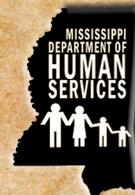


Mississippi Department of Human Services

Beacon



AUGUST

A Message from the Executive Director

I would like to thank everyone involved with Hurricane Isaac. From the Executive Staff, (I don't think that Mark Smith or John Davis slept for a week); to the folks assigned to the EOC at MEMA; to the hundreds of you that manned shelters; and to those of you that worked the Disaster SNAP project, both on site and through case assignment in your counties, your efforts are recognized and appreciated.

All foster children were accounted for and communication with both the Judges and resource families was the most well-coordinated that has ever been during such a widespread incident. The cooperation between the [Division of Aging and Adult Services](#) and the Area Agencies on Aging in the Southern and Southwest Districts is also appreciated. All of the clients were located prior to landfall and were visited after the storm to ensure that they were safe and accounted for. Once again, when the people are in need the "missionaries" at MDHS rise to the occasion.

The Mississippi County and Regional Directors Annual Conference (MACRD) was a huge success. Thanks to everyone that worked so hard in planning and coordinating the event. The speakers were outstanding, as well as, the facility and the camaraderie. The welcoming spirit extended to the Child Support

staff was overwhelming and is a vital first step as we go forward with our plan for these divisions to work more closely together.

The Olivia Y. Modified Settlement Agreement has been signed and the [Division of Family and Children's Services](#) is actively engaged in rolling out the requirements. The plan is ambitious but we will give it our best shot. We just don't know any other way to do things at MDHS other than to "give it our all."

We are now fully compliant in 72 of the 74 items in the Consent Decree with the Department of Justice at Oakley Youth Development Center. The tremendous progress there is a tribute to the hard work and caring of the management and staff of the [Division of Youth Services](#). Their accomplishments serve as an inspiration to us all knowing that the children housed there are safe and are learning both in the classroom and within social settings. The progress also underscores that obstacles we face in Olivia Y. are certainly not insurmountable

Until we visit again next month, thanks again for all that you do!

Executive Director
Rickey Berry

e.WIN Access Available at DHS Offices



Looking for a job is about to get a lot easier for people in Mississippi. With the signing of their names, agency directors from the [Mississippi Department of Employment Security](#) and the [Mississippi Department of Human Services](#) made it official.

"I hope that this will be an example to other state agencies to figure out ways that we can all provide services to the citizens of Mississippi in a cheaper, more efficient way," said Mark Henry, MDES executive director (seated at left, above).

With their agreement of understanding, electronic WIN job centers, known as e.WIN Access Points will be set up in every DHS office across the state.

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- **Protecting Yourself From The West Nile Virus**
- **MDHS Credit Union**

"We have a sign in our county offices saying that when you apply for assistance in Mississippi, you're asking for help in finding a job and now we really mean it," said Rickey Berry, MDHS executive director.

Berry says putting those job search portals in DHS offices gives folks applying for benefits the direct chance to also apply for a job or build a resume.

"It's ridiculous for the neediest people in our society to have to run all over the county to get services," Berry said.

e.WIN Access Points first started popping up in the state in the spring of 2008. Currently there are about 20 of them, mainly in libraries and community centers. This new effort will more than triple that amount.

Henry says that's increasingly important for areas and people under-served with job search services.

"I'm firmly convinced that most people who are there, trying to get benefits from DHS, would much rather have the dignity and responsibility of a job to provide for their families and we here at employment security will do everything we can to help them do that," Henry said.

The e.WIN Access Points will be up and running Oct. 1, 2012. The department of employment security hopes to link up with other statewide agencies as well to provide the same type of service.

MDHS has a footprint in every county in the state. For information on the location of your county office, go to: <http://www.mdhs.state.ms.us/eadirectory1.htm> and click on County & Regional Office Directory.



From Foster Care to Success



Denise Romano is a true success story. Taken into MDHS custody as a teenager, this beautiful young lady has finally reached her dream. Denise graduated from [Pearl River Community College](#) as a licensed practical nurse July 26. Denise passed her boards and is now actively seeking her first nursing position.

"It was a lot of hard work, but it finally paid off. When you set a goal, you have to go for it and never give in. Mr. Kenny, the Independent Living Program specialist, and Ms. Kris, my caseworker, encouraged me every step of the way. I couldn't have done it without them," said Denise.

Denise actively participated in the ILP and once she aged out of custody, she continued to receive Educational and Training vouchers to help with educational costs.

Congratulations, Denise and we know that you will be a blessing to many throughout your career.

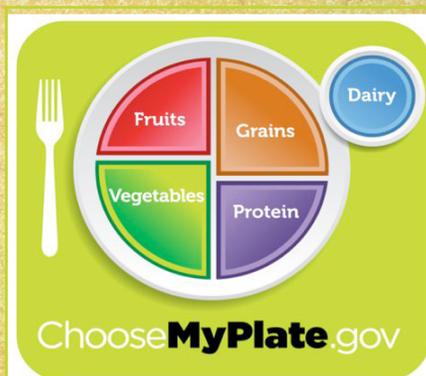
Above from left: Denise and MDHS Family Protection Worker Kris Schmitz, Pearl River County.

Dietary Guidelines For Healthy Americans

The MyPlate Food Guide identifies daily meal proportions for the fruit, vegetable, grains, protein, and dairy food groups; and is an easy-to-understand illustration designed to help Americans build a healthy plate at meal times.

More than one-third of children and two-thirds of adults in the United States are overweight or obese. In order to help stop this epidemic, USDA developed the MyPlate icon to simplify recommendations from the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and to help citizens adopt healthy eating habits.

The MyPlate logo divides a dinner plate into four sections for vegetables, fruits, grains, and proteins with a fifth smaller plate to one side for dairy. The fruit and vegetable portions make up half of the plate to emphasize the recommendation to include fruits and vegetables as half of every meal.



Here are a few more key suggestions that go along with the MyPlate guide:

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.
- Make at least half your grains whole grains.
- Go lean with protein.
- Compare sodium (salt) in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals and choose foods with lower numbers.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.
- Find a balance between food and physical activity.
- Enjoy your food, but eat less.
- Avoid oversized portions

Retirements: Moving On

Brenda Asken

After over 10 years with the Mississippi Department of Human Services, Brenda Asken retired on June 29, 2012.

Brenda started in the Division of Aging and Adult Services but transferred 5 years ago to the Office of Social Services Block Grant.

A Certificate of Appreciation was presented to Brenda from MDHS Executive Director Rickey Berry. She was also presented a Certificate of Appreciation from SSBG, Division Director Derra Dukes.

Brenda plans to stay busy spending time and traveling with her family and friends. Thank you Brenda for your years of service and dedication to the people of Mississippi.



Pamela Knight



Pamela Knight retired from DHS after 23 years of service.

Family, friends and coworkers celebrated with a luncheon held at the Forrest County DHS Office.

For the past five and a half years, Pamela has served as the Region 5-7 Area Social Work Supervisor with the Division of Aging and Adult Services, Adult Protective Services Program.

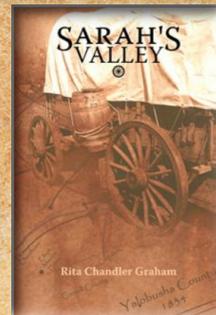
Congratulations Pam and know that your MDHS family will miss you.

Retirement? Just Another Chapter

Looking for an exciting Christian romance set in 1800's Mississippi? Look no further than Rita Chandler Graham's eBook Sarah's Valley on sale now at www.westbowpress.com or at Amazon.com.

For a preview of Sarah's Valley log on to Rita's blog at www.ritachandlergraham.com.

Rita Chandler Graham dedicated 29 years of her life to the MDHS, Division of Family and Children's Services. She first worked as a front line social worker, then as a foster care reviewer and later as a policy/procedure administrator. Rita retired in 2007 and lives in Pontotoc County with her husband, Michael.



Permanency for 19 Neshoba Kids

Neshoba County Division of Family Children Services achieved permanency for 19 children during the month of August. Reunification was achieved for five children, adoption was finalized for two, and Durable Legal Custody was awarded to relatives of twelve children. Join us in celebrating permanent placement for these children.



Pictured from left to right are: Front row: FPS Renee Edwards, FPS Jessica Denton, FPS Heather Palmer, and FPS L'Anntri Bell

Back row: FPS Angela Tatum, ASWS Amy Thomas, FPS Sr Derrick Pringle, FPS Jessica Townsend, CTS Sharon Dickerson, and ASWS Carla Mayberry

Do You Have a Facebook or Twitter Account?



Social networking is one of the many ways we stay connected with our friends and family. We also use it to find out what's going on in the world. "Like" the Mississippi Department of Human Services Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/msdhs> or follow us on Twitter at http://twitter.com/MS_DHS to stay up on the latest happenings at MDHS.

Mississippi Department of Human Services monthly newsletter, The BEACON.

For information or to submit articles, contact Julia Bryan, Beacon Editor and MDHS Public Information Officer at: julia.bryan@mdhs.ms.gov or phone 601-359-4517.

To mail photos or articles, send to: PO Box 352, Jackson, MS 39205-0352

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Montgomery County Trafficking Bust

July 29, 2012, investigators from the Mississippi Department of Human Services, Office of Special Investigations and the Montgomery County Sheriff's Department made an arrest in Kilmichael of a local store owner who was charged with trafficking Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. Amanda Paige Chastain was arrested at the Kilmichael One Stop located at 502 N. Rutherford Drive and charged with the fraudulent exchange of \$1,367.70 in SNAP benefits for cash or ineligible items.

SNAP trafficking investigations are aimed at preventing the illegal use, transfer or trafficking of SNAP benefits, with the focus of investigations on retailers who are authorized to accept benefits through EBT purchases but instead exchange benefits for cash and/or ineligible goods such as non-food items. Retailers arrested for trafficking are not only charged with the crime but lose eligibility to accept any future EBT benefits at that store location. Further, clients who participate in trafficking are charged and potentially lose their benefits. All can face fines and jail time.

Local residents can help spot possible fraud in their grocery stores. The small "mom and pop" grocers are usually the type of stores targeted by those trying to defraud a system in place to help those who are at risk of food insecurity, such as the elderly and children.

If you suspect a store or client is misusing benefits, call the Fraud Hotline at 1-800-299-6905. SNAP fraud is a crime.

National Night Out Against Crime

National Night Out Against Crime was observed August 7 in the coastal town of D'Iberville. Officer Shannon Nobles of the D'Iberville Police Department invited MDHS in an effort to strengthen the important relationship between DHS and the many areas of local law enforcement. The event included several community partners who shared information with the community while enjoying food and refreshments. Attendees were thrilled to win door prizes from many local businesses.

Labor Day

Labor Day has come to be celebrated by most Americans as the symbolic end of the summer. In high society, Labor Day is considered the last day of the year when it is fashionable to wear white. In U.S. sports, Labor Day marks the beginning of the NFL and college football seasons.

To take advantage of large numbers of potential customers free to shop, Labor Day has become an important sale weekend for many retailers in the United States. Some retailers claim it is one of the largest sale dates of the year, second only to the Christmas season's Black Friday.

The origin of Labor Day is debatable. First, in 1882, Matthew Maguire, a machinist, first proposed the holiday while serving as secretary of the Central Labor Union of New York. Others

Have You Joined the DHS Credit Union?

Welcome to the new MDHS Credit Union CEO, Jennifer Lovett, a Jackson native. She currently resides in Brandon with her husband Fred Lovett who is a Rankin County Deputy Sheriff, and her two children, Alyssa, 10 years old, and Quaid, 1 ½ years old.

Jennifer is a graduate of Wingfield High School in Jackson and is a Mississippi College alumni with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration.

She has previously worked for Gray-Daniels Auto Group, Digitec Inc., and JPFCE Federal Credit Union all of which helped shape her to successfully manage the MS DHS Federal Credit Union.

Jennifer follows in the footsteps of Lavina Robison, the previous CEO. Mrs. Lovett is also a Certified Credit Union Financial Counselor and hopes in the future she can help extend her knowledge to members who are interested in taking control of their finances and repairing their credit as well.

Jennifer is currently working with the staff and taking note of members expressed needs and desires for the future of the credit union. She sees a lot of great and wonderful things for the future of MS DHS CU and its members.

For more information, visit the new website at: www.msdfsfcu.com.



argue that it was first proposed by Peter J. McGuire of the American Federation of Labor in May 1882, after witnessing the annual labor festival held in Toronto, Canada. Following the deaths of a number of workers at the hands of the U.S. military and U.S. Marshals during the Pullman Strike, the United States Congress unanimously voted to approve rush legislation that made Labor Day a national holiday; President Grover Cleveland signed it into law a mere six days after the end of the strike. All U.S. states, the District of Columbia, and the territories have made it a statutory holiday.

Whether we celebrate with our families, take a shopping trip, or just spend the day relaxing, we need to take the time to reflect on those who have fought for fair labor laws and even gave their lives in protest to fight for the rights of the working class.

DAAS Annual Refresher Training

The Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) Adult Protective Services (APS) program staff held its annual refresher training. Training sessions included Character First and Habitudes, presented by MDHS Legislative Liaison Charlie Smith, and Division of Economic Assistance staff David Noble, Vera Butler, Barbara Hammer, and Paul Nelson. Melinda Bertucci, DAAS Director, presented each staff with a certification of appreciation for their hard work and dedication in protecting vulnerable adults in the State of Mississippi.

Jamie May, Family Protection Specialist, Region 4 was awarded a plaque for her determination and notable service that saved the life of a vulnerable adult.



Phishing Scam

Some emails, phone calls or text messages seek to scare folks into releasing personal information. Scammers may claim to be from a business or agency that you may already do business with and their warnings usually say that your bank account, credit or debit card has been locked or compromised. This practice is illegal and it's called phishing.

Clients who receive benefits through the Mississippi Department of Human Services have reported phishing calls regarding their EBT or EPPI cards. Phishers usually ask that you update or confirm your card or account information by "verifying" your identity. This is the hook where they elicit your secure, personal information.

Neither MDHS nor the card vendor will ever call, text or email you to request your card number, PIN, social security number or other personal information.

If you or someone you know has been the victim of a Phishing Scam, contact your local MDHS office or the Consumer Protection Division of the Office of the Attorney General at 601-359-4230 or 1-800-281-4418.

Don't get hooked. Protect your identity and your money from phishers!

RAMSAY Project

The Division of Youth Services, Mississippi Department of Human Services announced that the State of Mississippi was selected as one of two states to participate in the Risk and Mental Health Screening and Assessment of Youth (RAMSAY) Technical Demonstration Project, co-funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

The project is being facilitated by the National Youth Screening and Assessment Project (NYSAP) located at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

Participation in RAMSAY is projected to greatly enhance the effectiveness with which a juvenile justice jurisdiction makes case management decisions, optimally resulting in improved allocation of resources, reduced costs and reduced likelihood of further delinquency. Mississippi will receive technical assistance at no cost for up to 18 months to implement an empirically validated risk assessment tool and a well-researched mental health screening tool, the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument- Second Version (MAYSI-2), for use by youth court counselors and the youth courts.

The Demonstration project will operate in five jurisdictions: Clay, Hinds, Madison and Rankin Counties and the City of Pearl. DYS hopes that upon successful completion the assessment tool can be offered to all youth courts in the State.



West Nile Virus - Protect Yourself and Your Family

The [Mississippi State Department of Health](#) urges all Mississippians to avoid mosquito bites, whenever possible. The risk of a healthy person getting West Nile virus from a mosquito bite is "very low," however all people still should protect themselves. West Nile virus is transmitted primarily through the bite of an infected mosquito; although, there have been isolated cases occurring in blood transfusion and organ donation recipients, from mother to baby during pregnancy and through breast milk. People cannot become infected through ordinary contact with an infected bird, horse, or human.

Protect Yourself

- Avoid mosquitoes whenever possible. Stay indoors or take personal protective measures, especially between dusk and dawn, which are peak mosquito biting times.
- Use mosquito repellent with DEET. Products with up to 30 percent DEET will provide adequate protection under most conditions. Use DEET concentrations of 10 percent or less on children ages two years -12 years of age. For children less than two years of age, parents should consult their pediatrician. Always follow the manufacturer's directions for use, as printed on the product label.
- Wear long-sleeved, long-legged clothing with socks and shoes when practical.

Go Direct

This month, all federal benefit check recipients received an insert with their monthly check that emphasized the need to make the switch to electronic payments by March 1, 2013.

All Social Security check recipients received an insert featuring customer service representatives from Treasury's Electronic Payment Solution Center with a message about representatives being available to help.

Those who get Supplemental Security Income, Veterans Compensation and Pension or other federal benefit payments received a straightforward message about the law requiring them to make the switch to an electronic payment.

Step-by-step instructions on how to make the switch to direct deposit or the Direct Express® Debit MasterCard® card are included on the back of the insert. When you talk with the people you serve, ask them if they received one of these inserts and urge them to switch to electronic payments ahead of the deadline.

Protect Your Home

- Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots or similar water-holding containers.
- Remove all discarded tires on the property. Used tires have become the most common mosquito breeding site in the country.
- Remove all leaf debris.
- Close garbage can lids. Be sure water does not collect in the bottom of garbage cans.
- Make sure roof gutters drain properly, and clean clogged gutters in the spring and fall.
- Turn over plastic wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use.
- Change the water in bird baths frequently (every 2-3 days).
- Clean vegetation and debris from the edge of ponds.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, outdoor saunas and hot tubs.
- Drain water from pool covers.
- Use landscaping to eliminate standing water that collects on your property.
- Repair damaged or torn window and door screens.
- Remove outdoor pet food and water dishes that are not being used.
- Flush livestock water troughs twice a week.

If you know of specific mosquito control problems, call your local city or county public works director, the City Hall, or the Board of Supervisors. Learn what your local government is doing to control mosquitoes. Ask how you can help.



County Corner - Spotlight on Jackson and Jasper Counties

Jackson County is located at the southeastern tip of the state and its county seat is **Pascagoula**. As of 2010, the population was 139,668. Jackson County is named for U.S. President Andrew Jackson and was founded in 1812. Two consistent threads run through the history of this beautiful coastal county; progressive leadership and the ability to change with the times. Its greatest resources have been ,and continue to be, its people and its strategically located waterways.

The name Pascagoula, which means "bread eaters," is taken from a group of Native Americans found in villages along the Pascagoula River some distance above its mouth.

Pascagoula is a major industrial city along the Gulf Coast. Prior to World War II, the town was a sleepy fishing village of only about 5,000. The population exploded with the war-driven shipbuilding industry. Although the city's population seemed to peak in the late 1970s and early 1980s as the Cold War defense spending was at its height, Pascagoula experienced some new growth and development in the years before Hurricane Katrina.

Today, Pascagoula is home to the state's largest employer, **Ingalls Shipbuilding**, owned by Huntington Ingalls Industries.

It is the birthplace of well-known American singer and songwriter **Jimmy Buffett**, who also wrote a song about the city called Pascagoula Run.

The town has a reputation as an "arts community." Its historic and secluded downtown area, with streets lined by live oak trees, is home to several art galleries and shops. It is also home to a number of ethnic restaurants relatively uncommon in surrounding communities.

Ocean Springs lies at the heart of the beautiful Mississippi Gulf Coast on the eastern shore of Biloxi Bay.

It's known as the City of Discovery in recognition of the French establishment of a settlement here in 1699. Long before the French arrived, however, the area was appreciated for its beauty and natural resources by Native Americans.

The name Ocean Springs was coined by Dr. William Glover Austin in 1854. He believed the local springs had healing qualities. Ocean Springs was the hometown of the late Walter Inglis Anderson, a nationally renowned painter and

muralist who died in 1965. The town plays host to several festivals, including its Peter Anderson Festival and The Herb Festival.

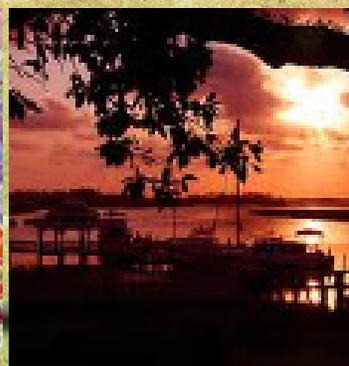
Jasper County was formed in 1833 from the middle section of Jones and Wayne Counties. It is the only county in the state that has two old highways crossing through the county. It was named for Sgt. William Jasper, who first distinguished himself in the defense of Fort Moultrie in 1776. When a shell from a British warship shot away the flagstaff, he recovered the flag, raised it on a temporary staff and held it under fire until a new staff was installed.

Of Mississippi's 82 counties, only ten have dual county seats due to the division of court districts. Jasper has a county seat in Bay Springs and in Paulding. In 1906 by an act of the Legislature, Jasper County was divided into two Judicial Districts, with Paulding as the seat of the Eastern District and Bay Springs the seat of the Western District.

According to the 2000 census, the county has a total area of 677.44 square miles and a population of 18,149 people.

Jasper County is the number one gas and oil producing county in Mississippi and also leads the state in timber, cattle and poultry production. Jasper County has four major industrial parks. The county also includes 17,156 acres of the Bienville National Forest which provides public land for hunting and camping.

The population of Bay Springs is 2,097. Located at the intersection of state highways 15 and 18, the area was settled in the 1880s by Joe Blankenship, who built the sawmill that became the town's industrial base. The city was incorporated about twenty years later after the arrival of railroads going through it. Bay Springs had a cotton industry in the nineteenth century; a cotton plant was disabled by Union troops in the summer of 1862. Throughout the twentieth century, Bay Springs has continued to be a beautiful, thriving city, expanding in territory and population.



BAY SPRINGS got its name from springs that still flow downtown. In earlier days, water was used