

OPINION

Our View

Clarksdale shining bright

The Delta’s new economic development star added yet more sparkle to our community and region this week.

Saf-T-Cart, the Clarksdale/Coahoma County Chamber of Commerce and the Mississippi Development Authority came together on the campus of Coahoma Community College Tuesday to announce an industrial expansion at Saf-T-cart.

The numbers are the simple part: a \$1.5 million corporate investment; the creation of 25 jobs; and an 18,000-square-foot addition.

The complex part is how a community, company and economic development entities came together to make it happen.

The phrases spoken over and over again Tuesday were teamwork, cooperation, vision and just plain hard work.

Yes, it’s time to be proud of what is happening in our town and county. It is not happening in any other community our size in this state and it is certainly not happening anywhere else in the Delta.

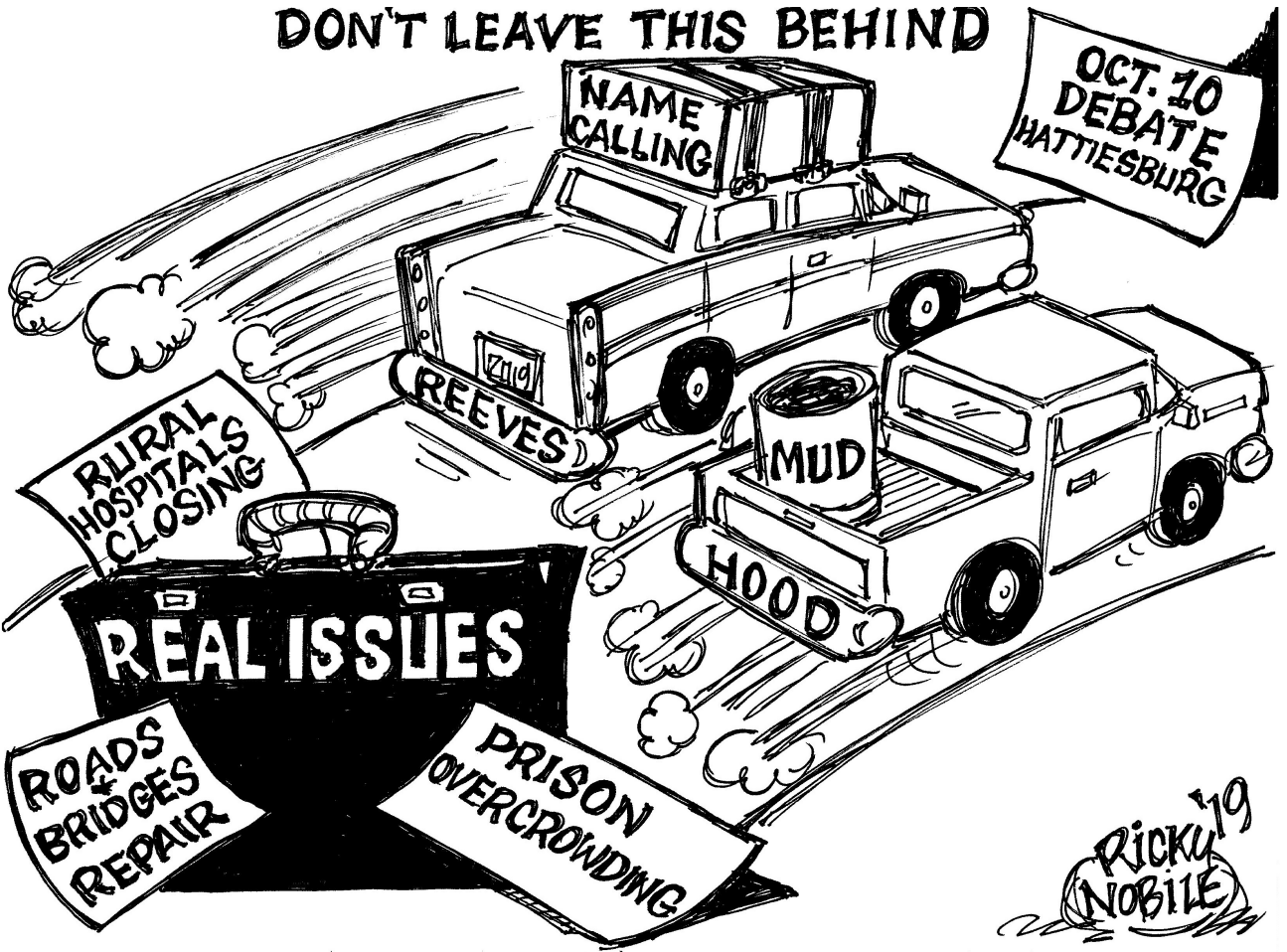
It’s time to realize our community is the Delta’s new shining star.

It’s time to realize we can show the rest of the region how we picked ourselves up, planned and moved forward.

Coahoma County and Clarksdale are fortunate to have welcomed two new companies -- People Shores and Image Industries -- to our community. We have also seen an expansion at MAP Easton and now Saf-T-cart. Combined, these projects bring 315 jobs to this county.

This newspaper is not naive enough to say things are booming, but they are looking up. We do have 315 new employees earning a paycheck and that is the grease in any economy anywhere in this country.

Sadly, the last people to realize what is happening are local residents. Let’s forget the past and look forward with pride at what is going on around here. Clarksdale and Coahoma County need to tell others about the Delta’s new shining star.



Taking pride in Clarksdale

It’s a very serious game, it’s played every single day by Clarksdale and Coahoma County and the rewards for victory are high and the price of failure is costly.

I have covered economic development since I reported on a new industrial park in Starkville more than 30 years ago. I’ve seen factories come to town ranging from Caterpillar and Tyson Foods, to mega-warehouses for Target that covered mega-acres.

But I have never lived in a community that had four industrial announcements in the space of 18 months. Clarksdale’s future looks bright.

Saf-T-cart

You know him better than I do. Jimmy Walker, Sr. strolled into the Pinnacle Tuesday morning and after shaking hands at the door, walked right over to where I was and extended his hand. It humbled me.

I’m in Rotary with Mr. Jimmy, we’ve talked highways and politics and problems far and wide. But I’ve only been here a couple of months.

Clarksdale is fortunate to still have men -- true Southern gentlemen -- who start with just an idea and build something their family and community can be very proud of.

241 plus you

There were 242 people at the Saf-T-cart announcement Tuesday. The Tyson Food ribbon cutting in Vicksburg years

ago did not see that kind of turnout.

Now, we pay Jon Levingston to worry over the details of industrial announcements, but with less than two-dozen people in the cavernous Pinnacle at 10:15 a.m., he was sweating bullets.

Thank you Clarksdale for this incredible show of support, but next time please come early.



Floyd Ingram
Clarksdale Press Register

Next time

I teased Levingston and pointed out he’s hosting a major economic development event about every two months.

That means he should have another one ready by the Holidays.

Look in your magazine

Mississippi Development Authority Executive Director Glenn McCullough held up a trade magazine Tuesday and proudly pointed to a story about Saf-T-Cart.

I didn’t have the heart to tell him we did a story on Saf-T-Cart just two weeks ago in *Coahoma Living Magazine*.

But Mr. McCullough was correct, the message about the things we are doing right in Clarksdale reaches far beyond the Delta and the borders of this state.

Serious stuff

Economic development is a tough business. Every community in this country is looking to land the next factory and the jobs it brings to town.

Every local speaker at Tuesday’s announcement talked about how this community pulls together to make these announcements happen.

The state and regional economic development guys talked about how Clarksdale is turning heads across this state as people look to see what we have going on.

I don’t claim to know a lot about the inner workings of economic development deals and the financing and legal lingo needed to turn an idea into reality.

I do know you can get a lot done when no one worries about who gets the credit.

I do know you can get a lot done when you first do your part and then ask for help.

I also know it takes people with a vision for a better future to bring industry, jobs and paychecks to town.

There is a sense of hope in Clarksdale. As with any community we have our problems, but I’m proud of Clarksdale and the direction we are headed. I’m proud of the the way we are working together to make good things happen.

Floyd Ingram is proud to be the Editor of your Clarksdale Press Register. He can be reached at 662-627-2201.

Public Safety Contacts

In an emergency call 911.

Clarksdale Police Dept.

Chief Sandra Williams: 621-8129
Asst. Chief Vince Ramirez: 621-8156
Asst. Chief Robbie Linley: 621-8156
Asst. Chief Fernando Harris: 621-8156

Clarksdale Fire Dept.

Chief Rocky Nabors: 627-8685
Asst. Chief Chris Chicorelli: 627-8685
Asst. Chief Jordan Sledge: 627-8685

Clarksdale Public Works

Director Todd Jones: 621-8142
Code Enforc. David Walker: 621-8142

Municipal Court

Judge Carlos Moore: 227-9940
Judge Derrick Hopkins: 621-8120

Coahoma Co. Sheriff Dept.

Sheriff Charles Jones: 624-3086
Chief Deputy Fernando Bee: 624-3081
Chief Deputy Leon Williams: 624-3081
Investigations: 624-2411
Domestic Violence: 902-4405

Emergency Management

Director Johnny Tarzi: 624-3041

District Attorney

Brenda Mitchell: 627-9877

County Court

Judge Kent Haney: 624-3036

Miss. Bureau of Narcotics

601-371-3600

Submission Policy

The views expressed on this page are those of the individual columnists and letter writers, or those of *The Clarksdale Press Register*.

Readers are encouraged to send their own viewpoints.

Send direct opinion articles and letters to the publisher, Floyd Ingram, at: *publisher@pressregister.com* or by FAX to 662-624-5125, or by U.S. mail to 128 E. Second St., Clarksdale, MS, 38614.

Letters should not exceed 500 words as a general rule.

We reserve the right to edit letters for content and length.

The Clarksdale Press Register

Clarksdale, Miss. (USPS 115-960)

• (USPS 115-960) • Founded 1865

Floyd Ingram, publisher/editor

floyd@pressregister.com

Josh Troy, managing editor

jtroy@pressregister.com

Brenda Keller, advertising manager

bkeller@pressregister.com

Sandy Hite, business manager

sandyhite@pressregister.com

Tracey Hankins Riley, graphic designer

thankins@pressregister.com

Published Wednesday by Delta Press Publishing Inc., 128 East 2nd Street, Clarksdale, MS 38614. Subscription rates: \$30 for one year.

To subscribe, call 662-627-2201, fax to 662-624-5125 or e-mail to *sandyhite@pressregister.com*. Entered as periodical postage paid at the post office in Clarksdale, Mississippi POSTMASTER: Send address changes to 128 E. Second St., Clarksdale, MS 38614.