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# Wesson News

**SPOTLIGHT**

**2016 Economic Outlook**

Pages 1,2 &5

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Volume 4, Number 1

*“Good News You Can Use”*

January 12, 2016

## Sales & jobless rates indicate rising economy

*Special to Wesson News*

Sales and employment trends in Copiah, Lawrence and Lincoln Counties, which encompass the Wesson zip code area, point to a healthy economy in the year ahead.

Gross sales before taxes in the three counties jumped to \$438.2 million from \$435.4 million through October during the 2016 fiscal year beginning July 1, Lincoln County enjoyed a \$4.7 million increase, while Copiah and Lawrence Counties experienced slight decreases.

For the four months through October, Lincoln County generated sales of \$314.7 million in its retail sector, \$28.1 million in manufacturing, \$19 million in accommodations and food services and \$16.4 million in construction.

Copiah and Lawrence Counties recorded sales of \$70.9 million and \$19 million respectively in the retail trade sector. In a manufacturing sector, dominated by Georgia Pacific, Lawrence County had strong manufacturing sales of \$13.6 million, while Copiah County reported more than \$11 million in sales in its information, services

and natural resources development sectors, and only \$1.2 million sales in manufacturing. Copiah and Lawrence Counties respectively had \$7.7 million and \$2.1 million in gross sales in the accommodations and food services sectors, and \$8.2 million and \$4.7 million in construction.

All three counties have been experiencing declining unemployment since peaks in 2010 and 2011.

In October and November, Lincoln County had the lowest unemployment rate among the three counties at 5.6 per cent -- down from a high of 11.7 per cent in January 2010 and 7.0 per cent in January last year. Copiah County's unemployment rate of 6.4 per cent in October and November has fallen from a high of 12.6 per cent in June 2011 and 8.8 per cent in January a year ago. Lawrence County's unemployment rate ticked upwards to 7.0 per cent in November from a 6.9 per cent rate in October, but has steadily fallen since a high of 13.5 per cent in January 2010 and 8.4 per cent in June.

The sustained depression of oil

and petroleum prices has both stimulated and tamped down the area's economy. Consumers who don't earn their livings from oil producers or companies servicing them have more money in their pockets with gasoline prices below \$2 per gallon and prices of other goods and services affected by oil prices falling. Contractors who don't build for the oil exploration and mining sectors are also enjoying the benefits of decreasing material costs, with construction costs down and increasing demand for residential and commercial work in a low-cost environment. On the other hand, oil-industry related workers have been idled with cutbacks by oil producers and their suppliers as a result of a pullback in shale drilling -- an emerging economic driver in Southwest Mississippi until crude prices started sliding.



Wesson News

*New restaurants are sign of rising economy, providing new jobs.*



Wesson News

*Retail sales are booming in Lincoln County.*

## Plastics plant omen for Copiah County economy

*By Bob Arnold*

Expansion of McNeely Plastics, a manufacturer and distributor based in Clinton, Mississippi, into Copiah County signals a bright economic outlook for the area in the new year, says Arthur Lee Evans, Jr., executive director of Copiah County Economic Development District (CCEDD).

“Along with the twenty to twenty-five jobs McNeely is creating in Copiah County at its new facility in Gallman at the Copiah County Industrial Park (CCIP), existing employers do not have layoffs or moves outside the country in their plans,” Evans says. “It suggests

a promising economic scene during 2016.”

McNeely, founded in 1983 as a diversified distributor of plastic products, is moving into the former MMI building at CCIP, which it is acquiring in a \$1.5 million lease-purchase deal. At the location, it will produce plastic bags that can be used by the Copiah County poultry industry for packaging.

The company, which had to delay its expansion plans in Hinds County, decided to locate its new facility in Copiah County after one of its board members, a resident of Crystal Springs,

*cont. on page 2*

## Lincoln County economic pie grows

*By Bob Arnold*

At first glance, an empty building in an industrial park would not seem to be a reason to be excited about the economy. But for Garrick Combs, executive director of the Brookhaven-Lincoln County Chamber of Commerce, an unoccupied building, which will be ready in May to house an employer in Linbrook Business Park, is a major source of his optimism about the 2016 economic outlook in the Wesson area.

Agracel, Inc., an Illinois-based industrial development company with offices in Madison, Mississippi, is erecting the building in the Brookhaven industrial park on speculation to sell or lease to an employer that will bring light industrial jobs to the area.

“The investment demonstrates confidence in our economy,” says



Wesson News

*Brookhaven-Lincoln County Chamber of Commerce Director Garrick Combs.*

Combs. “Agracel is a private company, which will be highly motivated to sell or lease its facility in Linbrook Business Park. It has the capital to finish the building to meet the needs of a

*cont. on page 5*



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cont. from page 1

# Plastics plant omen for Copiah County economy

learned of the availability of the CCIP site near Sanderson Farms and DG Foods locations and Interstate 55 and found the Copiah County government willing to assist it in the acquisition, Evans reports.

For Evans, the story of the McNeely move into Copiah County illustrates the attractions of the county as a site to locate businesses, which CCEDD emphasizes in its marketing program:

- CCIP, an industrial park with both raw land for development and ready-to-occupy buildings;
- Pro-business county supervisors and others throughout the county who will capitalize on opportunities to gain new employers by working together to address their varied needs and provide incentives, tax advantages, and financial assistance;
- Convenient transportation via rail and the interstate highway system;
- Potential customers in the presence of other businesses located in the area;
- Skilled workers and workforce training provided by Co-Lin.

Beyond McNeely, CCEDD is continuing to work with Gulf Coast Renewable Energy (GCRE), which has announced plans to begin producing wood pellets for European power plants



Wesson News

Arthur Lee Evans, Jr., executive director of Copiah County Economic Development District confers with staff assistant Brenda Harper.

in the third quarter of 2016 at a \$78 million manufacturing facility in CCIP. One GCRE full time employee is now focusing on upgrading the former Universal building in the industrial park for manufacturing operations that could employ as many as 45 persons.

"If we can get a prospective employer to visit Copiah County, our business attractions will convince them to stay," Evans says. "As it is, however, we are a well kept secret."

Evans says traveling up and down Interstate 55 stirs his optimism about

enticing new business to settle in Copiah County.

"You see the economy on the move with the big tractor trailers on the Interstate," he points out. "Products are being sold and shipped. A few years ago, the trucks were scarce. Things have changed."

In Copiah County, construction of the new Hardy Wilson Memorial Hospital on Highway 28 in Hazlehurst and entrepreneurial activity highlighted by new retail stores is all feeding Evans' optimism about the economy.

A movie company even visited Copiah County during the past year to explore locations for a production set in the 1940s, Evans relates.

At CCEDD, Evans guides an organized marketing effort encompassing radio, television, and the internet to sell Copiah County to business prospects. SG4, a consulting group based in Jackson, Mississippi, created a strategic roadmap for CCEDD to implement and sustain the marketing program.

The program has reached expansion-minded businesses in the Jackson area on WJTV and Fox 40 under the theme of "Let's Do Business."

Leadership of Copiah County Economic Development District during 2016 includes a new president, Rita Moak of Bank of the South in Crystal Springs, who takes over from Dr. Ronnie Nettles, president of Co-Lin. Other new board members are Johnny Clay, Michael Hutchison, Som Budhraj, Denton Marx and Barbara King, who are replacing Millerson Black, Johnny Butler, George Marx and Linda Phillips. The CCEDD executive committee will include Moak and Evans, Carl Robinson, vice president; James Mitchell, secretary; and Brenda Harper, CCEDD office secretary. Yolanda Brown and Tim Rutland are leaving the executive committee.

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## Police Blotter

*Special to Wesson News*

During December, Wesson Police Department activity encompassed:

**Response to:**

- Eight general complains
- One suicide

**Citations & arrests:**

- Fourteen speeding
- One stop sign violation
- Two driving with license suspended
- Three no insurance
- Four contempt of court
- One disturbing the peace

On school days, the Wesson Police Department facilitates traffic flow at Wesson Attendance Center with officers on duty between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.

# WAC honors athletes, cheerleaders

*Special to Wesson News*

Wesson Attendance Center (WAC) honored thirty-one athletes and cheerleaders for their contributions to its fall sports program.

Cornelius Barlow and Kaitlyn Smith were named most valuable players in football and softball, and Brittany Moore was named Cheerleader of the Year. Barlow, along with Jamarus Patterson and Bobby Pritchard, were recognized for being named to First Team All-Region 3A in football, and Jeremiah Stapleton, Hendrick Brown and Matthew Craft were recognized for being named to the regional second team. In softball, Smith, Brooke Jones, Riley Smith, Harmoni Ashley, Katie Westbrook, Aurianna Vaughn and Cheyenne Gladden were recognized as First All-Region 7-3A team members, and Arie Douglas, Shelbi Maxwell, Catherine Wilson and Nikki Guess were recognized as regional second team members.

In football, Brown also received WAC's Iron Cobra Award with Patterson and was recognized as Best Defensive Player with Pritchard and Team Captain with Davion Frye. Barlow was also named Best Offensive Player, Patterson as Best Defensive Back, Stapleton as Best Defensive Back and Craft as Best

Offensive Lineman. Demarcus Smith was named Most Versatile player and recognized as Best Defensive Lineman. Daniel Lyle and Justin Hynum received The Coaches Award, and Tyler Granger, the Jim Lowery Attitude Award. Barlow, Brown, Frye, Granger, Hynum, Patterson, Smith and Stapleton, along with Marty Jones, were all honored as senior members of 2015 Cobras grid squad.

In softball, Kaitlyn Smith was also named Best Offensive Player, Guess as Most Improved Player, Jones as Best Defensive Player and Gladden as Most Versatile Player. Westbrook also received the Hustle Award and Ashley, the Golden Glove Award. Kaitlyn Smith and Gladden were honored as senior softball players.

WAC presented other cheerleader awards to Lacie Tarver (Most Dependable), Chelsea McManus (Rookie of the Year), Jamiya Christmas (Most Improved), Arevica Cameron (110% Award), Madison Jones (Heart of a Champion) and Aysha Thomas (Mascot of the Year). Lindsey Alford, Jerrineisha Braxton, McManus and Moore all were honored as senior cheerleaders.

**Grid coach bows out.** Ronald Greer has stepped down as Wesson High

School head football coach after four seasons. He will remain the athletic director, transportation director and assistant principal. Greer, who finished his fourth season with a 12-29 record, said "that it is just time for a new breath of fresh air."



## SCOREBOARD

December 8-January 12  
Wesson High School Cobras

### Basketball

Boy's Record: 9-5. Recent Wins: Bogue Chitto. 65-61. Bassfield. 77-76. Loyd Star. 83-86. Florence. 71-61. Recent Losses: Brookhaven 89-52. Southeast Lauderdale. 68-48.

Girls Record: 5-9. Recent Wins: Brookhaven. 42-38. Recent Losses: Bogue Chitto. 51-28. Bassfield. 43-27. Lawrence County. 51-29. Florence. 82-42

### Soccer

Boy's Record: 4-4. Recent Wins: Raymond. 4-1. Recent Losses: Franklin County. 4-1. North Pike, 3-1.

Girl's Record: 6-3. Recent Wins: Raymond. 6-1. Franklin County. 2-1. North Pike. 2-1

### Co-Lin Wolves

### Basketball

### Men's Record:

2-8. Recent Wins: Delgado. 83-70. Recent Losses: Hinds. 64-63. Pearl River. 71-76. Southwest Tennessee. 75-67.

### Women's Record:

10-0. Recent Wins: Pearl River. 66-41. Delgado. 77-50. Southwest Tennessee. 90-70.

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## Christmas begins now for Wesson-area tree grower

By Bob Arnold

For most people, the Christmas season has ended. For Gary Keller, however, it begins this month.

Keller grows and sells Christmas trees on his ten-acre property just outside Wesson on Highway 51 in Beauregard. After selling more than fifty trees to customers last month, he is planting new seedlings this month in the empty spaces where he and his wife Deborah cut them down for buyers.

Keller has been growing and selling Christmas trees for 25 years, although he never intended to get into the business when he came to Wesson.

"I moved here to work in a saw mill at Hazlehurst after working at ones in Vicksburg and Baton Rouge," he relates. "I purchased the ten acres of land on which I now live for a home site. It was covered with trees, which the previous owner sold during the Christmas season. When the former owner's customers started returning the next Christmas to buy trees, I decided to try selling them. I met good people. Bad people don't shop for Christmas trees. I also enjoyed growing and caring for the trees. So I've been in the business ever since, in addition to working in a full-time job."

Keller devotes about two acres of his property to his Christmas tree business, growing Carolina Blue Sapphires, Eastern Red Cedars, which are native

to Mississippi, and Leyland Cypresses. "They are pretty trees," he says. "The sapphires have a lemon citrus smell. The cedars, of course, have their unique smell. The cypresses are a favorite of people with allergies, because they have no smell." Keller sells his trees for \$5 per foot.

The trees require relatively little attention once Keller plants the seedlings, which grow to about six feet over eight to nine years. "You need to shape them as Christmas trees at the very beginning and continue to do so one or two times a year," he says. "The trees I grow do not need a lot of work. They resist insects and disease. My biggest chore is cutting the grass."

Over twenty-five years, a few things have changed. For one, Keller quit working in saw mills and now is a laboratory technician at Claiborne County Hospital after "deciding to try something different and studying at Co-Lin." Keller also quit growing Virginia Pine trees, which require too much care and use of insecticides and pesticides. He also says his customers buy smaller trees today -- eight foot at the most -- compared to when sales of fifteen-foot trees were not uncommon.

On the other hand, former customers -- and even their kids, now adults -- keep returning to buy his trees. Good people and the joy Keller finds in caring for trees will keep him in the business another year.

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cont. from page 1

# Lincoln County economy grows

prospective employer.”

The Agracel building will be a state-of-the art facility, initially providing 54,000 square feet, readily expandable to 100,000 square feet, and offering a maximum of 216,000 square feet for operations. It will occupy twelve acres, with access to an adjacent rail line.

Combs says the empty building will appeal to expansion-minded companies seeking flexible light industrial space. “Companies prefer available buildings to raw land when they expand, because they can avoid eight to twelve months to complete and file environment and legal paper work, real estate closing and construction activity,” he explains.

Combs foresees a light industrial company using the building because of its relatively small size (by comparison, the Walmart distribution center at Brookhaven occupies more than one million square feet) and its six-inch flooring, which cannot accommodate heavy machinery.

In addition to area industrial prospects for the coming year, retail development -- particularly in downtown Brookhaven -- boosts Combs’ optimism about the economy.

“Brookhaven’s downtown area is thriving, with construction evidencing new investment,” he points out.

“New restaurants are on the horizon, and other businesses are expanding. At Chamber of Commerce meetings, the concerns are about traffic and parking -- growing pains rather than signs of economic deterioration such as empty store fronts.”

Combs says his organization’s economic development strategy is “building a bigger pie” with sectors of the area economy “feeding and building on each other, the varied layers of the economy complementing each other.” The key sectors of the Lincoln County economy are:

- Healthcare, including the King’s Daughters Medical Center components;
- Finance, including banking and financial institutions that have turned Brookhaven into a regional hub;
- Real estate, including single family housing;
- Education, including Co-Lin;
- Industrial, including advanced and traditional manufacturing, timber, metals, distribution.

“All and all, the outlook for the economy is good during 2016,” says Combs.

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# Co-Lin's pace setters in dance since 1949

By Guest Columnist Shaw Furlow

It's 2016, but I am looking back to 1949 this month and the beginning of a unique arts tradition associated with Co-Lin and Wesson: the Colettes dance line.



The Second World War was over, and soldiers were returning home to build our country. Ralph and Dot Franklin were beginning their second tour as Director of Bands and Majorette Director at Co-Lin. The Franklins had a new arts idea: a girls dance line to accompany the Co-Lin band at football games and parade appearances that went beyond majorettes. The group, to be called the Colettes, would be only the third college dance line in the nation associated with a band and the first in Mississippi, which earned them the moniker "Mississippi's Original Dancing Coeds" when they debuted.

The Franklins had grand ideas for the group and set out to model it after the famed Rockettes of Radio City Music Hall in New York City. Their routines were filled with all the latest dance moves and props. Lots and lots of props. In one of their more popular routines,

the girls were on bicycles doing figure eights in the middle of the football field accompanied by the Co-Lin band.

The first uniforms featured simple white turtle necks with Mrs. Franklin's hand-printed lettering of "Colettes" on the front, skirts above the knees with shorts underneath and small white boots with tassels. Simple and elegant. A first for the late 1940s. When the first head colette, Mary Little, appeared without the skirt, it caused quite a stir. Mrs. Franklin explained that Little was, in fact, tall -- 5-foot 9-inches -- and looked funny in the uniform short skirt. Over the years, the Colettes have kept a traditional costume in the closet for parades and other performances, but now dress according to the themes of half-time shows.

The two constants over the years have been the outstanding directors and the great young ladies who have entertained the audience at Co-Lin's Stone Stadium.

I single out four directors for special mention: Nina Smith, who moved to Wesson in 1974 with her new husband Bradley. One day her phone rang. Co-Lin president Dr. Billy Thames was on

the other end of the line. By the end of the conversation, she was the new Colette director. She held the position for four years and then became head of her own dance studio (that's another story about the art of dance in Wesson). Her influence continues as her dance students become Colettes. In 1980, Wesson native Janet Douglas Blackmon became director. Counting her years as a student, when she was head colette, and as director of the group, Blackmon was associated with the Colettes for eighteen years. When I joined

Co-Lin as director of bands on July 5, 1999, the first person I met was Sharon Speights, the new Colette Director. Over her two-year tenure, she helped transform the Colettes from athletic/cheerleader dancing to a trained, classical style. For the last thirteen years, Dr. Shelley Smith has directed the Colettes and has continued to take it to new heights with innovative costumes and routines, which once again have changed the culture of the community college dance line in Mississippi.

From the onset, the Colettes have set a standard for others and are the main attraction wherever they perform. In 1965, the Co-Lin band and Colettes,

under the direction of Clyde Wilson and Betty Jo Stewart, performed at the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City -- another first. They also travelled to Louisville, Kentucky, Dallas, New Orleans and Memphis for parades, conventions and lobby shows. The eyes of little girls light up when they see the Colettes in a parade, on stage at the Co-Lin Rea Auditorium, or performing at basketball games. They dream of the day when they will have their opportunity.

And by the way, Wesson can pride itself in another contribution to the dance world, which would not be right to ignore in a discussion of dancers from our little corner of the world: Summer Rials, who is completing her fourth and final year as a member of the New Orleans Saints Cheerleaders -- the Saintsations. Summer told me that young ladies can only dance for four years, according to Saints rules. As she comes to the end of her term, I want to wish her good luck in her next step.

And to you, my friends, stay warm; and, until next time, support the arts.

*Editor's Note: R. Shaw Furlow is director of the Mississippi Musicians Hall of Fame. His column this month owes much to a book entitled A History of the Co-Lin Band: 1928-2013, which can be purchased from the Co-Lin Foundation.*



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# Thames to keynote Chamber banquet

## Special to Wesson News

The Wesson Chamber of Commerce will host its annual banquet on Tuesday, January 26, with Dr. Billy B. Thames, Co-Lin's longest-serving president from 1968 to 1997, as the guest speaker. At the banquet, to be held at the Old School Community Center, the Chamber will honor citizens and organizations for their service to the community, and the Zion Hill Church youth program will cater the event as part of its fundraising activities. The event starts at 6:30 p.m.

Thames' almost thirty years at the helm of Co-Lin gives him a unique perspective on the Wesson area, which he will bring as the event's keynote speaker. A Monticello native and graduate of Monticello High School, he came to Wesson in 1954 to attend Co-Lin, where he was one of the college's first Hall of Fame selections. After earning Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral Degrees at the University of Southern Mississippi, he returned to Wesson and Co-Lin, where he was an active member of the community and brought important changes to his alma mater. He was a member, deacon and trustee at Wesson Baptist Church; served three terms as president of the Wesson Lions Club; held state Lions Club offices -- district Governor, Chairman of the Lions Council of Governors and

president of the Lions Sight Foundation; was a member of Copiah County Chamber of Commerce, Brookhaven-Lincoln Chamber of Commerce and Wesson Chamber of Commerce, which he served as president; and participated in the Mississippi Humanities Council, which he also served as president. At Co-Lin, Thames played a major role in establishing the Natchez Campus and spearheading the construction of numerous facilities on the Wesson campus, including the state-of-the-art conference center, which carries his name. Although Thames now resides in Madison, Mississippi, with his wife, the former Ann Allen of Monticello, he remains an active Co-Lin supporter. He and his wife are parents of three grown children -- Rachel, Rebecca and William.

Tickets for the banquet are \$20 until January 19 and \$25 thereafter. They can be purchased at Trustmark Bank in downtown Wesson and at the door on January 26.

**Beauties & beaus.** Wesson Attendance Center honored 78 beauties

and beaus during its fall semester, from kindergartners through seniors in high school. In its annual 2015 Beauty and Beau Pageant, the Most Handsome and Most Beautiful Seniors were Tre' Fleming and Kaitlyn Smith.

Named Most Handsome in other classes were Nicholas Adcock (from other high school classes), Aaron Mooney

(junior high classes), Dalton Orgeron (sixth grade), Justin Hailey (fifth grade), Joseph Howington (fourth grade), Parker Brooks (second grade) and Hayden D'Avy (kindergarten).

Named in other classes as Most Beautiful were Lacie Tarver (junior), Misty Tanksley (sophomore), Madison Boleware (freshman), Issy Morse (eighth grade), Avery Kyle and Alyssa Carraway (seventh grade), Destini Jones (sixth grade), Sadie Sandifer (fifth grade), Cami Beth Miller (fourth grade), Courtney Carr (third grade), Kate Norwood (second grade), Nikki Berch (first grade) and Addison Rorie (kindergarten).

Selected as Beauties were seniors Madison Coleman, Brittany Moore,

Kaitlynn Goodman and Cheyenne Gladder; juniors Madison Jones, Paige Tadlock, Mary Beth Munn, Cammie Byther and Aurianna Vaughn; sophomores Amber Brinson and Laina Thames; freshmen Shaylin Green, Madison Oster, Nikki White and Anna Elsie Beasley; eighth graders Arie Douglas, Shelbi Maxwell and Kaysha Register; sixth graders Alexis Guess, Emma Britt and Makayla May; fifth graders Lexie Freeman and Allison Adams; fourth graders Corley Sandifer, Melody Waltman and Rachel Anderson; third graders Gracie Martin, Aubree Smith, Maci Allen and Diamond Catchings; second graders Brooke Coleman, Delaney Hutt, Lexie Petridge, Katie West and Sara Grace Glasper; first graders Lexi Furr, Caylie Britt, Bently Roberson, Preslee Newman and Enysia Sinclair; and kindergartners Kenslie Carter, Kenzie Kay Lofton, Laney Hewitt, Lillie Porter and Anna Caballero.

Selected as Beaus were seniors Cabe Stephens, Bolon Tatlock, Justin Hynum, Davion Frye and Devlin Wallace; Logan Channell and Will Hulon from other high school classes; Nias Mendez from junior high; fourth graders Landon Beasley and Blaine Tarver; and second graders Karter McLemore and Brayden Wheat.

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# Fitting in fitness during 2016

By Guest Columnist  
Dr. Stephanie Duguid

Finding time for fitness can be tough. The key is making it convenient. You know fitness is important for your health and well-being. And you want to get more active, but



your days are a blur of work, household chores, errands and time with family and friends. Setting aside enough time to sleep — let alone exercise — isn't easy. So how can you find time? Flexibility and making fitness a way of life are the foundations. And remember, all physical activity — not just formal exercise programs — adds up to a healthier you. Within this context, consider these 25 practical suggestions.

## In general:

- Always take the stairs if you have a choice.
- Park away from every destination so you must walk the rest of the way.
- Stretch every chance you get. Besides burning calories, it keeps you flexible.
- On the phone, move around while

making calls, or lift hand weights while you talk.

- Make play part of your day. Whether with your children, grandkids or pets, take time for active play.
- Walk outside whenever possible. Enjoy the fresh air while getting fit.
- Take daily walks with Fido or Fluffy. If you don't have a dog, borrow one. An enthusiastic dog may give you the motivation you need to lace up your walking shoes.

## At home:

- Get up 30 minutes earlier than you normally do, and use the extra time to walk on your treadmill or take a brisk walk around the neighborhood.
- Rinse, scrub, and wash dishes by hand rather than using the dishwasher.
- Clean your home often. Put on music, and dance while you vacuum or dust to help you get moving.
- Heading for the mailbox? If you have time, take an extra walk around.
- Take group walks before or after dinner. Play catch. Ride your bike. It's best to build up to about 30 minutes of continuous activity, but you can exercise in shorter bursts, too.
- During TV commercials, get active. Dance around, march, or do jumping jacks in place.

• Use hand weights, ride a stationary bike or do a stretching routine during your favorite shows. Get off the couch to change the channel or adjust the volume.

## LIVING +HEALTHY+

## At work:

- Walk at lunch. Grab a quick bite, and spend the rest of your lunch hour strolling.
- Turn one-on-one meetings into power strolls. Everyone wins.
- Stand and sit several times while talking on the phone.
- Add extra weight to your briefcase. The more weight you carry, the more calories you burn.
- Keep a set of free weights handy. While on break, you can work at firming up your arms.
- Whenever possible, walk to coworkers' offices instead of calling or emailing.

## On the go:

- In waiting rooms, ask how much time until you will be seen, then spend it walking.
- Become an active spectator. When watching your child play soccer or baseball, walk up and down the field.
- Bid drive-up windows bye-bye and walk inside to make purchases.
- Turn halftimes at sporting events into walk-around times for you.
- When grocery shopping, return your shopping cart to the front of the store instead of leaving it in the parking lot.

There's no single best way to fit physical activity into your day. Your lifestyle, job and family responsibilities will point to the most convenient time and place for fitness. Do what works for you — and make daily physical activity a habit you keep.

*Editor's Note: Dr. Stephanie Duguid is Assistant Dean of Academic Instruction and the Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Division Chair at Co-Lin. She is also an athletic trainer and nutrition specialist and has been teaching courses related to those two areas as well as practicing what she preaches for more than twenty years.*

## NENA SMITH'S SCHOOL OF DANCE

Precious NeNe,

Thank you so much. I cannot say how much you have helped me. I would never have even gone to Dance Department tryouts at USM without your help and support! I learned more from you during my time at Co-Lin than I had in taking dance all my life since I was 3. You gave me my dream back of owning my own dance studio. Now I'm the humble and proud owner of Main Street Dance Company in McComb because you believed in me and my dream, that I almost lost along the way due to negative people and just life! I love you so much and you will never realize the impact you have had in my life and the lives of so many many other young ladies. Maybe their dream isn't to own a dance studio, but whatever their dream is they know you'll believe and pray and help them get there. Everybody needs a "Miss" Nena in their corner! You're the best!

-Laci Fenn Godbold-

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# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**January weather forecast:** *The Old Farmers Almanac* calls for an average temperature of 46.5 degrees F (four degrees F above average) and average precipitation of four inches (one inch below average).

## JANUARY 12

Diabetes support group. Meets weekly on Tuesdays. Education Annex at King's Daughters Medical Center, Brookhaven. 1:30 p.m. For information, call Natalie Ybarra at 601-835-9489.

Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and VFW Auxiliary Post 2618 meet. \$5.00 for meal. VFW Hall on Industrial Park Road, Brookhaven. 5:30 p.m.

## JANUARY 13

Health Weight Awareness Bingo Walk oriented to Co-Lin employees. Oswalt Nature Trail. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

## JANUARY 14

Widows Support group meets second Thursday of each month. Furlow Senior Center, Brookhaven. 5 p.m. For information, call 601-823-6376 or email bvaugnurfurrow@gmail.com.

Wesson Lions Club meets. Conference Room at Co-Lin student cafeteria building. 6:30 p.m.

## JANUARY 17

Martin Luther King, Jr. parade on East Monticello Street in Brookhaven from Williams Mortuary to Alexander Junior High School sponsored by Lincoln County NAACP. Vehicle participation fee: \$5. Preliminary 1:30 p.m. pep rally at Second Baptist Church. 3 p.m. lineup.

## JANUARY 18

Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

## JANUARY 19

Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) social. Schedule of luncheons, workshops, trips and other activities will be announced. Thames Center on Co-Lin campus. 1:30 p.m.

Student holiday at Wesson Attendance Center.

## JANUARY 21

50+ Club. Anderson Building on the Co-Lin campus. 10:30 a.m.

Reception for Kaitlin Mullins, whose photography is on exhibit at Lincoln County Public Library (LCPL) throughout January. Hosted by Brookhaven Regional Arts Guild (BRAG) at Vernon Room at LCPL. 4:30 p.m.

Brookhaven Regional Arts Guild (BRAG) monthly meeting for artists and patrons. Discussion will focus on 2016 planning. Vernon Room at Lincoln County Public Library. 5:30 p.m. For information, contact Nancy Hanks-Myers at Modestyann@aol.com and visit

Brookhaven Regional Arts Guild on Facebook.

American Legion Post #79 meets. American Legion Lodge on Main Street, Wesson. 6:30 p.m.

## JANUARY 25

Blood drive every second and fourth Monday. King's Daughters Medical Center Hospital Annex. 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. Call 800-817-7449 for information.

Beginner clogging classes for persons of all ages beyond age 5 are held every Monday night. A small fee is charged each month. Brookhaven Recreation Department on Highway 51. Call 601-833-3791 for information.

## JANUARY 26

Wesson Chamber of Commerce annual banquet. Dr. Billy B. Thames, for Co-Lin president, will be guest speaker. Organizations and individuals will be recognized for community leadership and service. Tickets are \$20 until January 19 and \$25 thereafter. Old School Community Center. 6:30 p.m.

## JANUARY 28

HAZWOPER 40-Hour classes start. A forty-hour training course designed for workers who are involved in clean-up operations, voluntary clean-up operations, emergency response operations and storage, disposal, or treatment of hazardous substances or uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. Participants who successfully complete the training will receive a completion card. \$90 fee. Thames Center on Co-Lin campus. 8 a.m.- 6 p.m. on Thursday through March 3. Contact Toni Dobbins at 601-643-8716.

Wesson Lions Club meets. Conference Room at Co-Lin student cafeteria building. 6:30 p.m.

## FEBRUARY 2

Wesson Board of Alderman meet. City Hall. 6 p.m.

## FEBRUARY 8

ServSafe class. National Restaurant Association food safety training program for hospitality personnel recognized in all 50 states. \$150 or \$75 for test only. Registration is on a first-come, first served basis. Co-Lin campus (locations vary). 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Contact Toni Dobbins at 601-643-8716.

## FEBRUARY 9

Self Defense/Personal Safety class. Learn safety tips to prevent and avoid violence. Loose fitting cloths and tennis shoes. \$15 fee. Registration is on a first-come, first-serve basis. Co-Lin campus (locations vary). 6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Contact Toni Dobbins at 601-643-8716.

## CONTINUING

Alcoholics Anonymous meets at convenient times seven days of every week. First United Methodist Church, 215 West Cherokee Street, Brookhaven. Open meetings are Mondays at noon and Tuesdays (Big Book Study), Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. Closed meetings are Wednesdays and Fridays (Big Book Study) at noon and Thursdays and Sundays at 7:30 p.m.

Email Community Calendar items to [bobarnold@wessonnews.com](mailto:bobarnold@wessonnews.com)

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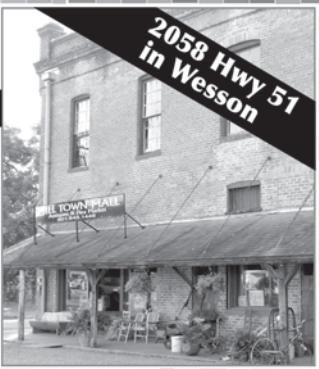
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# Businesses recognized for Christmas decorating

Wesson News

All photos by Wesson News

Six downtown Wesson businesses and a not-for-profit organization received recognition for their Christmas decorating efforts in the second annual Wesson News and Wesson Chamber of Commerce Spirit of Christmas Awards.

Boswell Regional Center, Los Lobos Restaurant, Mill Town Salon and Spa, S & S Check Cashing, Porches Restaurant and Trustmark Bank were cited for the special contributions they made in stirring the spirit of Christmas around town through their lighting, ornamental displays and 3D displays of seasonal themes. The awards were presented in four categories:

- **Best Window Display:**  
Mill Town Salon and Day Spa, first place.  
Los Lobos Restaurant, second place.
- **Most Creative Display:**  
Trustmark Bank, first place.  
S & S Check Cashing, second place.
- **Best Overall Design -- Inside & Outside:**  
Porches Restaurant.
- **Best Outside Scene:**  
Boswell Regional Center.



Mill Town Salon & Day Spa



Trustmark Bank



Porches Restaurant



Boswell Regional Center

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our clients get the best terms as well. People come from hundreds of miles to buy here. They rave on about what a great experience it is. Buying a new vehicle should be enjoyable."

Rogel Ford currently stocks over 5 MILLION DOLLARS worth of inventory. "We sure aren't greedy with our vehicles either. We want the business and we will earn the business. You will see the same faces here, we don't change people often. About 45% of our business now is clients buying their second or third vehicle from us or direct referrals from our owners."

Rogel says he does not hire people with previous Automobile sales experience. "Most of them have been ruined. I want our people to understand that the customer comes first, no bull, no back and forth." I leave the gimmicks to the other guys." Rogel said. "Come see us, shop us online, or just call. You will not be disappointed, you have my word."

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