Monthly Topics include: Economic Development, Education, State Legislation, Healthcare, Community Service, and Local Government.

The class of 29 participants are broken up into five project groups and will spend the next several months of class working on a community service project outside of the monthly meetings until graduation. The five class projects include: Desoto County Website project which includes working to improve and make a website more inclusive for the entire county,

Leadership DeSoto

“Feed Desoto” project to replenish area food banks, Eat well– Get well project working with area restaurants, Leadership Desoto project that will highlight different alumni who have gone through the program, and a Greenways Education project that will work with kids.

Leadership Desoto Class of 2011 Includes:

Cory Brady, *Integrated Land Solutions*, **John Caldwell**, *Strategic Financial Partners*, **John Camp**, *BancorpSouth*, **Jennifer Daniel**, *Atmos Energy*, **Dennis Davis**, *Exel*, **Debra Doyle**, *Community Bank*, **Julie Hollingsworth**, *Baptist Memorial Hospital-Desoto*, **Rob Hughes**, *Porter Leath*, **Jay Joel**, *First Tennessee*, **Lisa Johnson**, *Junior Auxil-*

iary of Desoto County, **Mike Jones**, *Future Electronics*, **Sibonie Jones**, *Southaven Chamber of Commerce*, **Russell Jordan**, *Hickman, Goza, Spragins, LLC*, **Ken Kirkpatrick**, *Baptist Memorial Hospital-Desoto*, **Carmen Kyle**, *Mississippi Secretary of State*, **Michael Leonard**, *Trustmark*, **Lynn McAdams**, *First Tennessee*, **Charles McGhee**, *Entergy*, **John Mitchell**, *Desoto County Board of Supervisors*, **Marc Montgomery**, *State Farm*, **Anthony Osijo**, *Future Electronics*, **Walt Parker**, *BancorpSouth*, **Kawana Phillips**, *Marietta*, **Pamela Pittman**, *LaQuinta Inn & Suites*, **Gordon Shaw**, *Walker, Brown and Brown*, **Adam Sowell**, *UBS Financial Advisors*, **Colin Tackett**, *Guaranty Bank*, **Randy Taylor**, *A & B Distributing*, **Patrina Williams**, *Parkwood Behavioral Health System*

Leadership Desoto is a program of the Desoto Economic Development Council. If you are interested in being in or nominating someone for the 2011-2012 class, please contact Lead-



Members of Governmental Affairs Committee and Leadership Desoto Heading to Jackson

The Governmental Affairs Committee for the Desoto Economic Council will make their annual trip to Jackson to serve fried pies to the Legislature on the morning of February 17, at the Capitol.

Leadership Desoto will also be in Jackson on February 17, for the Legislative Session. The group will meet with Senators and Representatives serving from Desoto County as well as other State elected officials, and tour the Capitol building.

Education Program Accepts \$20,000 Donation

Life Fellowship Church in Olive Branch recently made a donation to the Excellence in Education program of \$20,000.

This money was collected by the church as an offering in December. The Pastors at the church said they were discussing ways to give back to the community and decided the schools could use the money. Much of the church's ministry is filled with youth because the congregation is made up largely of young families with school-age children and the Education program was a natural fit.

The Foundation for Excellence in Education

program accepts donations to award teacher grants to deserving teachers and their students. The goal is to raise \$60,000 for this year's campaign which ends August 31, and this \$20,000 will be a great jump-start towards reaching the goal.

The grant program allows teachers to submit grant proposals and the grant winners have their proposals funded up to \$500. The program is open to teachers at Desoto County Schools, SBEC, Sacred Heart, and home school teachers as well. The grants will be awarded in September.

Funds are accepted from individual donors, families, businesses, non-profit groups, and churches. Employers can also donate memorials for their employees by adopting a policy similar to the Desoto County Schools, of making a donation to the Foundation in lieu of sending flowers to employees at times of bereavement.

Money will be collected for the Foundation for Excellence in Education Program through the end of August. Please contact Deborah Morgan at the Desoto Economic Council for more information at dmorgan@desotocounty.com.



Life Fellowship Church recently presented a check to the Desoto Council for \$20,000 to go towards the Foundation for Excellence in Education's Teacher Grant Program.

Pictured from left to right: Michael Baer, Next-Gen Pastor at Life Fellowship Church; Patrick Conrad, Pastor at Life Fellowship Church; Milton Kuykendall, Superintendent of Desoto County Schools; and Deborah Morgan, Desoto Council

DeSoto Council 2011 Board of Directors:

- | | |
|--|---|
| Lee Smart, Bank Plus | Barry Bouchillon, State Farm Insurance |
| Kevin Doddridge, Northcentral Electric Power Association | Wayne Spell, Entergy |
| Scott Carter, Gumps | Donnie Chambliss, Bob Leigh Realty |
| Marsha Spencer, Parker Hannifin | Matt Lipscomb, Lipscomb & Pitts |
| Greg Ryan, Ryan Keller Williams Realty | Bill Renovich, DeSoto Bank |
| Brian Walhood, BancorpSouth | Pete Bacon, Instaff |
| Karen Cummins, Atmos Energy Corp– MS Division | Mary Monteith, Austin Law Firm |
| Simon Weir, Community Bank | Jay Baum, American Contract Bridge League |
| Jimmy Gray, Jimmy Gray Chevrolet | Kim Terrell, Desoto County Tourism |
| Tiffany Heard, SSR Inc. | Jim Rone, Newly Weds Foods |
| David Barnett, Future Electronics | George Ready, Attorney |
| Doug Ray, Conair | Shawn Clayton, Renasant Bank |
| Kim Knop, Residence Inn | Dale Cole, CTW |
| Doug Davis, First Security Bank | Chris Brunetti, Elite Water Systems |
| Harvey Ferguson, retired-Trustmark | Beth Corl, Marietta |
| | Ken Purvis, Sycamore Bank |

DeSoto Council Executive Committee:

- Ken Purvis, Chairman
Sycamore Bank
- Greg Ryan, Vice Chairman
Ryan Keller Williams Realty
- Wayne Spell, Treasurer
Entergy
- Barry Bouchillon, Secretary
State Farm Insurance
- Simon Weir, Past Chairman
Community Bank

DeSoto Council Staff:

- Jim Flanagan**
President/CEO
- Deborah Morgan**
Office Administrator
- Cynthia Ramsey-Short**
Administrative Assistant
- Lisa Biglane**
Leadership DeSoto
Quarterly Newsletter
- Larry Jarrett**
DeSoto Co Greenways

2011 Upcoming Calendar of Events

Dates Subject to Change

February

11	Governmental Affairs Committee
11	Infrastructure Committee
17	Desoto Council-Capitol Breakfast
17	Leadership Desoto-Legislative Session
17	Metro Industrial Park Luncheon
22	Chamber Directors' Lunch
24	Salute to Industry Committee Meeting
28	Council of Governments Committee

March

2-4	Washington Briefing Committee
9	Governmental Affairs Committee
10	Tax Advisory Committee
10	Leadership Desoto- Healthcare Session
10	Salute to Industry Committee
11	Executive Committee
17	Metro Industrial Park Luncheon
25	Council of Governments
29	Chamber Directors' Lunch

April

1	Infrastructure Committee
8	1st Quarter Board of Directors
8	1st Quarter Membership Luncheon
13	Governmental Affairs Committee
14	Tax Advisory Committee
15	Leadership Desoto-Local Govt. Session
15	Executive Committee
21	Plant Managers' Forum/ Metro Industrial
21	Salute to Industry
26	Chamber Directors' Lunch
29	Council of Governments Committee

May

11	Governmental Affairs Committee
12	Council Golf Tournament
13	Golf Rain Date
19	Tax Advisory Committee
19	Leadership Desoto Graduation
19	Salute to Industry Committee Meeting
19	Metro Industrial Park Luncheon
20	Executive Committee
27	Council of Governments' Committee
31	Chamber Directors' Lunch

Congratulations From the Council

Chris Massey has been inducted as the 2011 president of the Home Builders Association of Mississippi.

Katherine Nelson, Director of Community Relations for DeSoto County Schools, recently won two 2010 Awards of Excellence from the Mississippi School Public Relations Association.

Michael Hatcher of Michael Hatcher Landscaping has been named a Mississippi State Fellow.

Ken Purvis, president of Sycamore Bank, has been named the 2011 Chairman of the Desoto County Economic Development Council Board of Directors.

Barry Bouchillon, a State Farm Agent for 30 years, has been named the Southaven Chamber of Commerce Man of the Year during a recent Chamber Banquet. Bouchillon received the award for his dedication to the community including his support and promotion of youth in our County.

Mississippi State Representative, Wanda Jennings, has been named the Southaven Chamber of Commerce Woman of the Year. Jennings has served in the Mississippi Legislature since 1997, and is a tireless advocate for education. She has been a successful teacher, businesswoman and lawmaker.

Shawn Clayton of Renasant Bank has made the Memphis Business Journal's List of "Top 40 Under 40." Shawn serves as market president of Renasant Bank for Desoto County.

Randy King, former CEO and administrator of Baptist Memorial Hospital-DeSoto, has been promoted to vice president and market leader for Baptist's six regional hospitals in Tennessee and Mississippi.

James Huffman has been named as the new CEO and administrator of Baptist Memorial Hospital-Desoto in King's departure. Huffman comes to Desoto County from New Albany, MS where he served as CEO of Baptist Memorial Hospital-Union County.



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Newsletter is also online: www.desotocounty.com