

# NEWSLINE GREENVILLE

## > Willis Meadows Joins GADC Board

Greenville County Councilman Willis Meadows has been named to serve a three-year term on the GADC Board of Directors, bringing his leadership and perspective as a member of the County's Finance and Public Safety committees to the economic development organization.



A longtime resident of Greenville County and the owner of Willis Meadows Insurance, Mr. Meadows served as administrator and principal at two Greenville County public high schools and as headmaster at Shannon Forest Christian School prior to entering the insurance business. He has served as chairman of the Greenville Legislative Delegation's Transportation Committee, as a director of Miracle Hill Ministries, and as an elder at Mitchell Road Presbyterian Church.

## > CDS Launches in Greenville

Container Design & Solutions, LLC (CDS) has announced its launch of operations, including the addition of over 60 jobs and capital investment exceeding \$1 million over 3 years.



The new company will manufacture corrugated containers and thermoforming for returnable packaging, along with providing custom packaging and fulfillment services to a regional client base. While new hires will occur over 2-3 years, hiring has already begun.

Located in 1224 Industrial Center, site of the former Kemet facility on Old Stage Road, CDS is a sister company to Progressive Packaging of Greenville. CDS was assisted by Bentley Commercial in identifying and securing the Industrial Center location.

## > Economic Development Advocate: STEVE ABERNATHY, Piedmont Natural Gas

Steve Abernathy is a man on a mission.

As Market Development & Support Engineer for Piedmont Natural Gas, Steve is integrally involved in helping Greenville County – and all of the communities in Piedmont's footprint – bring new commercial and industrial customers to the community.



A native of eastern Tennessee and graduate of the University of Tennessee, Steve moved to the Upstate to work for J.E. Serrine as a consulting engineer in 1980. He traces his love for the Upstate even farther back. His mother was a Taylors native, and he lives in a house built for his grandparents. After over a decade at Serrine, Steve spent time with DeVita & Associates before joining Piedmont in 1999.

His 30-year residency in the Upstate has branded Steve with a special appreciation for the people, business community and places of the Upstate – and honed his desire to help Greenville County grow and thrive.

"We want smart growth to complement the area's beauty," says Abernathy, an avid hunter and scuba diver. "The Piedmont team works closely with Upstate economic development officials like the Greenville Area Development Corporation to bring good new commercial and industrial companies here. When we help bring in new families and professionals to live in our communities, we all benefit."

While Steve's territory covers Piedmont Natural Gas' footprint across the Carolinas and Tennessee, his heart is firmly rooted in the Upstate.

"Successful economic development is a balancing act,"

Abernathy notes. "We want a vibrant economy and growing businesses. We also want residents to look at Greenville 20 years from now and be pleased to call it home."

He credits visionary leadership at Piedmont, and a talented group of Upstate economic development professionals and community leaders, with helping the area attain such a bright future.

"Piedmont Natural Gas is committed to helping our communities achieve economic success. We allocate significant funds annually to communities through grants and the utility tax credit program,

which allows entities like Greenville County to improve roads, add wastewater trunklines and more – all designed to attract new corporate citizens."

Abernathy points with pride to such Greenville County successes as Samsung Networks America's February announcement of up to 1,000 new jobs over the next 3-4 years. "Piedmont Natural Gas assisted that project by earmarking available utility tax credit funds to needed road improvements, and that helped cinch the win. We've also helped fund infrastructure improvements for Cytec's expansion, and helped get The Matrix Industrial Park off the ground," says Abernathy. "There are dozens of ways that Piedmont Natural Gas quietly helps contribute to positive growth here. We're proud of that record."



Steve and Piedmont Natural Gas also work behind the scenes with the GADC to getting prospects comfortable with relocating here. "When companies are making multimillion dollar decisions, they want to deal with people they trust and like. We work closely with economic development teams and other utilities to research their needs, determine what infrastructure is required, and present Greenville's best case. We work together to get that prospect to say 'Greenville is where we want to be.'"

While the successes have been many, Steve's mission is not done yet.

"There's a great outlook for this area, and credit should go to County Council and the GADC. We're diverse economically, with strengths in automotive, pharmaceutical, headquarters, life sciences, engineering – and diversity is a strength. It keeps us viable, as a community, to be considered by quality businesses aiming for success. By leveraging our assets, quality of life, resources, and working together, we all succeed."

"I'd say the future is bright."

