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- Page 6.

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Stanley Boats lands in Coahoma County

Company to locate near The River

Floyd Ingram The Press Register

Connor Industries, a Canadian boat building company that manufactures welded aluminum fire, rescue and police boats under the Stanley brand, has announced plans to expand production and will build a new plant near the banks of the Mississippi River in Coahoma County.

The plant will employ a minimum of 56 people, creating new jobs for the northwest Mississippi Delta. Plant construction on 53-acre site in northern Coahoma County is expected to begin within the next several months.

While Connor Industries has purchased the land and will build the plant, Coahoma County plans to build a road from the plant over the levee to the river and a boat ramp from which Connor Industries will be able to launch and test their vessels.

A crowd of more than 250 people gathered at The Pinnacle on the campus of Coahoma Community College Friday to hear the announcement.

"Most of you know this announcement has been a long time coming," said



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Connor Industries, doing business as Stanley Boats, has announced it will bring 50-plus jobs to the banks of the Mississippi River in Coahoma County. Shown are, from left, Hartley Kittle, team leader for this project, Crossroads Economic Partnership Executive Director, Jon Levingston, Mississippi Development Authority Executive Director Bill Cork, Coahoma County Board of Supervisors President Pat Davis, Connor Industries, owner Bill Connor and Delta Regional Authority Special Assistant LaShasha Griffin.

Hartley Kittle, who headed up the Coahoma County Industrial Foundation team created by Crossroads Economic Partnership to bring this project to Coahoma County. "I first told people, 'the train is on the tracks.' Then I told people 'I can see the station.' Well, today I am glad to say, 'The train has arrived!'"

The project began more than three years ago. Funding was initially announced as part of several economic development projects across the state more than a year ago, and then it hit a snag. Crossroads Economic Partnership Executive Director Jon Levingston said, with the help of James Curcio, of North Delta Planning and Development, the project pivoted to a new funding source.

The county has received four grants totaling approximately \$4.7 million to fund the construction of the road as well as improvements to a nearby road adjacent to the plant property. Grants included approximately

\$2.2 million from the Delta Regional Authority, approximately \$2.1 million from the Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Commerce Department and \$400,000 from the State of Mississippi. The project will receive \$50,000 through Cooperative

SEE COAHOMA PAGE 5 SEE CONNOR PAGE 5

Bill Connor builds boats

Floyd Ingram The Press Register

Bill Connor has been building boats for 37-years and the company that is coming to Coahoma County has a product line that can build a boat to play in, work in and also travel the Mississippi River in safety and style.

Yes, their bread and butter is selling premier high-performance custom aluminum boats for government and commercial markets. But they also offer a full line of high quality recreational boats that can handle the frozen shores of Canada, the turbulent waters of the Mississippi River or the bigger salt-waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

Connor's company started by offering sturdy recreational run-abouts and now offers more than a half dozen utility boats that can carry vehicles, haul parts and mail to towboats, hop between islands in the Caribbean and as rescue boats on larger bodies of water.

"We build boats," said Conner. "You name it we build it, from 16-footers to 60-foot custom boats. We have customers on five continents and, while we customize every boat, we have



Clarksdale Remembers

American Legion Post 28, Clarksdale Boy Scout Troop 4004, Clarksdale Baptist Church Youth and Planters Bank employees put out 1,091 American Flags on the graves of Veterans at Oakhurst Cemetery and Beth Israel Cemetery on Wednesday in preparation for Memorial Day. Placing flags on the graves of those who have served is a 30-year tradition in Clarksdale. Family members are urged to pick up their Flag if they visit the graves of relatives this weekend.

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FIELD DAY: St. Elizabeth Catholic School winding up school year. PAGE 2.

MEAN STREETS: Aggravated assault leads to more shots fired into home. PAGE 3.



Dale Clark said: 'Pause for just a minute on Memorial Day'