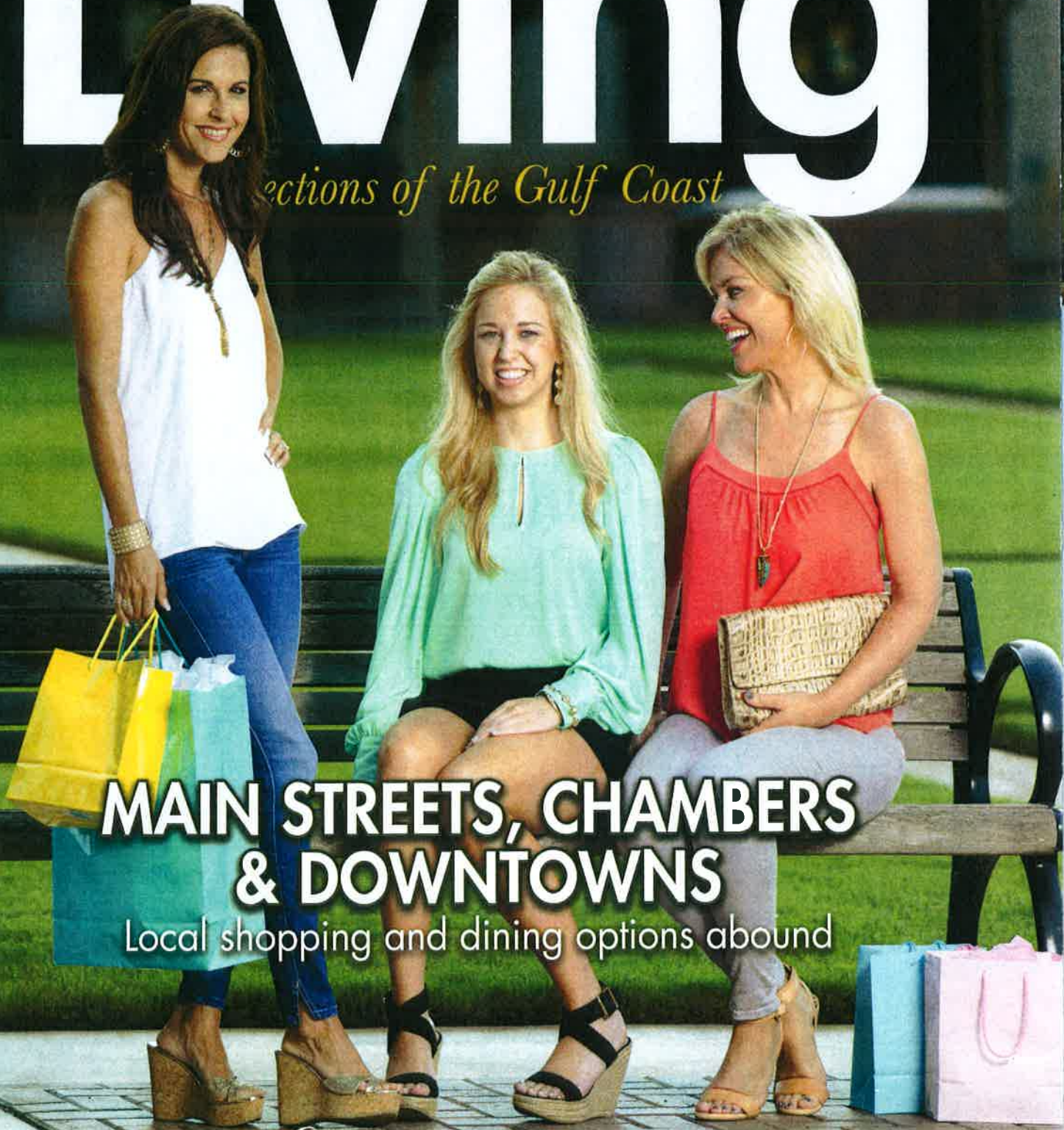


JULY 2014 • FREE

SOUTH MISSISSIPPI

Living

Connections of the Gulf Coast



MAIN STREETS, CHAMBERS & DOWNTOWNS

Local shopping and dining options abound

BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

What makes the Coast economy thrive

SMLIVING.NET

PEOPLE DINING SPORTS & OUTDOORS SHOPPING HOMES HEALTHY LIVING CLICK!

DOWNTOWNS a colorful community



OCEAN SPRINGS



CONTINUES TO ATTRACT AND ENCHANT

story by **Lynn Lofton** photos by **James Edward Bates** and courtesy of **Ocean Springs Chamber** and **Ben Muldrow**


Local residents and visitors are invited to discover Ocean Springs, the City of Discovery. Established by French explorers in 1699, this charming city continues to attract and enchant.

With a focus on downtown, uptown and all around town, the city features locally-owned businesses offering unusual shopping, dining, lodging, attractions, entertainment and artistic options — truly something for everyone.

Mississippi's Year of the Creative Economy is enthusiastically embraced in this Jackson County city. The city's recognition and

numerous awards attest to its success with festivals and other special events along with the variety of business and recreational opportunities.

"Each Main Street carves out a distinct reputation for itself. Ocean Springs leads its revitalization with strong events, the arts, and an amazing resilience to overcome not one but two major disasters," says Margaret Miller, executive director of the Ocean Springs Chamber-Main Street-Tourism Bureau.

"The true catalyst for reversing the cycle of disinvestment is to make local one-of-a-kind businesses our highest priority." 

DOWNTOWNS a colorful community



OCEAN SPRINGS won the Great American Main Street Award for 2013.



Ocean Springs received the prestigious Great American Main Street Award in 2013 from the National Trust for Historic Preservation for its exceptional accomplishments in revitalizing the nation's historic Main Street commercial district.

Mission: To promote tourism, provide progressive leadership for economic and community vitality for the greater Ocean Springs, Jackson County area and gulf coast and to enhance local culture and preserve quality of life through planned growth, diversification and beautification.

FESTIVALS/EVENTS

Peter Anderson Arts & Crafts Festival
– largest fine arts festival in state

Annual Herb, Garden & Art Festival

Taste of Ocean Springs
Food & Wine Festival

Red, White & Blueberry Festival

Mayfest

Art Walk

Cruisin the Coast

Mardi Gras



TASTE OF OCEAN SPRINGS Food & Wine Festival.

AWARDS 2012-2013

Great American Main Street Award

Mississippi Main Street Association's Award for Excellence
– Best Special Event, Peter Anderson Arts & Crafts Festival

Margaret Miller, Mississippi Tourism Hall of Fame

Mississippi Main Street Association's Award for Excellence – Charles O. Beasley Award

Mississippi's Research in Action Award – Peter Anderson Arts & Crafts Festival

AAA Southern Traveler's Travel Treasure – Peter Anderson Arts & Crafts Festival

ABA's Top 100 Events 2014 – Peter Anderson Arts & Crafts Festival

Life on the Water Magazine's Best on the Water Top 10 Small Towns

Southeast Tourism Society's Shining Example Award for Festival of the Year attendance over 100,000
– Peter Anderson Arts & Crafts Festival

Coastal Living's "Dream Town" 2014



DOWNTOWN Ocean Springs is home to many Coastal icons including the Peter Anderson Festival in the Fall.

Ocean Springs has become a tourist destination and **arts mecca** statewide, as well as an on regional and national levels. The economic impact of this is evident by the non-existent vacancy rate in the downtown district, which has spurred infill development to meet the demand. The events in the downtown district, led by the nationally acclaimed **Peter Anderson Festival**, generate more than \$30 million in revenue for the City of Ocean Springs annually. And the public/private investment of \$523,490,471, over the past 22 years speaks to the dedication of the **people of Ocean Springs** and the importance they have placed on preservation.

Phil Bryant, Governor ●

DOWNTOWNS a colorful community



LIVING IN OCEAN SPRINGS has many perks, including a beautiful beachfront.

STATISTICS FOR OCEAN SPRINGS MAIN STREET

Community: Rural downtown

Nearest Major Cities: New Orleans, LA and Mobile, AL

Population: 17,800

Size: 100 blocks

Tax Status: 501(C) 6

BUSINESS MIX

New Business Net: 335

Public Reinvestment: 411,000,000

Private Reinvestment: \$116,000,000

New jobs: 1365

Building Rehabs: 196

Housing Units: 320

Vacancy rate when Main Street Program began in 1990: 80%

Current vacancy rate: 3%

MAJOR EMPLOYERS NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

Singing River Health System	3,000
Walmart	500
City of Ocean Springs	250
Ocean Springs Public School District	600
AT&T Call Center	725

Blossman Gas Headquarters 200

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Ocean Springs \$61,469

Mississippi \$37,095

United States \$51,404

OCEAN SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT

Ocean Springs High School, Ocean Springs Middle School, Ocean Springs Upper Elementary School, Magnolia Park Elementary, Oak Park Elementary, Pecan Park Elementary, Elizabeth H. Key Alternative Education Center

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY

University of Southern Mississippi - Gulf Coast, William Carey University - Gulf Coast, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College - Jackson County

PRIVATE EDUCATION

St. Alphonsus Elementary School, Children House Montessori School

MEDICAL FACILITIES

Singing River Health System

*Ocean Springs Chamber of Commerce
Main Street - Tourism Bureau
1000 Washington Avenue Ocean Springs, MS
228.875.4424 • www.oceanspringschamber.com*