

## A Message from the Executive Director

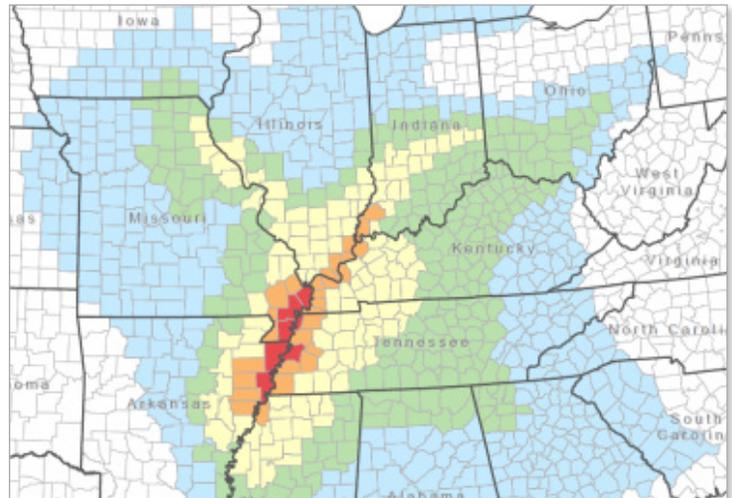
There has been a lot of discussion in the newspaper, social media and even around the water cooler about who "won" the Super Bowl. Of course I realize that the Patriots won and did so by scoring the most points when the final whistle blew. The point of most of the discussion is not about the outcome of the game as such but centers around which individual won or lost the game. Many say that Tom Brady won it by throwing four touchdown passes. Others say that the Seahawks were destined to lose because of the "dumb" play call made by their coaches. Others say the pass play would have worked if Malcolm Butler, the young man from Vicksburg, hadn't jumped the coverage, beat the receiver to the ball for the interception and therefore won the game.

My point is although there were many great individual plays and performances, the key element to winning the game was teamwork. Love them or hate them, the Patriots have always been successful because of their system of team play. Many individuals come and go but their scheme requires players to adapt to the Patriot way. This unwavering philosophy has made them successful for many years.

Yes, Tom Brady threw four touchdown passes but could he have done so without the offensive line holding out an excellent defense giving him the time to throw? Would the play action passes have worked if the backs had not run so hard when they carried the ball? The four touchdown

*Continued on page 2*

## February is Earthquake Awareness Month



As earthquakes continue to occur on a daily basis in the central U.S., Central U.S. Earthquake Consortium and emergency management officials in Mississippi are reminding communities about the earthquake risk by designating February as Earthquake Awareness Month.

Preparation for emergency events is key to your ability to maintain or survive during and after a disaster. It is essential to plan ahead for risks you or your family may have to endure, such as a tornado, hurricane, severe weather or earthquake.

### Why should we prepare for an earthquake?

Mississippi is one of eight states that would be significantly affected by an earthquake in the New Madrid Seismic Zone. The probability of a moderate earthquake occurring in the New Madrid Seismic Zone

*Continued on page 2*

## In this issue:

- **Warren County Hosts Reception for Elected Officials**
- **Region 3S Honorees and Holiday Greetings from Hinds County**
- **Job Fair Held at OYDC**
- **County Corner: Winston, Yalobusha and Yazoo counties**
- **And much more!**

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passes that Brady threw were to four different receivers. Could he have been this successful with only one or two guys running good routes? What about the defense? The special teams? Steven Gostkowski, another Mississippian, was successful on all of his kicks. All of the parts worked together to earn the victory.

My point of selecting this topic for this article is to stress that all organizations are teams. When the team members know their role, work toward a common goal and don't care who gets the individual credit, then great things are accomplished. Individual success is defined by team success. No feeling is greater than to be part of something bigger than oneself. This is especially true when a great goal is accomplished.

Here at MDHS we are one team. It is true that we are divided by divisions, bureaus, regions and counties but we all are working here each day for one common goal which is to serve our citizens and help them along the road to family stability and self-sufficiency. We share facilities, work with the same families, and are all committed to our task.

Whether our short term goal is COA accreditation, the TANF Work Participation Rate, keeping kids out of Oakley or the dozen other measures we have to embrace, our long term overall team goal is strengthening families and promoting self-sufficiency. The goal is not to throw four touchdown passes or make an interception. The goal is to win the Super Bowl! If specific individual efforts are needed to help your team reach the pinnacle then you have done your job.

Like the Patriots, by working together as one and keeping focus on the larger goal while achieving our smaller goals, there is no limit to what we can accomplish here at MDHS!

Richard Berry  
MDHS Executive Director

in the near future is high. Scientists estimate the probability of a magnitude 6.0 or larger earthquake occurring in this seismic zone within any 50 year period is 25 to 40 percent. The Mississippi Valley could be hit by such an earthquake at any time. Quite frankly, we are on borrowed time according to scientists.



Reelfoot Lake, located in northwestern Tennessee, was created during the 1811-12 New Madrid earthquakes which were reportedly felt as far north as Quebec.

Today, Reelfoot is a recreation destination known for its fishing, wildlife, natural beauty and bald eagles.

Our agency will participate in the Annual Great Central U.S. ShakeOut in October.

Take the following actions if you feel a quake:

**DROP** to the ground (before the earthquake drops you!).

Take **COVER** by getting under a sturdy desk or table.

**HOLD ON** to it until the shaking stops.

If there isn't a table or desk near you, cover your face and head with your arms and crouch in an inside corner of the building.

Earthquakes occur without any warning and may be so violent that you cannot run or crawl; you therefore will most likely be knocked to the ground where you happen to be. You will never know if the initial jolt will turn out to be start of the big one. You should Drop, Cover, and Hold On immediately!

For additional information on the Great Central U.S. Shakeout, go to: <http://www.shakeout.org/centralus/index.html>



# The Beacon



For information or to submit articles for the Beacon:

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## Warren County Hosts Reception for Elected Officials



County offices work closely with their local boards of supervisors, administrators and legislators. Recently the Warren County DHS hosted a reception to meet and greet our elected officials. From left: Rep. Chuck Middleton; Rep. Oscar Denton; County Director Terri Cosey; District 2 Supervisor William Banks; District 5 Supervisor Richard George; District 3 Supervisor Charles Selmon; and County Administrator John Smith.

## MDHS Mission Posters and Door Branding

At publication of this edition, 24 county offices have had a new logo installed on their front door and a poster of the mission statement installed in their front offices. Remaining counties will receive their installation soon. I hope that you'll take pride in the new logo and read the mission poster often. Thank you for serving the people of Mississippi. MDHS staff are the best.

## Region 3S Honorees and Holiday Greetings from Hinds County



At left, Region 3 South Director Linda Slaughter presenting Beverly Lawson with certificate for 10 years of service with pin. Photo on the right, Slaughter presenting Terri Cosey with a 30-year service certificate and pin. Bottom left is Hinds County Child Support in celebration of the holiday season. Right is Hinds County Economic Assistance.



## CSEO and EW Training at State Office



## Job Fair Held at OYDC



The Oakley Youth Development Center Office of Special Education hosted a career fair for students at the facility in December. Oakley students created project boards about careers of their choice. Several institutions of higher learning and agencies that aid students in finding employment were on campus to speak to the students about their career choices. The students' boards were displayed and judged with prizes awarded for winners.

The career fair was much needed because a number of the students are unsure about employment opportunities. The fair gave them a deeper insight into the job requirements, descriptions, salary range, working conditions and educational requirements necessary for the career paths that they aspire to follow.

The event was exciting for both students and staff!

### Attention: Regional and County Directors

Don't forget to send your news, photos, retirements and events to [mdhs.communications@mdhs.ms.gov](mailto:mdhs.communications@mdhs.ms.gov). Maybe next month, you'll see your county featured in The Beacon!

## Region 2W Mentoring/Shadowing Focus Group



"We are a team in Region 2-West. There is no big I or little you," said Region 2W Director Viedale Washington at the first Mentor/Shadowing Focus Group in Washington, Sunflower and Coahoma counties. The purpose of the focus groups are to provide needed peer-to-peer support for new resource parents or those who are considering becoming a resource family.

Interest in the focus groups is high in Region 2W with 21 resource parents making a commitment to participate and 11 parents attending the first session. The group participated in a Mentor Family Feud Icebreaker and other group discussions. Groups will meet monthly for the next three months and with expectations of increased participation. The Recruitment/Retention Unit thanks regional staff, supervisors and workers for being team players and providing this valuable training for area parents.



## SUPPORT PROTECTION OF MISSISSIPPI CHILDREN

The Children's Trust Fund (CTF) of Mississippi has developed a car tag to support efforts to prevent child abuse, neglect and exploitation in Mississippi.

For the state to go forward with plans for the car tags, 300 tags must be pre-sold at \$31 each prior to production. For every \$31 purchase, \$24 will go directly to the CTF to promote child abuse prevention efforts.

For more information on the car tag, call 601-359-4999 to speak with the DFCS Prevention Unit or go to: <http://www.mdhs.ms.gov/family-childrens-services/programs/child-abuse-preventionprotection/childrens-trust-fund/ctf-car-tag/>.



## Retirements

### Wendy Barnes



Marion County Director Wendy Barnes recently retired and was presented a placque by Region 6 Director Dennis Miller at her luncheon to commemorate her 25 years of dedicated service to the agency.

### Helen Barnes

Helen joined the Department of Public Welfare in November 1978 as an accounting clerk, in the Office of Accounting and Finance.

Her career at MDHS ends as director of the Office of Accounting, which includes the Office of General Accounting, Purchasing, Property, Employee Payroll/Travel and Accounts Payable.

Helen said, "My tenure has been challenging, satisfying and rewarding. It has been a tremendous honor and privilege being an employee of MDHS for 39 service years."

We appreciate your work and dedication to the agency.



## Service Award Fit for a Queen



Queen Little (left), CSEO Noxubee County was recently recognized for her 20 years of service. She is pictured with Noxubee County Supervisor Jolynn Cotton.

## MDHS Leaders



Ross Crawford, Lisa Johnson and David Love were recently recognized at the Regional Directors/Senior Attorney meeting for outstanding leadership. Congratulations!

## MDHS at the State Capitol



The 2015 Mississippi Legislature convened Jan. 6 and MDHS had a team of State Office personnel at the capitol to ensure law makers had access to information, brochures and annual reports. From left, MDHS staff Eric Burden, Paul Nelson, Sharon Womack and Aaron Rushing. Also on hand, was Elvis who is apparently alive and well at the State Capitol.

## County Corner - Winston, Yalobusha & Yazoo Counties

This month we wrap up the series on Mississippi counties with a look at Winston, Yalobusha and Yazoo counties.

### Winston County

- Population: 18,788 (2013 estimate)
- Persons under age 5: 6.2%
- Persons under 18 years: 23.8%
- Persons 65 years and over: 17.5%
- High school graduate or higher: 79.5%
- Homeownership rate: 71.3%
- Median household income: \$30,821
- Persons below poverty level: 29.8%

Winston County is in the east central portion of the state. Its county seat is Louisville.

An area inhabited since as early as 1 CE, Winston County includes the ancient burial mound of the [Choctaw tribe, Nahih Waiya](#), preserved today as a sacred area by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. The county was established in 1833, and was part of 16 county lands ceded to the U.S. in September 1830 in the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek by Chief Greenwood LeFleur, the chief of the Choctaws.

Louisville, the county seat, was chartered in 1836. Both the county and the county seat were named for Louis Winston, a Natchez lawyer then prominent in Mississippi politics. Col. Winston (1784-1824), a native of Virginia, was secretary of the [Constitutional Convention of 1817](#) and served as a judge of the Mississippi Supreme Court from 1821 until his death.

[Lake Tiak O'Khata](#), located just outside of Louisville, is a family owned resort since the mid-1830s. The home built by the [John Brown Smyth](#) family from South Carolina, sits on the north shore of the lake and was commandeered by the Union army during the Civil War. By the 1950s, the family constructed a levee of the now scenic lake. The name, Lake Tiak O'Khata comes from the Choctaw meaning "Lake of the Pines."

### Yalobusha County

- Population: 12,373 (2014 estimate)
- Persons under age 5: 6.2%
- Persons under 18 years: 23.2%
- Persons 65 years and over: 18%
- High school graduate or higher: 77.5%

- Homeownership rate: 74.6%
- Median household income: \$32,930
- Persons below poverty level: 22.2%

Yalobusha County was formed from lands ceded by the [Chickasaw Nation](#) through the [Treaty of Pontotoc in 1832](#). The name was derived from the Native American language meaning "tadpole place." The area was inhabited by both Chickasaw and Choctaw tribes with the treaty ceding more than 6 million acres of land. Both the Chickasaw and Choctaw tribes were promised land west of the Mississippi, in present day [Oklahoma](#).

[Coffeerville](#), the original county seat, was named for General John Coffee, who represented the U.S. in the treaties with the Native Americans.

Because of a dispute with the [Illinois Central Railroad](#), [Water Valley](#) was deemed an additional county seat in 1858. Most of Water Valley was burned to the ground by Union troops after retreat of Grant's army. After the war, people returned to rebuild, and by 1867 [Yacona Mills](#), a twine manufacturer was in business and deemed the largest manufacturer of twine in the world at that time.

Water Valley's famous railroad engineer, [J. L. "Casey" Jones](#) moved to the town in 1893. He was killed when his passenger train, the "Cannonball Express," collided with a stalled freight train at Vaughan on a foggy, rainy night. In his dramatic death and heroic attempt to stop the train and save the lives of passengers, he was immortalized in a [popular ballad](#) sung by his friend, Wallace Saunders, an African-American engine wiper.

Unfortunately the area was dealt a huge economic blow in the mid to late 1920s with the closure of the twine mill and relocation of the ICRR shops, which combined provided approximately 800 jobs for area residents. This, followed by Black Tuesday, the stock market crash Oct. 29, 1929, and [the Great Depression](#) threatened the livelihood of Mississippians and others across the U.S.

In an attempt to rebuild the morale and bring recognition to the county, the first Watermelon Carnival was held in 1931. Due to World Wars I and II, it wasn't held annually until 1980.

In the early 1950s, the county population dropped to just more than 15,000. The [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](#) began work on two flood control reservoirs in and around the county. Enid and Grenada lakes were formed and have become popular recreational and fishing sites for many.

Continued from page 6

## Yazoo County

- Population: 27,883 (2014 estimate)
- Persons under age 5: 6.8%
- Persons under 18 years: 24.3%
- Persons 65 years and over: 12.3%
- High school graduate or higher: 74.1%
- Homeownership rate: 60%
- Median household income: \$26,336
- Persons below poverty level: 35.5%

Yazoo County was part of the Choctaw Nation and was ceded by the [1820 Treaty of Doak's Stand](#). It is the largest county in the state by land area and third-largest by total area.

Yazoo County, whose name, legend has it, comes from an Indian word meaning "River of Death." One legend says that when DeSoto's men came through Mississippi, the diseases they left killed so many Indians that the bodies filled the river. Another legend asserts that the Indians believed the fog on the river was an evil spirit that brought death.

The county was established in 1823, the 19<sup>th</sup> county of the state. The first county seat was at the area known as Beatties Bluff, but in 1829

was moved to Benton. In 1849, the county seat was moved to Yazoo City where it remains. The town was scene to battles in both 1863 and 1864 during the American Civil War, and sits on the edge of the Mississippi Delta.

The town is home for the 62<sup>nd</sup> Governor of the state, [Haley Barbour](#), [Zig Ziglar](#), famous writer and motivational speaker (1926-2012), and [Willie Morris](#), writer and editor.

The [county courthouse](#) was designed by the same architect whose talents drew plans for the [Mississippi Governor's Mansion](#) and the [Lyceum on the University of Mississippi Campus](#).

We've enjoyed bringing these articles to readers and hope that you've not only enjoyed reading them but have learned a bit about Mississippi and its history. If you're a native Mississippian, most of us had a course on Mississippi history in school, but as we get older, some of the facts just get pushed aside.

As we wrap up the series, I hope you'll take some time to ride a country road, go to a local museum, check out your county courthouse, or visit your local chamber of commerce to learn more about scenic, beautiful and historic Mississippi. There's a lot to see in Mississippi.



# Choose a Healthy You for 2015

## News and Health Tips

### Did you know...

- There are [recent reports](#) that four major retailers have been accused of selling FAKE supplements. Many of us take supplements. And you can't go into the store without seeing a display for the newest weight loss pill, mood enhancement, memory help or sleep aid. Before you buy, you may want to do some research to see if the brand you're purchasing is really what it says it is.
- [Vaccinating kids: Should it be optional?](#) There's been a lot of talk about this since the Measles outbreak in California. If you have children, do your research and talk with your pediatrician. [In Mississippi](#), students are required to be vaccinated with few exemptions allowed and the state has one of the highest rates of kindergarten students who have been vaccinated in the country.
- Reports of school closures for flu outbreaks continue to climb. Even with the announcement that this year's flu vaccine effectiveness being somewhat limited against certain strains, it is recommended that people take the shot. The influenza vaccine is proven to be the best defense for flu prevention.



Monthly Wellness webinars are available to help you stay informed about health issues.

[Click here to access a webinar.](#)

Meeting Password: **wellness**

Call-in Information: **1-877-658-8148**

Access Code: **714 687 6907**

Webinar times: 9:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. CT

To speak with a health coach, call 1-866-939-4721, Monday-Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., CST, Saturday 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. or visit [MyActiveHealth.com/Mississippi](#).