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Moving Freight, IMPROVING LIVES

TIM CROSS CREATED EXPEDITED TRANSPORT
TO PROVIDE FIRST-CLASS SERVICE WITH
SECOND-CHANCE STAFF

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Houston and Henry Counties

by GAIL ALLYN SHORT

James Oates Turf Field.

Down in the Wiregrass Region of Alabama, **HOUSTON AND HENRY** counties sit as neighbors in the Southeast corner of the state, bordering Georgia and close to the Gulf Coast. And both counties' leaders are on a mission to bring new businesses and tourism to their respective cities and towns.

Colton Cureton, vice president of economic development for the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, says several factors help distinguish the region.

"We've got a great structure for leadership, and our elected officials in the community really understand the importance of working together and working across city and county lines and doing whatever it takes to better our local economy and the Wiregrass Region and helping one another," Cureton says.

In Henry County, the major industries include manufacturing, retail, agriculture, timber, construction, financial, entertainment and entrepreneurship.

The county is home to manufacturers like Great Southern Wood Preserving, which produces treated lumber, and industrial systems maker TriDelta Systems, two companies that are among the county's largest employers.

The key industries in Houston County include technology, health care, retail, construction, manufacturing, distribution and transportation, food processing, the college system and the Southern Nuclear Operations Co., to name a few. And through initiatives like Grow Dothan — a public-private partnership — the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce is working to secure incentives for companies wanting to expand or relocate to the area and assisting with workforce development planning.

"The population doubles during the day because people come here to work. People come here for health care and people come here for retail purposes. So, you've got a great community that really benefits from not only the people that are here, but also the people that are in the surrounding communities," Cureton says.

In Dothan, Gateway Tire Southeast announced plans recently to expand its 200,000-square-foot warehouse in the Westgate Industrial Park by 100,000 square feet. The expansion will cost \$9 million and bring 30 new jobs to the city.

Another company, SmartLam North America announced it would spend \$62 million in Dothan to build a new

140,000-square-foot glulam manufacturing plant.

Meanwhile, Peak Renewables, out of Canada, announced it intends to spend \$30 million to construct a new wood pellet production plant in Dothan.

To help train and prepare its workforce, the Wiregrass Region offers public and private educational institutions, like Wallace Community College, a two-year associate degree institution, and Troy University.

Dothan is also home to the Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine, an institution accredited through the American Osteopathic Association's Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA).

Houston and Henry counties also have economic and community development initiatives in the works.

One of the initiatives is in Dothan, which is revitalizing its city center. According to the chamber, the project will be paid for with public and private funds and include renovating the Dothan Opera House, constructing a new arena to seat approximately 6,000 people — double the seating capacity of the current civic center — and the new Wiregrass Arts and Innovation Center for cultural and arts events.

And through the initiative Visit Dothan, efforts are underway to update other recreational venues, says Matt Parker, president of the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce.

"The city and Visit Dothan have done a good job developing recreation infrastructure, the ball fields, soccer fields, tennis courts, clay court tennis courts, walking trails and everything. And we've hosted a lot of traveling sports activities," Parker says.

In Henry County, Abbeville Mayor Jimmy Money says his city is working toward extending a runway at its municipal airport. The city recently obtained \$236,700 in grant funding from the Federal Aviation Administration toward the project.

"We're extending our runway up to 5,000 feet. We're going to add 1,600 feet, which is going to make it convenient for larger planes to come in here," Money says.

"Companies that are coming in and looking at our city and county are wanting to land at our airport, and it just can't accommodate them on a 3,500-foot runway. So, we're extending up to 5,000 feet," he says.

"Time is money, and they want to fly in, look around and fly out. We've missed a lot of opportunities over the years not having a place for them to land and they are having to go to Headland. We've been fortunate to get some grants to help site that."

Additionally, he says the Abbeville City Council recently voted to update the city's rescue unit, which would bring the number of 24/7 rescue units to two and add more ambulances.

And Brandon Shoupe, chairman of the Houston County Commission, says his county is working to build up its quality-of-life bona fides.

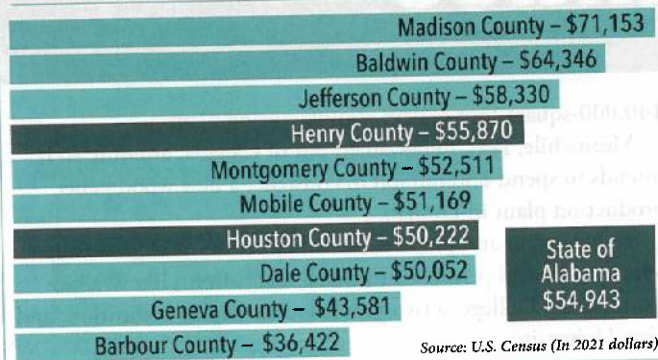
"We recognize that there's plenty of jobs out there, and people

are choosing where they want to live before they choose where or who they want to work for. Today you can live in Dothan, and work for a software development company out of Silicon Valley if you want to, because there's so much remote work," Shoupe says.

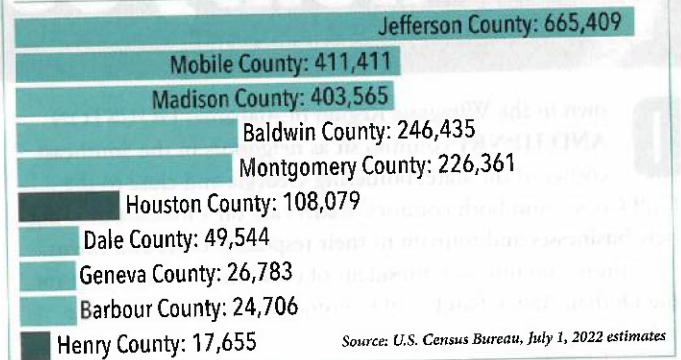
"We want Houston County to be a place where people want to live because we have cultural opportunities, recreational opportunities and other amenities that people desire. That makes a more balanced life and makes life worth living."

Gail Allyn Short is a Birmingham-based freelance contributor to Business Alabama.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



POPULATION Total Alabama Population: 5,074,296





AAA COOPER TRANSPORTATION

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Forbes 2023
AMERICA'S
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Forbes 2022
THE BEST
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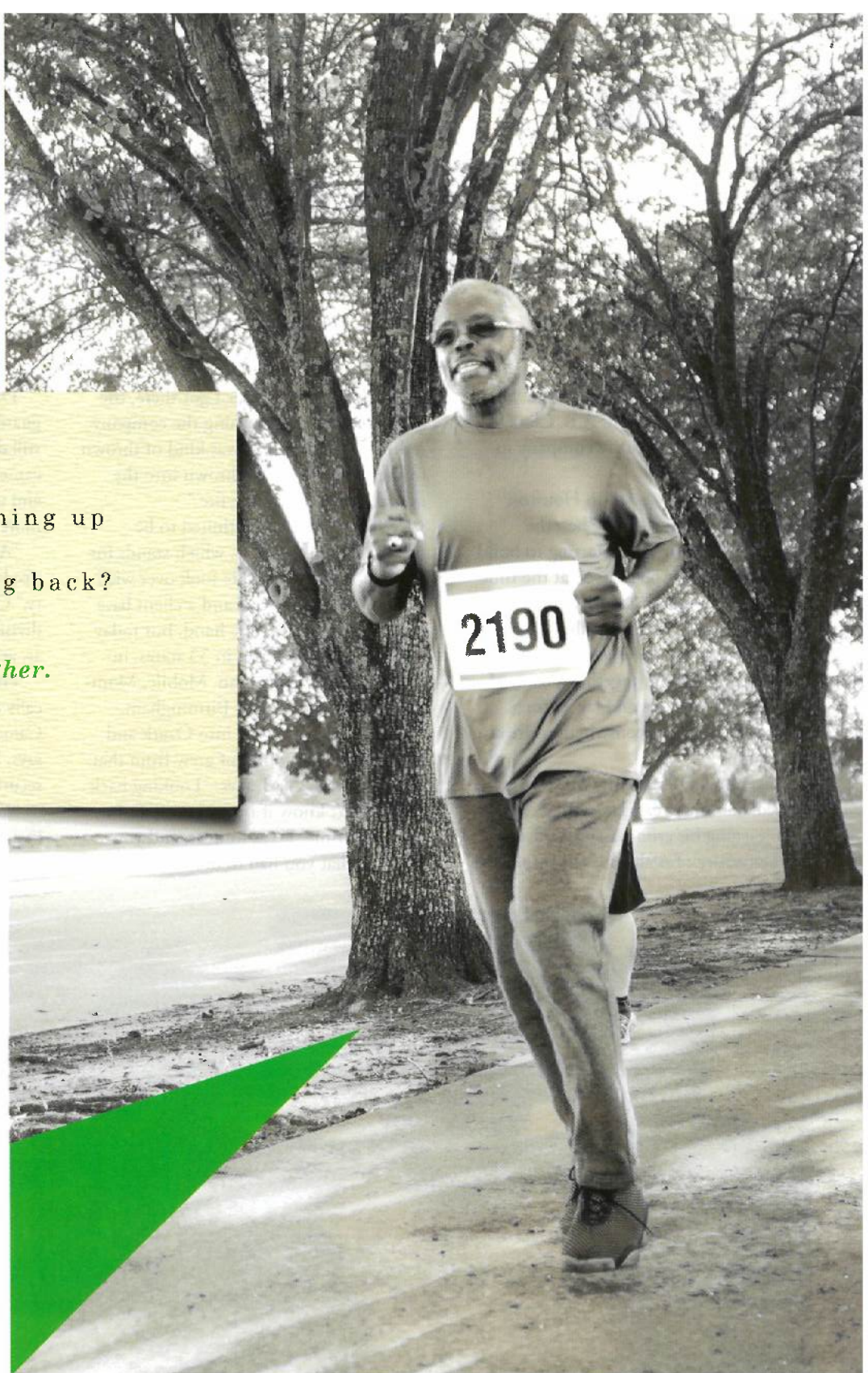
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Job security

Growing Dothan's DSI Security Services is a family affair

By ALEC HARVEY

Alan Clark was 14 years old when his father, Sheriff A.B. Clark, started a security company in Dothan.

"My father was sheriff in Houston County for 20 years, and when the Southern Company was starting to build the Farley nuclear plant here, at the time there were no private security companies in our area," Clark recalls. "Daniel Construction Co. came to my father and asked if he'd put together a team of retired police officers and law enforcement people for the construction site at the plant."

That's how DSI Security Services got started, and nine years later, Clark, fresh from earning his criminal justice degree at the University of Alabama, was running it.

"About a month after I got there, the guy who had been running the company retired," Clark says. "I was kind of thrown to the wolves, kind of thrown into the fire, all the way into the fire."

While his father continued to be sheriff, Clark grew DSI, which stands for Dothan Security Inc. He took over with a handful of employees and a client base you could count on one hand, but today DSI operates 28 offices in 33 states, including offices in Dothan, Mobile, Montgomery, Huntsville and Birmingham.

"I started expanding into Ozark and Enterprise, and it kind of grew from that, little by little," Clark says. "Looking back now, I don't know if I could do it again, but at the time, I was hungry, and you just did what you had to do."

DSI started by providing security guards for businesses. The company still does that, but it also offers security camera setup and monitoring, armed and unarmed guards, mobile patrols and more.

"About 25 years ago, we decided we needed to be a one-stop shop for security," Clark says. "We started an electronics division, including manpower and cameras, access-controlled gates, everything."

Over the years, technology has drastically changed the way DSI does business. Cameras are getting better and better, he says, but there will always be a need for security guards.

"You can't cover every nook and cranny in a large facility," Clark says. "Cameras are just an enhancement to what we do."



Alan and Marty Clark are pictured with Alan's parents, Sheriff A.B. and Runell Clark.
Photo from DSI Security Services.

Some of DSI's 600 clients include AAA Cooper Transportation, Community Health Systems, Wayne-Sanderson Farms and the Ryder Corp.

DSI also just renewed a national contract with BMW, providing security for the carmaker across the U.S.

When DSI takes over security operations for a company, "We're like a police department at that facility," Clark says. "We handle access control, we check cargo, we make sure the right truck is leaving a facility and, vice versa, make sure the right truck is coming back in."

The company also works with other law enforcement in the area.

"We try our best to be partners with law enforcement wherever we are," Clark says. "They need us, and we need them. Many times, they'll need our cameras that we have in certain areas."

DSI Security Services has remained a family-owned and family-run business. Clark, the company's board chairman, owns 49% of DSI. His wife, Marty, is president and owns 51%, making it the largest Women's Business Enterprise Council Certified employer in Alabama.

The Clarks' two sons are also part of the business. Boyd is DSI's sales and marketing director, and Deavours is a regional manager.

The company still works with the same philosophy A.B. Clark instilled in it 54 years ago. The DWYSYWD that's part of the DSI logo means "Do What You Say You Will Do."

Clark has seen the company grow from its humble beginnings, but he still says "the sky's the limit" when it comes to growth.

"There have been rumors for 30 years that personnel are going to go away, and that's not going to happen," he says. "Camera resolution is going to get better and better, but you still need people to monitor cameras and for access control. It can't all be done by robots."

And Clark thinks DSI Security Services will continue to be in the thick of it.

"We've got a lot of guys and girls who have been working here a long time, and that makes it easier," he says.

Alec Harvey is executive editor of Business Alabama. He is based in Birmingham.

Alan Clark and Marty Clark are married and co-owners of DSI Security Services. Photo from DSI Security Services.

An advertisement for Wallace Community College. On the left, a young woman with curly hair and glasses, wearing a yellow shirt, holds a red folder. To her right is a large maroon graphic with a white 'W' logo. The text "here it begins." is written in white script. Below this, in white capital letters, is "APPLY NOW AT WALLACE.EDU". At the bottom, in white capital letters, is "WALLACE COMMUNITY COLLEGE" followed by "DOTHAN • EUFAULA • 800.543.2426".

here it begins.

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AGRIBUSINESS

Peanuts are big business in Houston and Henry counties.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) estimates that in 2022 Houston County was the top peanut-producing county in Alabama with almost 107 million pounds of peanuts harvested.

Henry County harvested around 56.5 million pounds of peanuts.

The other top peanut producing counties are Geneva, Baldwin and Escambia.

Overall, the NASS estimates that Alabama produced 559 million pounds of peanuts in 2022, making Alabama second in the United States in peanut production behind Georgia.

Meanwhile, in Henry County, Golden Peanut & Tree Nut in Headland is one of the county's largest employers with 99 employees.

But the Wiregrass Region is also cotton country. In 2021, Houston

County was among the state's top two cotton producers at 43,300 bales, behind Madison County at 57,000 bales, according to the USDA.

On the other hand, Henry County's largest export is timber. It is home to Great Southern Wood Preserving. And Abbeville Fiber, which is owned by Great Southern Wood, produces 200,000 feet of finished wood a day and procures an estimated \$14 to \$15 million in yellow pine timber from local suppliers, according to the Henry County Economic Development Council.

The council also reports that Henry County has 240,000 acres of timberland, and the timber industry provides more than 270 jobs.

In Dothan, one of the area's largest employers is the chicken processing company Wayne Farms.

AVIATION

Dothan Regional Airport is one of six major airports in Alabama, with 428

employees and a payroll of nearly \$21 million. A study by the Aviation Council of Alabama, published in 2020, calculated the airport's economic impact at \$93.7 million with a payroll impact of more than \$50.7 million.

The Dothan Regional Airport is also home to the CAE Dothan Training Center. Open since 2017, the CAE Training Center is a high-tech, 79,000-square-foot facility that provides fixed-wing flight instruction and training to the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy, U.S. Army and others.

HEALTH CARE

Health care is a major driver of Houston County's economy. Southeast Health, a community-based academic health system, serves 460,000 residents. The health system includes the Medical Center, Medical Group, Foundation, Southeast Health Statera Network and the Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine.

The Southeast Health Medical Center is a 420-bed regional referral center and one of three certified comprehensive stroke centers in Alabama. It is also a Level II trauma center. In addition, Southeast Health has a chest pain center and the only NICU in its region with specialty trained neonatologists.

Southeast Health employs around 3,000 people and was named in Forbes

BUSINESS BRIEFS

MAY 2023: LBA Hospitality, a hotel management company based in Dothan, announces it will add a new brand to its portfolio, avid hotel by IHG in Ocala, Florida.

APRIL 2023: Construction Partners Inc. (CPI), a civil infrastructure company specializing in constructing and maintaining roadways, acquires Pickens Construction Inc. of Anderson, South Carolina. CPI will integrate approximately 20 employees who will

work at CPI's South Carolina platform company, King Asphalt Inc.

MARCH 2023: Global Resources International and its subsidiary, Advanced Product Solutions, announce plans for a \$1.6 million expansion in Houston County. GRI provides medical devices and industrial products and is headquartered in Flowery Branch, Georgia.

MARCH 2023: Flowers Insurance Agency in Dothan announces a

merger with Where Relationships Matter Group. The merger makes Flowers the third company to join WRM, an entity formed with the earlier merger between Pritchett-Moore Insurance and Byars|Wright Insurance.

JANUARY 2023: Wallace Community College in Dothan captures a \$300,796 Alabama Community College System grant for industrial diesel systems technology training. The training will help meet the need for trained

truck and bus mechanics, diesel engine specialists, and forklift and CDL class B drivers.

DECEMBER 2022: Circle City Brewing Co. opened in downtown Dothan, offering craft beers and live entertainment.

NOVEMBER 2022: Friend Bank, a Community Development Financial Institution in Dothan, is one of two Alabama banks and one of seven in the Southeast selected by Regions Bank for a program that lets customers access

Regions Bank ATMs without having to pay out-of-network fees.

OCTOBER 2022: Summerford Pallet Co. in Ashford announces the addition of robotics to its operation, automating processes like precision pallet and board sawing.

SEPTEMBER 2022: Gateway Tire, operated by the wholesale and retail tire dealer Dunlap & Kyle Inc., is investing \$9 million to expand its 200,000-square-foot warehouse in Dothan's Westgate Industrial

magazine's list of Best-in-State Employers for 2022. Forbes and Statista Inc., the statistics portal and industry ranking provider, sponsored the award.

Meanwhile Flowers Hospital's CEO Jeff Brannon reported in May 2023 that Flowers' overall total economic impact stood at more than \$263 million in 2022.

Flowers also provided care to more than 303,200 patients, including more than 40,700 who visited the emergency department and more than 12,100 inpatient admissions. The hospital has also performed more than 15,000 surgeries and delivered more than 1,400 babies.

In addition, Brannon reported 234,000 patient cases through Flowers' Medical Group physician clinics and outpatient sites, including the Breast Health Center, Cardiac Rehabilitation, the Sleep-Wake Disorders Center and outpatient speech therapy program.

Another health care entity, medical device and industrial products maker Global Resources International, and its subsidiary, Advanced Product Solutions, announced earlier this year a \$1.6 million expansion in Houston County to the old Russell Corp. building. The expansion will create 36 jobs.

MANUFACTURING/ LOGISTICS/DISTRIBUTION

The number of manufacturers, industrial

parks and distribution centers in Houston and Henry counties are many.

The various sectors range from distillers, food processing and logistics to tire manufacturing, wood manufacturing, industrial systems and medical devices.

RETAIL/TOURISM

Leaders in Houston and Henry counties are working to make the region a shopping and entertainment destination. The Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, as part of its Grow Dothan campaign, worked successfully to bring the women's clothing retailer Simply 10 to the city's southside.

The region also boasts several theme parks, museums and restaurants. Headland in Henry County has a robust agri-tourism sector with destinations like Corndodgers Farm and the Todd Syrup Farm.

Dothan maintains public parks with amenities like the Rip Hewes Athletic Complex for athletic events.

"We've made significant investments in our sports tourism. So, we have a lot of new fields, baseball fields and softball fields," says Brandon Shoupe, chairman of the Houston County Commission.

"The great thing about sports tourism, especially with it as it relates to youth sports, is that parents come. Grandparents come. Sometimes aunts and uncles come. A lot of times they'll stay in a hotel for

TAXES	
PROPERTY TAX	
HENRY COUNTY:	18.5 mills
HOUSTON COUNTY:	13.0 mills
STATE OF ALABAMA:	6.5 mills
SALES TAX	
HENRY COUNTY:	2%
Cities within the county	
Abbeville:	4%
Headland:	3%
HOUSTON COUNTY:	1%
Cities within the county	
Dothan:	4%
Kinsey:	4%
Rehobeth:	3%
Webb:	3%
Cottonwood:	3%
Cowarts:	2%
STATE OF ALABAMA:	4%
Source: Alabama Department of Revenue	

a night or two, go out to restaurants and shop and so it's a good return on investment."

Park by 100,000 square feet. The expansion is estimated to bring 30 new jobs.

SEPTEMBER 2022: SmartLam North America in Dothan announces plans to invest \$62 million to build a new high-tech, 140,000-square-foot plant to produce glulam beams and columns.

SEPTEMBER 2022: Peak Renewables plans to invest \$30 million to build a new wood pellet production plant. The plant, which turns mill

residuals into fuel, will run 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

AUGUST 2022: SmartBank, headquartered in Tennessee, announces its acquisition of the historic Ellison Building in downtown Dothan, with plans to relocate its Dothan branch there.

AUGUST 2022: The city of Dothan and the HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology team to develop the new HudsonAlpha Wiregrass. The facility

will promote genomics education, provide genomics research on Alabama peanuts, recruit agriculture tech startups and support small businesses and entrepreneurs.

JUNE 2022: Dothan and Houston County officials, members of the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce and others break ground on a new 100,000-square-foot speculative building in the Sam Houston Industrial Park in hopes of attracting new industry.

APRIL 2022: Third-party logistics warehouse operator Dothan Warehouse announces an \$8 million, 30,000-square-foot expansion, adding 25 new jobs.

NOVEMBER 2021: FedEx Ground announces plans to open a \$57 million logistics facility in Houston County – a 317,000-square-foot facility in the Sam Houston Industrial Park. The move is expected to create more than 200 jobs.

NOVEMBER 2021: Great Southern Wood Preserving in Abbeville announces its acquisition of Kentucky-based Escue Wood Preserving for an undisclosed amount. Great Southern produces YellaWood brand of pressure-treated pine.

OCTOBER 2021: The Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce announces plans to bring the women's clothing retailer Simply 10 to the city.

Movers & Shapers

LINDSAY RANE CARTER is the director of external affairs for Great Southern Wood Preserving Inc. She is a graduate of Auburn University and the Jones School of Law. She has served on the Business Council of Alabama's directors and has been active with Innovate Alabama.



DENNIS COE is superintendent of Dothan City Schools. He is a graduate of Wallace Community College, Troy State University and holds a doctorate from Alabama State University. His 35 years in education include teaching, coaching and administration at several Wiregrass school districts, and he worked as director of the Office of Supporting Programs for the Alabama State Department of Education.



MACKROYCE CORBITT JR. is the owner of Computer Printing Etc. in Dothan. He is a graduate of Talladega College. He also is president and chairman of the Entrepreneurship Council in Dothan, which fosters startups throughout the Wiregrass region.



KEVIN COWPER is city manager for the city of Dothan. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of South Alabama and a master's from the University of Memphis. He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners. He is also a graduate of the International City/County Management Association, its Emerging Leaders Development Program and an ICMA credentialed manager.



COLTON CURETON is vice president of economic development for the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce. He is a graduate of Troy University and holds a doctorate from Liberty University. He joined the Chamber as director of retail and redevelopment in 2021 before his promotion to vice president in 2022. Cureton is a member of the Economic Development Association of Alabama and the Dothan Rotary Club.



WALT ELLIS is city president at Troy Bank & Trust in Dothan. He is a graduate of Auburn University. He also is a board member for the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, Southeast Health Foundation and the Wiregrass United Way.



MARK FELLOWS is vice president of Eastern Technologies Inc. in Ashford. He also is one of ETI's founding partners, its radiation safety officer, and sits on the board of Global Resources International (GRI), the company ETI merged with in 2013. He holds a bachelor's degree from Auburn University.



ALLISON HALL is director of leisure services for the city of Dothan. She has a bachelor's degree from Sweet Briar College and a master's from Auburn University. She is past president of United Way of Lee County and is active with the Public Relations Council of Alabama-East Alabama.

MARNIX HEERSINK M.D. is an eye surgeon and founder of Eye Center South in Dothan. His support for philanthropic, educational and charitable causes includes

the University of Alabama at Birmingham Heersink School of Medicine, Wills Eye Hospital in Philadelphia, Troy University, Wallace Community College, Wiregrass Museum of Art, Dothan Boys and Girls Club and the Wiregrass Humane Society.



ROBERT HAYNE HOLLIS III is chairman of the board of Hollis & Spann Inc., a general contractor in Dothan. He holds a bachelor's degree in building science from Auburn University. He is chairman of the city of Dothan's Industrial Development Board, a member of the Dothan/Houston County Airport Authority and the Flowers Hospital board of directors.



MICHAEL JACKSON is co-founder and executive director of the DuBois Institute, a social enterprise operating a community garden called Katie's Garden, which promotes wellness and teaches underserved residents how to grow healthy produce. Jackson is a Morehouse College graduate and serves on the Dothan Housing Authority, the Dothan Historic Preservation Commission and the Dothan Alumni of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity Board of Directors.



RAY MARLER is serving his fourth term as mayor of Headland. He is a graduate of Troy State University and is employed with the Alabama Department of Agriculture. He serves on the boards of



the Henry County United Way, Southeast Gas and the Southeast Alabama Rural Health Association.

DEAN MITCHELL is director of HudsonAlpha Wiregrass, a public-private partnership between the city of Dothan and HudsonAlpha Institute for



Biotechnology in Huntsville. Mitchell is a University of Georgia alumnus and a graduate of the Institute of Organizational Management, Dothan 101, Leadership Dothan and Leadership Alabama. He is past executive director of the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce and was Alabama's 2022 Chamber Professional of the Year.

JIMMY MONEY is the mayor of Abbeville. In addition, he serves on the Southeast Gas board and the Henry County Economic Development Authority board.



DAVID PARSONS CPA is the managing partner of ParsonsGroup LLC, an accounting firm based in Dothan. Parsons holds an accounting degree from the University of Alabama. He is past chairman and current board member of the Wiregrass Foundation; chairman of the Houston, Henry, Geneva and Dale Counties Industrial Development Authority; past chairman of the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce and a board member of Flowers Hospital and the Wiregrass Pet Rescue and Adoption Center.

DEREK RATCHFORD is CEO of SmartLam North America, headquartered in Dothan. He holds degrees from Clemson University and the University of Idaho.

IZELL REESE is CEO of RCX Sports.



The Dothan native attended the University of Alabama at Birmingham before playing in the NFL for the Dallas Cowboys, the Denver Broncos and the Buffalo Bills.

BRANDON SHOUPÉ is chairman of the Houston County Commission and an executive committee member of the Alabama School of Cybertechnology and Engineering



in Huntsville. Shoupe, who earned a bachelor's degree from Auburn University, owns Kaiser Capital Investments LLC, investing in ecommerce companies.

BRANDY WHITE is superintendent of Houston County Schools. White earned his AA and master's degrees from Troy University's Dothan campus. He is a former teacher



and coach, and worked as assistant principal at Webb Elementary School in Houston County for nine years. He is also a former co-owner of Southern Home Builders.

JEFF WILLIAMS is SmartBank's regional president for South Alabama. A graduate of the University of Alabama, he also holds credentials from the Executive



Education Program at the University of Texas and Samford University's Community Banking School. He is vice chairman of the Dothan Housing Authority, executive board member of the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce and a 2012 graduate of Leadership Dothan.

Largest Industrial Employers

HENRY COUNTY

GREAT SOUTHERN WOOD PRESERVING | ABBEVILLE

Treated lumber, YellaWood
175 employees

TRIDELTA SYSTEMS | ABBEVILLE

Industrial Systems • 115 employees

ABBEVILLE FIBER | ABBEVILLE

Sawmill • 102 employees

GOLDEN PEANUT & TREE NUT

HEADLAND

Shelled peanuts and seed peanuts
99 employees

RED STAR YEAST | HEADLAND

Baker's yeast • 47 employees

HOUSTON COUNTY

WAYNE FARMS LLC | DOTHAN

Chicken processing • 1,000 employees

SOUTHERN NUCLEAR OPERATIONS CO. | DOTHAN

Electricity generation • 950 employees

MICHELIN NORTH AMERICA INC.

Dothan

Tire production • 550 employees

MCLANE CO. INC. | DOTHAN

Distribution/Logistics/Transportation
500 employees

AAA COOPER TRANSPORTATION

Dothan

Distribution/Logistics/Transportation
375 employees

TWITCHELL CORP. | DOTHAN

Manufacturing/Production/Wholesale
350 employees

COMFORT SYSTEMS USA SOUTHEAST | DOTHAN

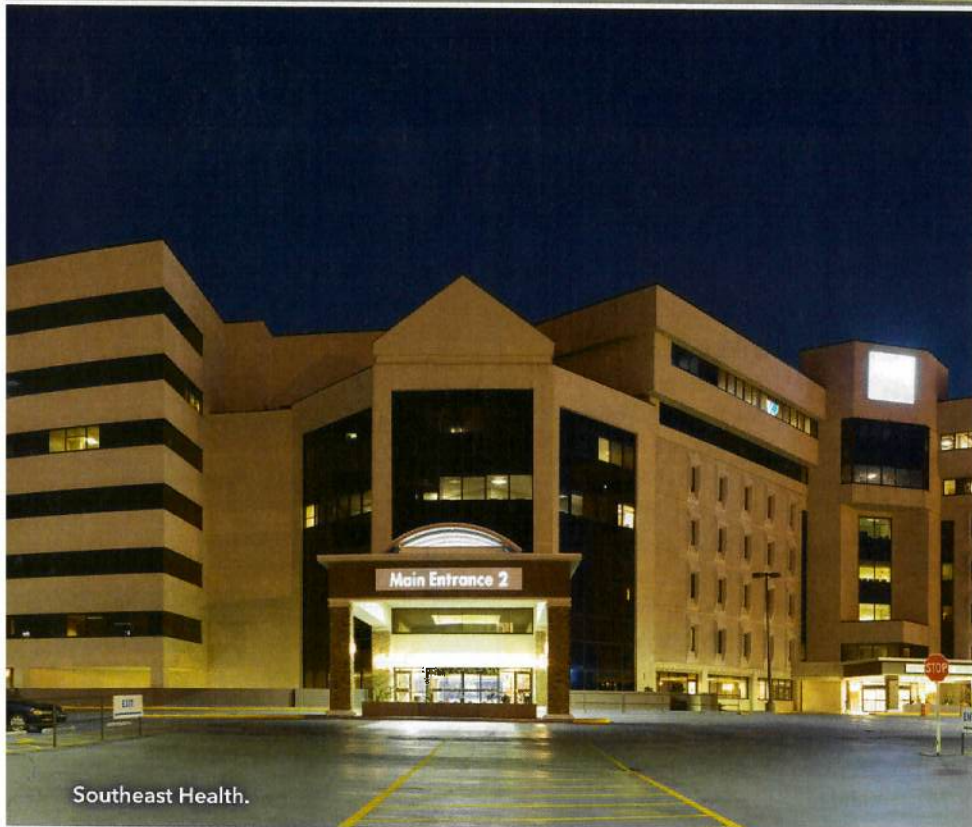
Heating and cooling • 260 employees

Sources: Local economic development officials

Health Care



Flowers Hospital.



Southeast Health.

SOUTHEAST HEALTH

Southeast Health is a nonprofit community health system in Dothan. The hospital maintains 425 beds and has 3,000 employees. Southeast Health offers clinical, surgical and diagnostic care for patients across the region.

Physicians at Southeast Health recently performed the hospital's 250th successful Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement procedure.

In addition, Forbes magazine added Southeast Health to its list of Best-in-State Employers for 2022, an award presented by Forbes and Statista Inc., a statistics portal and industry ranking provider. The award was based on reviews by employees.

FLOWERS HOSPITAL

Flowers Hospital in Dothan is a regional medical referral center. With 235 beds, the hospital offers a range of medical services, including in- and out-patient care, emergency care and diagnostic and

surgical care.

The hospital in 2022 introduced PeriWatch Vigilance, an AI-based maternal-fetal early warning system, to improve health outcomes for mothers during labor and delivery. PeriWatch monitors fetal heart rate, contractions, labor and mothers' vital signs to identify potential crises.

The hospital delivers more than 1,400 infants annually.

ENCOMPASS HEALTH REHABILITATION HOSPITAL OF DOTHAN

Encompass Health offers inpatient rehabilitation care for patients in Dothan and the surrounding Wiregrass Region. Medical services provided in the 56-room facility include amputee and stroke rehabilitation, joint replacement and cardiac care, as well as care for patients suffering from a variety of conditions, from diabetes, cancer and arthritis to burns, neurological disorders, trauma and hip fractures. The facility employs 200 people.

NOLAND HOSPITAL DOTHAN

Noland Hospital in Dothan, housed inside Southeast Health Medical Center, offers pulmonary care, infectious disease management, wound care and treatment for patients with complex conditions such as head and spinal injuries, multi-system organ failure and renal failure.

LAUREL OAKS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CENTER

Laurel Oaks offers acute psychiatric hospitalization and intensive, longer-term residential treatment for youngsters ages 4 to 18. The center treats patients suffering from severe psychiatric disorders, mild or moderate intellectual disabilities and cognitive delays, high-risk behaviors, as well as abuse and neglect.

SPECTRACARE HEALTH SYSTEMS

SpectraCare Health Systems, based in Dothan, is a public non-profit corporation that provides mental health, intellectual disability and substance abuse services. SpectraCare recently announced its plans to open a mental health crisis center this year in Dothan.



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Higher Education



ALABAMA COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

The Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine in Dothan is a four-year, private institution licensed by the Alabama Department of Public Education and accredited through the American Osteopathic Association Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation. Open since 2013, the college's first graduating class marched in 2017. Graduates receive a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree.

WALLACE COMMUNITY COLLEGE-DOTHAN

Wallace Community College is a public institution offering academic, health and career technical programs, as well as fast-track and workforce development. The college provides instruction at its Wallace Campus in Dothan, as well as its Sparks Campus in Eufaula.

WCCD's career technical programs include air conditioning and refrigeration, basic Mig and industrial welding, automotive technology, masonry technology, cosmetology, basic maintenance technician training

and computer information sciences.

The college's health-related programs include associate degree nursing, practical nursing, RN to BSN mobility, emergency medical services, phlebotomy, radiologic technologist, respiratory therapist and dental assistant, to name a few.

The 152 graduates of the WCCD Associate Degree Nursing program achieved an outstanding pass rate of 95.39% on the NCLEX exam for 2022, the second-highest pass rate for 2022 in the Alabama Community College System.

An independent study on the Alabama Community College System conducted by Lightcast estimates that WCCD alone has a total economic impact of nearly



\$164 million annually on the Wiregrass service area and adds nearly 3,000 jobs.

Moreover, the study finds that WCCD's activities and its students support one in every 49 jobs in the WCCD service area, and WCCD's operation spending has an annual impact of \$32.6 million. The study was based on FY 2021 data from ACCS colleges, the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Census.

WCCD recently entered into an agreement with the City of Dothan to provide its Skills for Success Commercial Driver's License training course to 15 current city employees. The training will give the city employees the skills needed to pass the federal Class A CDL test.

The Lumina Foundation awarded WCCD a \$75,000 grant to increase adult student enrollment in credit and non-credit programs. Lumina is an independent, private foundation based in Indianapolis that is working to provide more after-high-school educational opportunities for adult learners. WCCD was one of 20 community colleges nationwide and one of two community colleges in Alabama tapped for a Lumina Foundation grant funding.

WCCD announced plans recently to offer a free Food and Beverage Services training course. The two-day course would be offered as a pilot program with the aim of helping to fill shortages of workers in the local hospitality industry.

Students will learn best practices for customer service, food and kitchen safety, beverage service, cooking techniques and management principles in the hospitality industry. The program will also teach current laws and regulations that impact the food and beverage business, labor and restaurant management, purchasing procedures inventory and food costs.

WCCD is offering the course for the Alabama Community College System Innovation Center and in collaboration with the Visit Dothan and the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, along with the Wiregrass Rehabilitation Center, Southeast AlabamaWorks and former NFL player Izell Reese.

WCCD's Adult Education Program offers basic literacy instruction, GED preparation classes, college and career preparation, English as a Second Language and academic support.

Additionally, WCCD's Fast Track and Workforce Development Training programs prepare students for in-demand jobs like industrial welding, medical coding, heavy equipment operator, pre-apprentice electrical line worker, food and beverage services, certified nursing assistant, and many others.

TROY UNIVERSITY

Troy University is a public institution with campuses in Troy, Montgomery, Phenix City and Dothan. The Dothan campus is a nontraditional campus that offers more than 60 degree programs for adult learners.

KINGDOM COLLEGE

Kingdom College in Headland is a Christian college that prepares students for service and ministry with degree programs that include Biblical studies, master of divinity, clinical mental health counseling, psychology and a certificate program in lay counseling.

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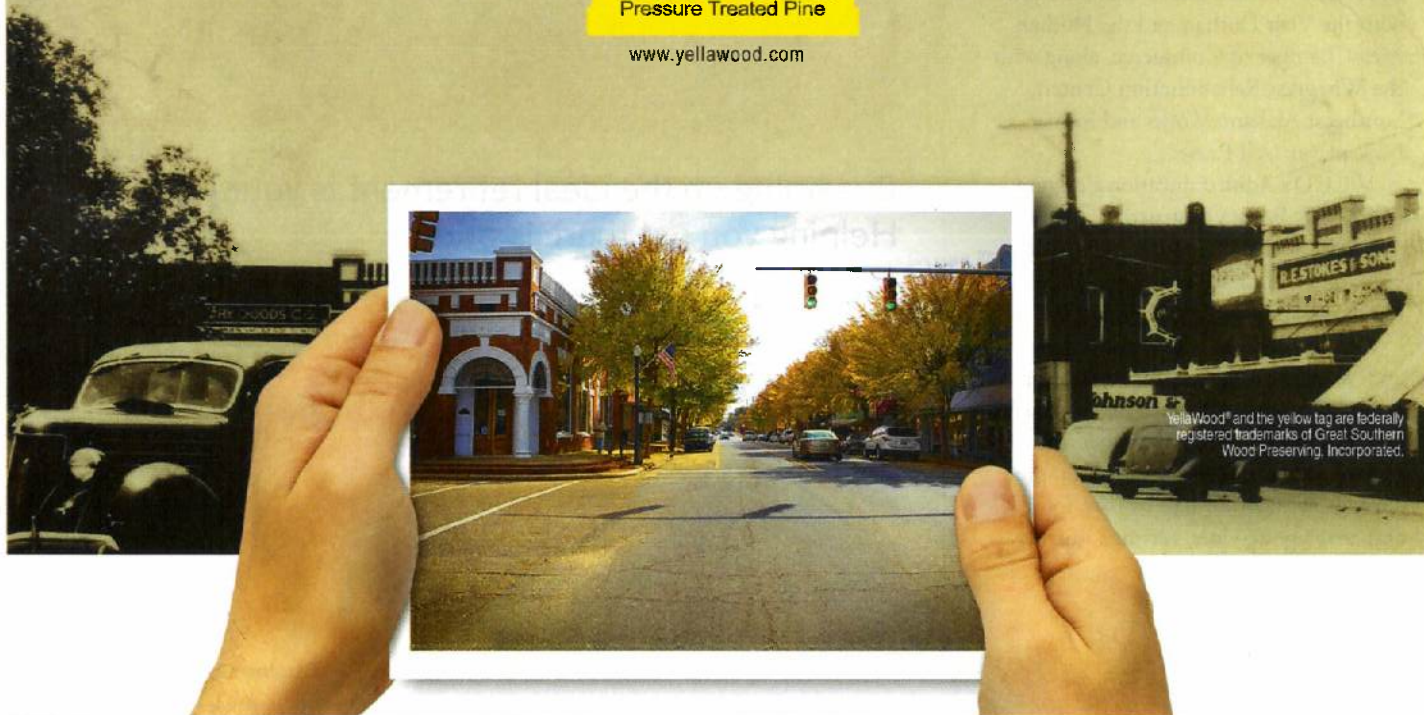
Prosperity and Longevity Were All Part of the Original Picture.

When you look at Abbeville, Alabama, today, it's easy to forget that it's over 200 years old. Incorporated in 1822, the town's streetscape once featured such local icons as the Bank of Henry, Stokes Brothers Dry Goods and a host of small town merchants. Today that same street is a thoroughfare for the largest lumber treater in the nation. In the last 53 years, Great Southern Wood has grown to employ more than 1800 people with 15 locations in 11 states. Our products are now distributed in 28 states, the District of Columbia, much of the Caribbean and Latin America, part of the European Union, as well as the Mediterranean region and China. Yet we've never lost sight of those who came before us, and we're proud to preserve their vision for generations to come.



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Community Development

HOUSTON COUNTY

Plans are in the works to revitalize Dothan's city center. The project will include a new 6,000-seat arena to replace the current civic center and a new culture and arts center for art exhibitions and theatre productions, an outdoor amphitheater and a new "Events Street" between St. Andrews Street and Museum Avenue that could be closed off for outdoor events.

The first phase of the project began recently with the demolition of the old Dothan Utilities building that is next door to the historic Dothan Opera House. The Opera House, under the plan, will eventually get an upgrade that will include a new lobby and south wing.

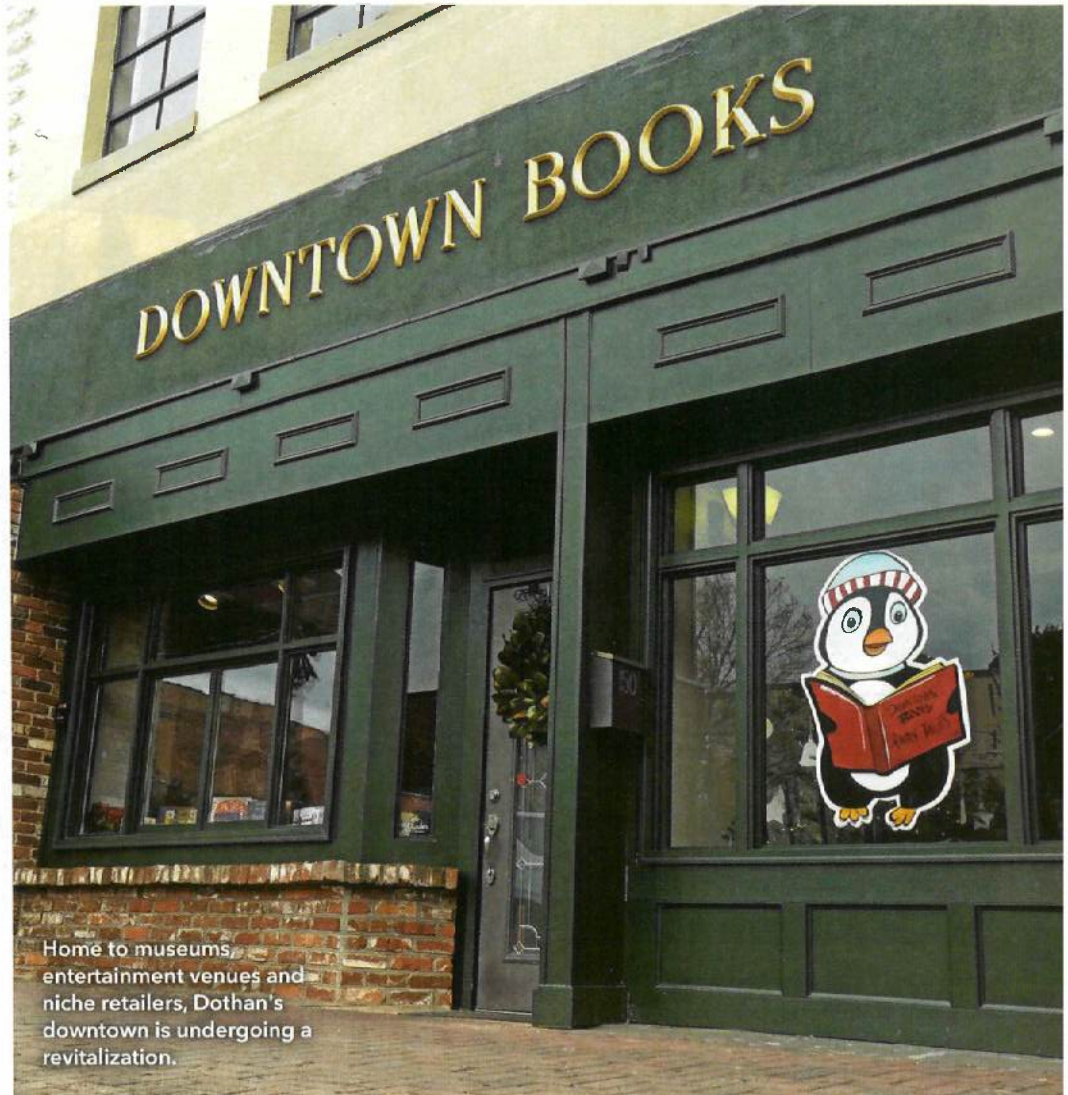
Colton Cureton, vice president of economic development for the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, says the revitalization of the city center will help attract young people, like him, and families to live and work in Dothan.

"The work that the city leaders are doing to revitalize downtown is going to be super important as we continue to recruit individuals to come to Dothan to live here and continue to increase our workforce base," the 28-year-old Cureton says.

Besides revitalizing its downtown, the city of Dothan is also working to boost research and economic development.

The city partnered last year with the HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology to establish a public-private partnership for the creation of HudsonAlpha Wiregrass. This new institute will foster agricultural research and economic development, as well as educational opportunities.

"The thing that we've always wanted to do is to have an opportunity to do more research and development," says Matt Parker, the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce president. "And obviously we've got a strong agriculture backyard here that creates a lot of opportunities to enhance economics and plant life. So that unique partnership is already in motion, and it's already impacting our classrooms."



Parker says HudsonAlpha is already instructing some local school children in Dothan on several science projects.

"It's opening up a whole new door to science, technology and research and creating new opportunities that these kids probably wouldn't have if we didn't have this partnership," Parker says.

In Taylor, the city council broke ground for a new wastewater treatment plant. The project will be paid for through a bond issue and grant monies from the Houston County Commission and the Alabama Department of Environmental Management. The plant is estimated to cost \$6.2 million.

Also in Houston County, in the town of Cottonwood, a new clinic called Modern Health Family Care Practice opened its doors in February. Jessica Jones is CEO of Modern Health Family Care,

which provides both in-person primary and urgent care, as well as televisits. She earned her bachelor's degree in nursing from Troy University, a master's nursing degree from South University and her Doctor of Nursing Practice from the University of Alabama.

Meanwhile, last year the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Dentistry announced its plans to open a dental clinic in Dothan to address the state's shortage of dentists. UAB faculty and staff members will operate the clinic. And in a plan to provide more mental health services to the region, SpectraCare Health Systems Inc. has received \$7 million from the state government to open a behavioral health crisis center in Dothan. The SpectraCare Diversion Center will provide mental health and substance use care and will be a place



The annual Abbeville Christmas Parade attracts residents and visitors to the area.

where police and emergency medical personnel could bring patients suffering from a mental health crisis.

Efforts also are underway to provide more housing options in downtown Dothan. The Town Terrace Inn on North Oates Street is being renovated into a gated apartment community with upscale, one- and two-bedroom units.

In addition, developers have been refurbishing the historic Malone Motor Co. building on South St. Andrews Street to turn it into upscale apartments in downtown Dothan.

Also, the Dothan City Commission this year approved a contract with Lewis Construction Inc. for close to \$11.7 million to construct two new fire stations. Construction of both building projects will take place on Main Street and Wheatley Drive and are expected to be complete by next summer.

Starting this school year, Dothan City Schools students will have equal access to school meals through a federal Community Eligibility Provision for free

breakfast and lunch meals. Dothan City Board of Education recently approved the move that will provide free breakfast and lunch to students in the school system for four years, starting in 2023-2024. CEP is a free meal service option for schools and school districts with many low-income students.

Also, this year, Dothan Tech held an open house to showcase recent renovations to the school. The upgrades cost \$7.5 million. Dothan Tech, which is part of the Dothan City Schools district, specializes in workforce development with a host of career technical courses ranging from welding, automotive technology and building instruction to biomedical science and pre-engineering. The total upgrade at Dothan Tech included new equipment such as a new kitchen layout for the culinary arts program and supplies for the health science program.

HENRY COUNTY

In neighboring Henry County, the County Commission approved a 20-year

tax abatement for a solar project owned by Hecate Energy. The renewable energy company, headquartered in Chicago, will construct a ground-mounted, 80-megawatt solar facility on property located northwest of the city of Headland near County Roads 12 and 45.

Also, a federal FY23 omnibus package is providing \$13 million to the Abbeville Municipal Airport to lengthen a runway by 1,600 feet to become a 5,000-foot runway.

The city of Abbeville's Mayor Jimmy Money says the municipality is also looking at revitalizing its downtown.

"We're in the process of looking at doing some things that have been badly needed downtown in the recreation end of it," Money says. "The state was kind enough to give us the old National Guard Armory, which we are turning into a recreation center and gym complex and for all kinds of activities like dancing and basketball. We have martial arts classes and dance classes that have already started there."

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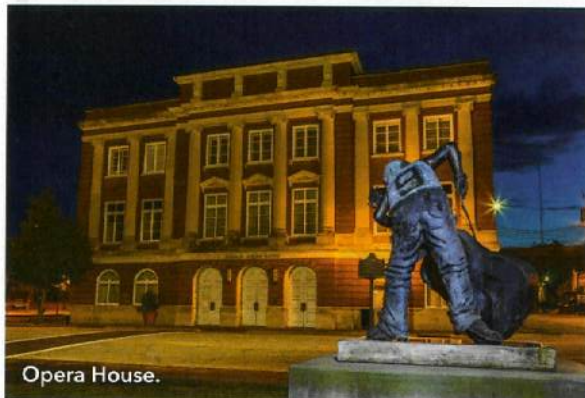
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FUN IS THE THEME

Family fun is in the plans with visits to any of several Wiregrass destinations, like **Adventureland Theme Park** with its arcade, go-karts, bumper boats, batting cages and mini golf. **Corndodgers Farm** in Headland offers pony and wagon rides, a corn maze and other old-fashioned fun. **Water World** in Dothan features a water slide, 450,000-gallon Rip Tide Wave Pool, Twister Slides and Kids Cove.

ARMY AWE

At the **Army Aviation Museum at Fort Rucker**, visitors can learn about the history of Army aviation. The museum exhibits include 160 military aircraft and the world's largest collection of military helicopters.

HISTORIC HIGHLIGHTS

Civil rights icon Rosa Parks grew up on a 260-acre farm in Abbeville. The **Rosa Parks Childhood Home** still stands but is not open for tours. **Cherry Street AME Church**, organized in 1877, is known as the "Mother Church" of the AME denomination in Alabama. **Bethune/Kennedy House** in Henry County was

built by local physician William Calvin Bethune around 1870 and sold to the Kennedy family in 1885. It's listed on the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage and the National Register of Historic Places. "**Soldier In the Window**" **Stained Glass Memorial**, at the Methodist church in Abbeville, is a favorite of visitors. It depicts a soldier in his World War I uniform, a Doughboy, holding a rifle with an angel behind him.

MUSE ON

E.R. Porter Hardware Museum, long the oldest continually operating hardware store in Alabama, opened in 1889 and is preserved as it was the day it closed in 2014. The **George Washington Carver Interpretive Museum** showcases the contributions to arts and sciences made by African Americans, including its namesake, the scientist George Washington Carver. **Wiregrass Museum of Art**, housed inside what was once the city of Dothan's electric and water plant, displays works by contemporary artists from around the state and the Southeast.

GARDEN PATHS

Dothan Area Botanical Gardens feature 50 acres of nature trails, cultivated gardens and undeveloped wooded landscape.

NUTS TO YOU

Known as the "Peanut Capital of the World," Dothan celebrates its fame with **Peanuts Around Town**, whimsically

decorated peanut statues all around the town. Also in Dothan, **Shute Pecan Co.**, open since 1929, buys and sells pecans and peanuts.

CATCH A SHOW

The **Dothan Civic Center & Opera House** hosts everything from concerts, recitals and plays to meetings and sporting events. **Southeast Alabama Community Theater**, established in 1974, showcases local talent. **The Uptown**, open Friday and Saturday nights in Dothan, features live jazz, open mic nights and "Drip 'N' Sip" events where patrons can paint while enjoying fine wines.

MONUMENTAL OPTIONS

Joseph Monument and Memorial Park near the Wiregrass Museum of Art honors the biblical origin of the city name: Genesis 37:17, "For I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan,'" that inspired city founders in 1885 to name the city. A replica of the **Statue of Liberty** stands along Alabama 10 in Abbeville to honor Giuseppe Reina, grandfather of Jimmy Rane, the founder and CEO of Abbeville's Great Southern Wood Preserving. Reina immigrated from Sicily in 1907 at the age of 29.

RELAX AND LEARN

Landmark Park in Dothan focuses on the Wiregrass Region's historic past, with an 1890s farmstead with farm animals, smokehouse, cane mill, general store and one-room schoolhouse. **Todd Syrup Farm** in Headland is a seventh-generation family farm with a museum teaching the history of syrup making. The farm also has a general store and café. **The ATTA** in downtown Abbeville is a new library of

STEM and history offering visitors of all ages a chance to learn history and scientific concepts through the interactive displays.

MURALS TO VIEW

Dothan celebrates its local history and hometown heroes in **Murals of the Wiregrass** throughout downtown. Film star Johnny Mack Brown and Tuskegee Airman Sherman Rose are among those featured.

THINK SMALL

"Ripley's Believe It or Not" called this triangle patch of land in Dothan "**The World's Smallest City Block**," followed by recognition in 1964 by the Camellia Garden Club of Dothan.

OH, SHOOT!

Ravenwood Sporting Clays is designed for skeet shooting enthusiasts. The facility includes a club house and pavilion.

FORE!

Golf options abound in the Wiregrass. **Highland Oaks** is part of the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail and features 36 holes, a pro shop, dining and a lounge. **Roundabout Plantation Golf** offers a driving range and lessons from experts. Celebrated architect Robert Simmons designed the 18-hole course at **Dothan National Hotel and Golf Club**. **Dothan Driving Range and Golf Shop** offers club repair, lessons and practice sessions. **Silver Wings Golf Club** at Fort Rucker offers a 27-hole course that's available to military and civilian players. The semi-private **Headland Country Club** has golf, a pool and club house.

PARKS ABOUND

Doug Tew Community Center offers a recreation center, five ball fields, swimming pool, playground and picnic area. **Eastgate Park** amenities include a two-mile walking trail, boardwalk, catch-and-release fish ponds, disc golf course, archery range, dog park and greenspace for picnics. **James Oates Park**, Dothan's newest, features AstroTurf fields for baseball and softball. **Rip Hewes Athletic Complex** includes a 10,000-seat football stadium, six tennis courts, two softball fields and a baseball field. **Westgate**

Park, Dothan's largest, offers a nature trail, recreation center, the Water World water park and Miracle Field for Miracle League baseball.

HEAD OUTDOORS

Lake Eufaula on the Chattrahoochee River offers fishing and boating, plus lakeside parks, eateries and festivities. **Southern Cross Ranch** is a horse ranch

with lessons, training and boarding. Its banquet room is available for weddings and other events.

TAKE A SIP

Keel and Co. Distilling in Headland makes bourbon whiskey, rums, vodka and gin, and visitors can taste before they buy. Friday and Saturday nights feature live entertainment.



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