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Volume 8, Number 8

"Good News You Can Use"

August 11, 2020

Wesson stores begin Sunday beer sales

By Bob Arnold

You can now buy beer on Sundays in Wesson.

A little more than a year after the Wesson Board of Aldermen voted to prohibit sales of beer and light wine on Sundays, they reversed their decision, amending the town ordinance that regulates sales of the beverages.

The vote was 3-2, with Mayor Alton Shaw breaking a 2-2 deadlock over the amendment. Alderman Jared Ashley, who operates the Ashley's 51 convenience store, which sells beer, recused himself from the discussion and vote on the issue.

"A number of factors influenced the decision," Mayor Shaw said. "Chief among them was the sales tax revenue losses the town is facing in developing its 2021 fiscal year budget in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and the decline in shopping as a result of the closures of Co-Lin



Special to Wesson News

and Wesson Attendance Center. After voting against Sunday beer sales last year, several Alderman also said they wanted to revisit the issue in 2020."

Ashley affirmed the Mayor's comments, saying "the town's finances are not good right now."

The focus on beer and light wine sales in Wesson started in January 2019, when the town's electorate voted 187-78 to authorize it within the Wesson corporate limits. A decision by Lincoln County Chancery Court Judge to allow Wesson to annex a strip of Highway 51 that extended the town's corporate boundary to just three miles north of Brookhaven cleared the way for the vote under a state law that permits municipalities with populations of at least 1,500 to legalize beer and light wine sales if they are within three miles of another municipality in which they are legal. The Board of Aldermen approved

an implementing ordinance in

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WAC opens cautiously with hybrid plan

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Wesson Attendance Center (WAC) reopens August 17 for all students, but those in grades four through 12 will follow a two-day hybrid schedule with in-person classroom settings only two days a week and distance learning alternatives three days. All students in kindergarten through third grade will attend Monday through Thursday on a four-day hybrid schedule, and pursue distance learning alternatives on Friday with all other students.

The reopening was delayed for one week because the Copiah County School District wanted to wait to see if the Governor gave state schools any further direction.

"The goal is to get all students on campus every day as soon as safely possible," WAC officials say. In the mean time, caution is the watchword:

• Although Friday will be a distance learning day for all students, WAC will provide additional on-campus support opportunities for some students. "Academic curriculum along with the social and emotional wellbeing of our students will be a priority," WAC officials say.

• In seeking to maintain a healthy, safe and clean environment in the re-opening of school, WAC is following a detailed plan of illness prevention encompassing students, parents,

faculty and staff. It covers social

distancing in all campus locations, wearing washable cloth masks in accordance with Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines and regular hand

washing and hand sanitizing, starting on entry each day at the school. WAC is asking parents to screen their children for pos-

sible illness and its faculty and staff to monitor students and refer them to the school nurse if they are symptomatic. Students diagnosed with COVID-19 cannot come to school until the risk of transmission has passed.

- Although Copiah County School District is providing transportation for students as needed, WAC is encouraging parents/guardians to bring children to school and pick them up to limit bus use. Students must wear cloth face masks on busses.
- Cleaning protocols have been established for custodial and teaching staff, covering disinfecting hightouch surfaces and classrooms. If a confirmed positive COVID-19 case occurs on campus, WAC will carry out a standard disinfection protocol based on CDC and Mississippi Department of Health recommendations.

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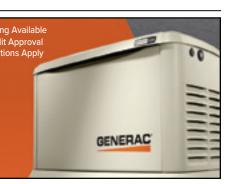
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Choosing to say who we are

By Guest Columnist Shaw Furlow

As you are probably aware, the state of Mississippi went through a tough ordeal, one that has been years in the making: changing the state flag. I will not get into the politics, but rather explore the



arts side of the flag. Flags, in general, and Mississippi's, in particular.

Nearly every explanation I found for the use or value of a flag used the word unity. Flags are used as symbols, identification, a signaling device

or decoration. In battles, they identified which troops were where, prior to GPS, of course. The police, EMTs, firefighters and many truck drivers proudly wear the Stars and Stripes on their uniforms.

But, as with most things, and people, there comes a time when you know it's just time to go. It's a decision, tough one, perhaps, you never thought you would have to make. And so it was with the 1894

Mississippi state flag. Its time had come. So, on June 30, 2020, our flag was retired and sent to the Department of History and Archives.

Now it is up to the people of Mississippi to choose a new banner, one that will unite and identify. The legislature put two requirements in the bill that authorized the design of a new flag:

- That no Confederate imagery be used;
- The words "In God We Trust" must be on the flag.

Already, people are shooting off sky rockets about the second requirement. Most of us saw that coming, and wondered why the legislature wanted another

flag fight. I don't want to take sides, but a quick Google search will take you to one of any number of websites that speak on good flag design and advise avoiding words because they are too difficult to reproduce in small versions and clutter the design. 'Keep it simple" is the overwhelming advice. I am not being critical of our legislature, but it could have done the same Google search I did.

For six years, Jackson artist Lauren

Stennis has been active in getting the flag changed. So active, that she designed a flag and has been promoting it throughout the state. It has become quite popular. Until recently, it was called the

Stennis Flag. Because the Stennis name conjures up some bad memories, she removed her family name and renamed her design the Hospitality Flag. Stennis says she is trying to "atone," if that's the right word, for

around several ideas himself. In fact, he has submitted twelve designs to the Department of Archives and History.

"It was just fun to see what I could come up with," he explains. "I don't expect them to choose any of them, but the good thing is the design process is open to all Mississippians, not just professionals. My

There are several other flag ideas floating around. Wesson High School

History teacher Rod Martin has kicked

hope is the flag chosen is designed by a school age student.'

In November, a flag chosen by a special commission will be on the ballot for a thumbs up or down vote. If that design is not chosen, the pro-

cess begins all over again. In theory, we could have a new flag as early as November, or it could take years. That's right, years.

Some have asked why we even need a flag. Martin has a great take: Flags are historical and say 'this is who we are.' Second, flags do two things for the people they represent: they unify the people behind a common, purposefull image, and they show the colorful diversity among the

people represented. Third, state flags, in particular, should be changed over time to represent the changes in the place and people represented, so that different generations

can be represented. Martin wonders if the state flag shouldn't be changed every thirty or forty years. He may be on to something.

Between now and November. we will learn which flag the commission will put on the ballot. Social media will be abuzz with pros and cons. Essays and editorials promoting both sides will be written. Friends will debate. Which ever flag we choose, picking a banner to represent all of us is a big deal. It says "This is who we are."

That's it for this month. Stay safe and support the

EDITOR'S NOTE: Shaw Furlow is a local composer, musician and arts promoter. He produces an internet-based video show -- From the Shadyside -- that spotlights area musical talent and is a consultant to



Rod Martin design.

some of her grandfather's actions as a U.S. Senator that negatively affected generations of Mississippians. It's a great story, and a pretty flag. How-



Hospitality Flag.

ever, "In God We Trust" is not on the flag, and although you can already see it flying on flagpoles throughout the state, it is an ineligible replacement for the old flag, according to the current legislation.

Wesson News

school bands in the region.



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Wesson stores begin Sunday beer sales

February 2019 intended to limit beer and light wine sales to shoppers and restaurant/cafe patrons to Mondays thru Saturdays in Wesson. The language of the law, however, permitted licensed eateries to serve the beverages by the glass on Sundays, and until May customers could legally buy beer and light wine served in glasses in the When town's restaurants/cafes. Mayor Shaw reported the loophole in the ordinance at the Board of Aldermen's April meeting, a debate, including town citizens, on whether or not to adjust the law ensued. In May, the majority of Aldermen voted to adjust the law to reflect the intent of their vote in February to prohibit Sunday sales of beer and light wine anywhere in town.

The Sunday beer sales debate at the April and May Aldermen meetings encompassed town residents who cited their religious beliefs in arguing to outlaw Sunday sales, and others who pointed to lost tax revenues, the need to face the reality of a secular society in changing times and "bringing Wesson into the Twentyfirst Century."

In the vote last year, Aldermen Stephen Ashley, Billy Ellison, Michael King and Larry Hall opposed Sunday sales, with Jarrad Ashley not voting because of conflict-of-interest considerations. Last month, King and Ellison changed their votes, setting up Mayor Shaw's tie-breaking vote and legalization of Sunday beer and light wine sales.

The Sunday sales amendment is part of an ordinance that also includes:

• Prohibiting sales of beer and light wine within 250 feet of any church, school, funeral home, public library, day care center, public park or kindergarten in a commercial or industrial zone and within 500 feet in other areas;

- Limiting sales of beer and light wine to between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. in grocery, variety and convenience stores that derive 50 percent or more of gross sales from merchandise other than alcohol and to between 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. in restaurants and cafes with 50 per cent of gross receipts from prepared
- Prohibiting (1) service at the curb outside an establishment, to visibly or noticeably intoxicated individuals and to persons of ill repute and (2) licensure of sellers with "lewd, immoral or improper entertainment" and gambling, and that permit loud, boisterous or disorderly
- Requiring (1) establishments that sell beer and light wine to complete a comprehensive application that lists owners or principal officers to assure they are qualified, and pay an annual privilege license tax and (2) restaurants and cafes to obtain a permit or to pay a small fee to allow customers to bring alcoholic beverages, beer or light wine to consume with

The tax loss sustained when Newman's liquor store moved to Brookhaven after the city legalized hard liquor and wine sales propelled proponents of beer and light wine sales in Wesson. With hard liquor and wine sales legal throughout Copiah County for some fifty years, authorized Wesson stores have benefited generated significant tax revenues for the town. Wesson lost close to \$4,000 per month of these tax revenues, however, with Newman's relocation.

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COVID-19 safe job fair August 27

Special to Wesson News

Co-Lin is making its annual 2020 Job Fair COVID-19 safe and scheduled it for for Thursday, August 27, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Billy B. Thames Conference Center on the Wesson campus.

Serious job seekers are invited to attend this free event by registering at www.colin.edu/jobfair. Local and regional employers will be present and available to speak with job seekers about employment opportunities. Professional attire and resumes are strongly encouraged.

"We want the community to take full advantage of this event, as employers from all over the region are net. Job seekers may apply to posted jobs from any hand-held device or computer through Co-Lin's Career Coach website.

Social distancing and face masks will be required for everyone attending the Job Fair. In order to comply with occupancy restrictions in the conference center, attendees are asked to reserve an arrival time on the job fair website.

Learn more about attending employers, event sponsors, social distancing policies, registering for a Co-Lin Career Coach profile, and reserving an arrival time at www.colin.edu/jobfair. Follow the Workforce at Copiah-Lincoln Community College Facebook page for updates and reminders at



Wesson News

attending in hopes of filling open positions in their respective companies," said Workforce Education Director Stephenie Sullivan. "Face-toface conversation is the best way to meet people and get a feel for company fit, so we have put a lot of effort into making this event as safe and as 'hands-free' as possible.'

Co-Lin is providing a resume/ application exchange system to employers and job seekers that will foster a hands-free environment. Job seekers are asked to create a free Co-Lin Career Coach profile on the internet and then upload a resume to their profile. There is also an option to create a new resume in Career Coach, if needed. Employers will post their job openings to the Co-Lin Career Coach Job Board on the interwww.facebook.com/clccworkforce.

The Co-Lin Job Fair is a continuing effort by Co-Lin to advance a business-friendly climate by investing in training and employment opportunities for the labor force in the college district and surrounding areas. Through workforce enhancement training funds administered by the Mississippi Community College Board, Co-Lin Workforce Education works to coordinate critical, affordable training to district employers and employees. Over the past three years, an average of 7,384 individuals have received training. Co-Lin firmly believes that economic success is best attained in a cooperative effort by the communities it serves, and surrounding areas benefit when one community succeeds.



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AUGUST 27, 2020 | 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Thames Conference Center

Long-time Co-Lin band director

By Bob Arnold

A long list of people are associated with the proud history of the Co-Lin band program, but no one has a longer association with it than Stanley Stewart, who landed at the college in 1970 and stayed on until 2012 -eleven years after his official retire-

When Stewart came to Co-Lin, its marching band, like others elsewhere, performed line drills. It was a show band focused on musical themes that featured its Collette dancers when he left, evolving through a period when it was influenced by the symmetrical sets and circular formations of drum and bugle corps that carried flags and

Stewart jokes that he "was born one morning when the sun didn't shine" at Kosciusko, Mississippi, the namesake of the Polish American Revolution general, and grew up in Vaiden, Mississippi, where he graduated from high school in 1963.

"I came to music under the influence of my mother, who played the piano, which I used to bang on,' Stewart recalls.

In junior high school, Stewart, of slender build, learned that athletics was not his calling, as a guard on the football team. So he pursued band as a trumpeter.

After a year at Holmes Junior College, where he played in the band, Stewart transferred as a sophomore to Mississippi State University (MSU), played in its Maroon marching band, brass choir and concert band, enjoyed trips to LSU, Auburn and Ole Miss and graduated with a degree in instrumental music in 1967.

Before taking over the reins of the band program at then Co-Lin Junior College, Stewart directed bands at Eupora (Mississippi) North High

School and Coahoma county (Mississippi) Hìgh School. He started at

Co-Lin as di-

rector of the college's marching and concert bands and jazz ensemble and the Wesson Junior High School Red Knight band, and taught instrumental music

to college students, all while working on his Master's Degree in music and education at MSU, which he received

Stewart came to a band program largely known for its dancers -- the

side an old structure behind the administration building that has since been torn down and replaced by a parking lot.

"We called it the desert," Stewart "It was a horrible building recalls.

that featured 12 supporting square pillars, which the band had to maneuver around as it practiced."

The Colettes remain an integral part of the Co-Lin band program,

but Stewart reduced their numbers by half so they did not dominate the musicians. He also moved the band program across campus to a new fine arts building and marching band practice field in 1973, and became the college's fine arts division chair, as well.

Stewart retired as director of the Co-Lin band program in 2001, but continued to assist his successors with the marching band, or show band, as it has become known, and leading the jazz ensemble. He continues to live in Wesson with his wife Sheila, who worked in the registration office at Co-Lin when they met. He has a daughter, Angela, 46, by a previous marriage, who is an education administrator in Harding, Texas.

What are your hobbies?

I enjoy stamp collecting, gardening, cooking -- barbequing particularly, traveling to Orange Beach and in Europe -- Paris, Venice, Spain. I have a small shop, where I do repair work.

Are you a reader?

I read alot. Newspapers, history books on the Civil War, World War I and World War II with lots of pictures. I am not much into fiction.

Do you enjoy movies or theater? I am a Bill Murray fan. I like comedies, dramas, and war movies. My favorite movies are Dr. Strangelove, Where the Buffalo Roam, Inglorious Bastards, a war film. I like opera, too. I enjoyed Rosini on a European trip at the Venice Opera House.

How about music?

Except for rap and pop 20 music, I enjoy about everything. Whalen Jennings and Willie Nelson country music. Classical -- Bach, Beethoven, Handle, Vivaldi, the Russian composers. Jazz.

How would you spend your lottery winnings if you were so lucky.

I would tithe to my church -- Beauregard United Methodist, where I serve as a Deacon. I would give to Co-Lin and Mississippi State. Sheila and I would travel.

How would you change the world?

I would get rid of all the illnesses, find a cure for the coronavirus; stamp out poverty and end religious conflict.

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Colettes, who numbered about 60 at the time. Classes were taught on the second floor of the Mutton Building, and the marching band practiced in-









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Wesson woman award recipient

Special to Wesson News

Jessica Breazeale of Wesson has received an Award of Excellence in the Public Relations Association of Mississippi (PRAM) 2020 PRism Awards Tier 2 category for an Internal Communica-

tions campaign.
The Public Relations Association of Mississippi conducts the PRism Awards each year to recognize the outstanding work of the state's leading public relations and communications profession-Breazeale's honor was announced during the organization's virtual PRĂM PRism Award event last month. While

typically announced during the annual PRAM conference, the award winners attended the organization's first virtual ceremony.

Judged by public relations practitioners across the country and featuring multiple categories, the program honors the top work in communications, public relations, marketing and media. Award-winning entries demonstrate knowledge and application of the fourstep process, including research, planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Jessica Breazeale Consulting was chosen from a wide pool of entries to receive an Award of Excellence. As a program winner, the organization joins a premiere group of past winners.

"Out of many outstanding submissions, our judges found Jessica Breazeale Consulting's work to truly set a new standard of excellence for all practitioners," said Rob Pettit, vice president for awards programs with the Public Relations of Association. "We congratulate her and look forward to seeing her future successes in this field,'

"I am extremely honored to have

been recognized for my hard work," Breazeale said. "I love being involved with this organization to network and collaborate with other PR practitioners."

During the awards Breazeale ceremony, was also recognized for obtaining her Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) designation, which certifies and credentials public relations professionals as experts and leaders in the field. Special to Wesson News "The process work
three years," Breazeale

said. "It was a lot of hard work. I studied nonstop and practiced my skills to earn this accreditation, and it felt good to be recognized for it during the awards

program. Jessica Breazeale Consulting services clients across the United States with marketing, advertising and public relations services. PRAM is a non-profit organization and is an autonomous affiliate of the Southern Public Relations Federation (SPRF), which, along with eight other regional and national public relations organizations, is a participating member of the Universal Accreditation Board (UAB), the national body which administers the Accreditation in Public Relations (APR).



ILR looks ahead with new officers

Special to Wesson News

The Institute for Learning in Retirement, the Co-Lin-sponsored adult education program for retired and semi-retired persons, has elected its new officers. They are:

- Tommy Sasser, president
- Sarah Loyd, vice president
- Joy Wesbrooks, secretary
- Nora Berch, associate secretary
- Martha Lightsey, treasurer
- Dian Summers, member-at-large Dr. Bettie Bullard as past-president continues to serve as an officer.

Julie Wright, director of the program, also announced that ILR has awarded its annual scholarship to Hannah Elizabeth Owens, granddaughter of George and Zoula.

Wright said that she and the new officers are discussing the ILR program for the coming months if Co-Lin allows it to have meetings during the fall semester in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We have all been praying, and hoping, that the COVID-19 numbers would be improving by now, but this has not been the case," she noted. "Social distancing and wearing masks are still the norm, as well as, staying away from large gatherings as much as possible.

Travel for both short and long trips is not an option now," she said. "We could possibly have luncheons by spreading out the tables in a larger area, with the meals provided in pre-packaged disposable containers and serving something that does not need to be hot. Classes and workshops may be offered if speakers and presenters are willing to come to lead them. Co-Lin employees will not be available as speakers or presenters, since they will be giving extra time to their students.'

To assist with planning, Wright is asking ILR members to provide feedback on the following questions:

• Will you attend luncheons, if

- they are planned?
- Will you attend classes if they are planned?
- Will you attend workshops if they are planned?
- What are your thoughts or feelings about postponing all ILR activities until the spring?

July Honor yards





All photos Special to Wesson News

Wesson Garden Club has recognized the July landscaping efforts of Barbara Hancock at 1012 Wolf Hollow Drive (first above), Gyen and Velesta Young at 1060 Williams Road (second above), Deb's Style Shop at 11090 Sylvarena Road (first below) for Yard of the Month honors in town residential, rural residential and organizational categories. It also awarded a Fourth of July Seasonal landscaping award to Hank and Paula Smith at 1034 Church Street (second below). The awards, based on maintenance principles and elements of landscape design, seek to encourage ongoing beautification and cleanliness of the Wesson area and cultivate a citizenry that values and protects natural resources and assumes responsibility for enhancing the environment. The Garden Club's Yard of the Month awards honor properties during the spring, summer and fall.





Doty to direct public utilities staff

Special to Wesson News

Governor Tate Reeves has appointed Senator Sally Doty Director for the Mississippi Public Utilities Staff.

Having served in various leadership roles in the Mississippi State Senate, from Chair of the Senate Energy Committee, which is instrumental in public utilities, to currently serving as Chairman of the Judiciary A Committee,

Senator Doty has emphasized making sure public utilities appropriately serve Mississippians

pians

"Sally and I have been good friends for years, and it was an honor to serve with her in the Mississippi Senate," said Governor Reeves. "She has always been a strong leader for Mississippians, fighting for their interests on the Senate floor. I know she will continue to

serve our state well leading the Public Utilities."

The Public Utilities Staff was created in 1990 to represent the broad interests of the State of Mississippi by balancing the respective concerns of the residential, commercial and industrial utility customers, the state agencies and the public utilities.

Senator Doty gives up a State Senate seat to which she has been elected for three terms to represent Senate District 39. Doty has held a variety of key

leadership positions within the Senate, including Chair of the Senate Energy Committee. She played a pivotal role in the passage of the 2020 "Broadband Enabling Act" allowing Mississippi's 25 electric cooperatives to provide high-speed internet to remote areas of the state.

Doty has received a number of legislative awards and honors over the years, including service on the Nation-

al Conference of State Legislators, receiving the Women Making a Difference Award and being recognized as Mississippi Law Enforcement Legislator of the Year.

With an extensive legal background, Doty began her career at the Wells, Moore, Simmons & Neeld law firm from 1991 to 1993. She subsequently served as Director of Legal Writing for the Mis-

sissippi College School of Law from 1993 to 1996. She joined Allen, Allen, Boerner & Breeland in 1996 to handle civil litigation defending county and city governments until 2004. Since 2016, Doty has served as an Attorney at Law, managing a general civil practice in Brookhaven.

Doty is a graduate of Mississippi University for Women with a Bachelor's Degree, and earned a Juris Doctor from the Mississippi College School of



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WESSON AREA DINING GUIDE













Managing stress in uncertain times

By Guest Columnist Stephanie Duguid

The COVID-19 pandemic poses unique challenges and has made many feel higher than normal stress and anxiety levels while trying to balance life. It is natural to feel



Special to Wesson Ne

stress, anxiety and worry as we face this time of uncertainty. Anxiety typically occurs when we believe we are unable to predict what will happen or control stress. This can lead to feeling panicky, irritable and anxious. These tips from Medical University of South Carolina, John Hopkins Medicine, and HelpGuide.org can help you:.

1. First, rest assured you are not alone.

2. Stay informed—but don't obsessively check the news It is vital to stay informed, particularly about what's happening in your community, so you can follow advised safety precautions and do your part to slow the spread of coronavirus. But there's a lot of misinformation going around, as well as sensationalistic media coverage that only feeds into fear.

Stick to trustworthy sources. Utilize the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the World Health Organization, and your local public health authorities for appropriate information. Limit how often you check for updates. Constant monitoring of news and social media feeds can quickly turn compulsive and counter-productive, fueling anxiety rather than easing it. Step away from media if you start feeling overwhelmed. If anxiety is an ongoing issue, consider limiting your media consumption to a specific time frame and time of day (e.g. thirty minutes each evening at 6 p.m.). Be careful what you share. Do your best to verify information before passing it on. Snopes' Coronavirus Collection (https://www.snopes.com/collections/ new-coronavirus-collection/) is one place to start.

3. Focus on the things you can control. There are so many things outside of our control, including how long the pandemic will last, how other people behave, and what's going

to happen in our communities. When you feel yourself getting caught up in fear of what might happen, try to shift your focus to things you can control: Washing your hands frequently (for at least 20 seconds) with soap and water or a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Avoiding touching your face (particularly your eyes, nose, and

mouth). Staying home as much as possible, even if you don't feel sick. Avoiding crowds and gatherings of 10 or more people without protection. Avoiding all non-essential shopping and travel. Keeping six feet of distance between yourself and others when out. Getting plenty of sleep, which helps support your immune system. Following all recommendations from health authorities.

4. Stay connected -- even when physically isolated. The biggest thing that most people can do right now to make a positive difference is to practice social distancing. But social distancing comes with its own risks. Isolation and loneliness can exacerbate anxiety and depression, and even impact our physical health. Stay connected and reach out for support, even while social-distancing.

Use text messages, video chat and social media to access social support networks. If you have internet access, utilize video connections to spend time with others, such as Facetime, Zoom, Google Duo and Skype. Don't let coronavirus dominate every conversation. Take breaks from stressful

thoughts about the pandemic to simply enjoy each other's company. Other activities: Start a virtual book club with friends. Play "Words with Friends," "Yahtzee," "Connect 4," or other app games with

people you know. Set coffee dates with friends or family. Each morning, call a friend or family member while you both have your morning coffee... or tea.

5. Take care of your body and spirit. All the tried-and-true stress management strategies apply: eating healthy meals, getting plenty of sleep, and meditating.

Maintain a routine as best you can. Even if you're stuck at home, try to stick to your regular sleep, school, meal, or work schedule. This can help

you maintain a sense of normalcy. Take time out for activities you enjoy. Read a good book, watch a comedy, play a fun board or video game, make something, whether it's a new recipe, a craft, or a piece of art. Get out in nature, if possible. Sunshine and fresh air will do you good.

Find ways to exercise. Staying ac-

tive will help you release anxiety, relieve stress, and manage your mood. While the gym and group classes are out, you can still cycle, hike, or walk. Look online for exercise videos or activi-

ties you can do even without equipment, such as yoga. Take up a relaxation practice. When stressors throw your nervous system out of balance, relaxation techniques such as deep

breathing and meditation can bring you back into a state of equilibrium.

Find a mantra. This is a short and powerful phrase that you relate to that you can easily think or say when anxiety spikes. Some great ones are: "This is a marathon, not a sprint." "Be where your feet are." "I have endured (insert event here); I can weather this storm." "Just for today --

I'll take things one day at a time."

6. Help others (it will make you feel better). It's no coincidence that those who focus on others in need and support their communities, especially during times of crises, tend to be happier and healthier than those who act selfishly. There's still plenty you can do to help others.

• Reach out to others in need. Support people you know in your community who are isolated --particularly the elderly or disabled. Perhaps an older neighbor needs help with groceries or fulfilling a prescription? You can always leave packages on their doorstep to avoid direct contact. Or maybe they just need to hear a friendly, reassuring voice over the phone.

• Donate to food banks. Panic-buying and hoarding have not only left grocery store shelves stripped bare but have also drastically reduced supplies to food banks.

• Be a calming influence. Being a positive, uplifting influence in these anxious times can help you feel better about your own situation, too.

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations, and while some people may be able to adapt to changes easily, other people may struggle greatly to change their routines. Find what works best for you to remain healthy and safe!

EDITOR'S NOTE: Stephanie Duguid is Dean of Academic Instruction at Co-Lin. She is also an athletic trainer and nutrition specialist and has been teaching courses related to those two areas as well as practicing what she preaches for more than twenty years.











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Outside funds support town projects

Special to Wesson News

Wesson is facing an austere year fi-nancially, but outside funding will continue to support important projects.

The latest inflow of outside funding is \$300,000 from the state legislature's bond bill for upgrades and improvements to the Old School community center. The legislature will have to approve some modifications to the project before work begins, Mayor Alton Shaw reports.

The Wesson Board of Aldermen has awarded Hazlehurst-based Huntington Lumber Company the contract for the \$443,801 public library renovation funded by Mississippi Development Authority with American with Disabilities Act monies. It encompasses the addition of 1,000 square feet of space, facade restoration and installation of new shelving.

On the horizon is construction of a new police department headquarters funded by a \$300,000 appropriation in the bond bill approved by the 2019 state legislative session. The legislature modified specification of the use of the funds for new construction. "Renovating the existing police station was impractical," Mayor Shaw says. "In fact, a new building will cost less than renovations to existing structure."

Almost \$70,000 remains from a \$350,000 bond issue five years ago for street repairs and paving at the municipal park, Mayor Shaw adds.

"So people will see work going on, even as we struggle to manage a frugal budget," Mayor Shaw summarizes. "The closures of Co-Lin and Wesson Attendance Center as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic have had a major impact on sales tax and water revenues. More than 1,500 dormitory residents at Co-Lin come from outside Wesson as well as many instructors, administrators and staff persons. Fewer people are shopping here and eating at our restaurants. Both Co-Lin and Wesson Attendance use enormous amounts of water when they are operating at full capacity. Even with their re-openings, normal revenues are down. Co-Lin is ending its fall semester early. Wesson Attendance Center will have fewer students in classes each dav.'

Mayor Shaw notes that the town has negotiated an \$80,000 bond sale to Copiah Bank to provide emergency funds if

Jason Barrett Announces Candidacy For State Senate District 39 - Special Election September 22

Special to Wesson News

After prayerful consideration, together with my family, we made the decision for me to seek the recently vacated office of Mississippi State Senate District 39serving portions of Copiah and Walthall

counties, and all of Lawrence and Lincoln counties. We are thankful for the support and encouragement of our family, friends, and residents throughout the district we call home.

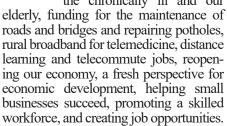
I am married to Brandi Edwards Barrett and we have two children, Emme and John Henry. Brandi grew up in Monticello and we have lived in both Lawrence and Lincoln counties. We are members of Heucks Retreat

Baptist Church in Brookhaven and former members of Bethel Baptist Church in Monticello. I am a small business owner and practicing attorney with Barrett Law Firm in Brookhaven. Prior to serving as a family law attorney, I was a public high school teacher and coach.

The reason I am running for office is to serve all citizens with effective, transparent leadership, while being a trusted conservative voice that represents the values and will of the people throughout the district. I am a Christian and Republican who believes that government should be ran from the citizens up, not bureaucracy down. I am not in favor of big government, over regulation, or tax increases; however, I am in favor of you always having a voice at the capitol and at the ballot box, and helping families and small businesses keep more of their hard earned money in their own pocket where it belongs. I am dedicated to protecting families, the unborn and our constitutional rights, always being accessible to the residents of our district, and citizens having real-time

> input during the legislative session. I am pro-life, pro-law enforcement, pro-military, and pro-2nd amendment. As the first in my family to earn a college degree, I know the value of sacrifice and hard work.

> A vote for me is a vote for lower taxes, smaller government, providing teachers with promised pay increases, assistance for rural hospitals, taking care of sick children, the chronically ill and our



I am asking for your vote in the special election to be held Tuesday, September 22nd. Your prayers and support in the coming weeks are greatly appreciated. Please contact me at 601-754-9367 or jasonbarrettforsenate@gmail.com with questions or concerns, or to request a yard sign. Allow me to be your trusted conservative voice at the capitol and let's work together to build a better Southwest Mississippi for the livelihood of our families and the future of our children.

Ad paid by the Committee to Elect Jason Barrett.



Co-Lin academics, football & golf

Special to Wesson News

Co-Lin athletes and their teams have been recognized for their impressive academic accolades during the 2019-2020 sports seasons. Forty-four individuals were named to All-Academic teams. Five teams -- men's tennis, women's tennis, softball, golf, and baseball, earned recognition from the NJCAA, the most since 2017.

"The National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) student-athletes proved that no obstacle is too difficult to overcome," NJCAA President and CEO Dr. Chirstopher Parker said. "These difficulties pushed our student-athletes to the limit this year, but the opportunity to overcome these challenges presented itself and our student-athletes flourished academically. The association commends all individuals for their continued success on the playing surfaces and in the classrooms."

Student-athletes are eligible to earn academic honors by achieving an overall GPA of 3.60 or higher for the 2019-20 academic year. The criteria for the three All-Academic teams: All-Academic First Team, 4.00 GPA. All-Academic Second Team, 3.80-3.99 GPA. All-Academic Third Team: 3.60-3.79 GPA.

Co-Lin had 17 student-athletes earn NJCAA All-Academic First Team honors, 14 earn Second Team, and 13 earn Third Team.

- First Team members include Brittany Barnett (women's tennis), Molly Davis (softball), Duncan Falvey (men's tennis), Kylar Fielder (baseball), Trey Frierson (baseball), Katelyn Hayman (softball), April Lynn (softball), Morgan McCray (basketball), Jordi Morley (men's tennis), Landon Murphy (football), Micah Parker (baseball), Logan Pitts (men's golf), Megan Poole (softball), Skyler Rasberry (men's tennis), John Readyu (men's tennis), Julia Toloza (men's tennis) and Macy Ziskin (softball).
- Second Team members include Carlon Brabham (softball), Abigail Carter (softball), Jana Case (women's basketball), Will Harkins (baseball), Baileigh Jackson (softball), Bryce Lofton (football), Landry McQeen (baseball), Peyton Parker (baseball), Susana Patino (women's tennis), Carly Polk (softball), Madison Shows (women's tennis), Trent Tyre (football) and Ky'Albri Washington (softball).
- Third Team members include John Allen (football), Rhett Blackburn

(baseball), William Davis (men's golf), Joshua Day (baseball), Adam Files (men's golf), Adie Goodman (baseball), Andrew Hulon (men's tennis), Brooks Italiano (baseball), Preston Ivy (men's tennis), Bryson Jones (men's golf), Cade Lowery (baseball), Bella Luckey (softball) and Gracie Phillips (women's tennis). Co-Lin's men's tennis team ranked

Co-Lin's men's tennis team ranked No. 2 in the nation in team GPA with



a 3.59, the highest honor since the team claimed the top spot in 2015. Co-Lin's women's tennis, softball, and golf teams all finished tied for 13th in the nation in their respective sport. The honor is the highest softball ranking since 2014. Baseball rounded out the teams tied at 21st in the nation, the highest-ranking since the team finished 16th in 2010.

"It is great to receive honors like these," says Co-Lin Athletic Director Bryan Nobile. "Our student-athletes' success in the classroom is of the utmost importance to us at Co-Lin, and we are proud of our student-athletes, coaches, and faculty for pushing through this past year with the pandemic and still performing so well on the academic side of things." Over the past decade, the Wolves have had 35 teams rank in the top-25 nationally in team GPA.

A little bit of fall football. Co-Lin will continue football season as a fall tradition in 2020, but it will be an abbreviated season. Following the recommendation of Mississippi Association of Community Colleges (MACC) presidents, the state's community college Region XXIII representative to the NJCAA Board of Regents abstained from support of moving most sports to spring competition. Instead, the presidents of the MACC have voted to delay the start of the 2020 fall football season to October 1. The 2020 football season will consist of a six-game regular season with divisional play only and will conclude with a playoff. The MACC will continue to evaluate COVID-19 and its impact on our student-athletes. For more information, contact Commissioner Steve Martin, Mississippi Association of Community College's Athletic Commission-

cont. on page 12

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Foster joins Co-Lin Foundation board

Stan Foster of Brookhaven has been elected to serve on the Co-Lin Foundation Board.

Foster graduated from Mississippi State University with a Bachelor's Degree in fisheries management and a Master's Degree in business administration and finance. He has been in banking for more than 25 years, and is currently a community bank president for Trustmark National Bank in Brookhaven.

Foster serves on the board of directors and is chairman for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes Southwest Mississippi District. He is a member

and past president of the Krewe of Ceres, a member and past president of the Brookhaven/Lincoln County Rotary Club, and member and past president of the Brookhaven/Lincoln County Chamber of Commerce. He also serves on the Mississippi School

of the Arts advisory board. Foster has previously served on the Brookhaven Public School District planning committee, the Entergy Southern Advisory Council, and the Exchange Club

board where he is a past president.

Foster has been married to his wife Sarah for 20 years, teacher, and a Dave



The Co-Lin Foundation is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization which serves as the fundraising arm of the college. The Foundation is governed by a 25-member board of directors whose goal is to raise private monies to support the mission of the college.



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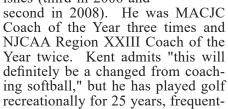
cont. from page 10

Co-Lin academics, football and golf

er at smartin@mccb.edu.

New golf coach. Brookhaven native and long-time Co-Lin employee Allen Kent is the college's new men's links coach -- the eighth in the school's history. Kent was the head softball coach for 16

softball coach for 16 seasons, with an illustrious tenure, leading the Lady Wolves to a 392-242 overall record, three Mississippi Association of Community and Junior Colleges (MACJC) state championships (2006, 2008 and 2009), two National Junior College Athletic Association Region (NJCAA) XXIII championships (2006 and 2008) and two top-three NJCAA national tournament finishes (third in 2006 and



ly competing on Co-Lin's on-campus 18-hole course. "I am very grateful for this opportunity and I'm looking forward to building on the tradition of our golf program," he says. "I've got a strong competitive nature, love

teaching and coaching and have a strong desire to win and get the most out of each our players. The Co-Lin golf team has a storied history as a leader in MACJC and NJCAA, with student-athletes regularly participating in the NJCAA DII national tournament. Kent graduated from Brookhaven High School in 1982, Co-Lin in 1984 and Mississippi State Uni-

versity. He is Co-Lin's director of housing and Student Government Association advisor. He is a member of Brookhaven First Baptist Church. He and his wife Wanda have on son, Colby, and a daughter-in-law, Erica Kent.



Allen Kent, new Co-Lin golf coach.





Welding graduates and new training

Special to Wesson News

Six Co-Lin Workforce Education students on the Wesson Campus have completed the non-credit evening welding course and secured the National Center for Construction Education & Research (NCCER) Welding CONTREN Level I and II certifications. The program introduces participants to introductory craft skills (Core), Gas Metal Arc Welding (MIG), and Flux Core Arc Welding (FCAW).

With welders in high demand in the manufacturing, agriculture, and oil industries, Co-Lin's Workforce Education Division offers evening classes at the Wesson Campus.

Welding training courses start again August 17, with funding assistance available through a variety of sources.

Upon successful completion of the Welding Contren Learning Series, students have the opportunity to earn Level I and II certification through the NCCER. In addition to welding skills, students train for and earn a certificate for 10-hour Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) General Industry. Participants must also take the ACT Work Keys Assessment and earn a Bronze level or











Special to Wesson New

Co-Lin Workforce Education Welding program students (top row from left to right) Corey Baker, Jeffery James, and Louis Stanton, all of Brookhaven; (bottom row from left to right) Blake Burns of Wesson, LaKendrick Harrell of Gloster, and Brian Yarbrough of Crystal Springs recently completed 550 hours of training.

greater National Career Readiness Certificate.

Additional information about registration and funding may be obtained by calling 601.643.8707 or visiting https://workforce.colin.edu/program-info/welding.

The Workforce Division at Co-

Lin provides skills to current and future employees desiring to acquire skills necessary for their career no matter their age, background, or skill set. Training is available in various forms and accommodates a wide audience in the Co-Lin District, which includes Adams, Copiah, Franklin, Jefferson, Lawrence, Lincoln, and Simpson counties. Individuals benefit from affordable, short-term, non-credit, workforce training classes that provide new or enhanced skills needed to enter a new field or re-enter with upgraded skills. Employers who enter a partnership with Workforce Education may receive custom, affordable job-training to address the unique needs of their organizations, including but not limited to safety, computer, and soft skills. Training sessions are available at Co-Lin facilities or at the industry location. Visit https://workforce. colin.edu/ or Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.



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Peppers laugh at heat into fall

By Guest Columnist Gary R. Bachman

At this time of year, much of my vegetable garden is a distant memory due to the summer heat and humidity. But I'm always encouraged by the production I enjoy from my pepper plants. I marvel at the way these plants seem to laugh at the heat and produce fresh peppers all the way to frost in the fall.

There really isn't anything better than picking fresh peppers from my home garden, although I guess that's true for all of our garden vegetables.

The options for growing peppers are endless. I personally grow a wide variety, ranging from sweet to rather spicy peppers. I used to grow and enjoy the weapons-grade, super-hot varieties like Ghost, Trinidad Scorpion and Carolina Reaper, but I guess I've gotten smarter as I've gotten older.

I watch the cooking shows looking for ideas not only for recipes but also for new, trendy vegetables to grow.

This year, I'm growing a superb group of peppers that are changing my thoughts about an already versatile fruit. Yes, a fruit. Although its classified as a vegetable, a pepper contains seeds, making it a fruit.

A fun little pepper I'm growing for the first time is the biquinho red, commonly called Brazilian Little Beak. This small pepper has a pointed shape that starts out pale yellow and transitions to bright red. It has a mild heat profile that I enjoy pickled and used as a playful garnish.

A popular pepper to grow is the Fresno pepper.

Taste-wise, a Fresno is similar to a jalapeño, but it has a smoky flavor note to me. The peppers are two to three inches long and about an inch in diameter. As they transition from glossy green to bright red, they tend to increase in heat level. The peppers are cone-shaped, and many will be slightly curve.

Another popular pepper I'm growing is the shishito. This is an old Asian variety that is thin-skinned and about three inches long. Shishito peppers are mild, but one in 10 is randomly hot and can be



Special to Wesson News

The biquinho red, commonly called Brazilian Little Beak, is a fun little pepper with a mild heat profile.

a pleasant surprise. I first enjoyed these peppers at Chef Morimoto's restaurant in Orlando, where they were flash fried. The wrinkly skin made them perfect for

holding onto the peanut dipping sauce.

I'm growing an improved shishito hybrid called Mellow Star. This is a shishito crossed

with sweet red pepper that is deliciously mild and sweet. I like to wait until these

peppers display their bright, glossy skin before harvesting.

One of the best peppers I continue to grow in my home garden is Giant Mar-

coni. This is an elongated, Italian sweet pepper selection that tastes great with no heat. It produces an up to eight-inchlong fruit that

have a smoky flavor without the need for the grill. I think they taste best when

fully bright red.

Giant Marconi is an All-America Selection winner that produces strongly through the heat and humidity of our Mississippi summers.

It's too late to start from seed this season, but I've noticed that garden centers have a nice supply of transplants that will still bear a late-season pepper crop.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dr. Gary Bachman is an Extension and research professor of horticulture at the Mississippi State University Coastal Research and Extension Center in Biloxi.

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Red tape, census, virus & loans

Special to Wesson News

Cutting red tape. The Mississippi Secretary of State's Office (MSSO) is launching a "Tackle the Tape" initiative towards cutting anti-competitive business regulations that do not substantially further the safety and well-being of citizens of the state. The goal is to increase economic opportunities in Mississippi by promoting competition and encouraging innovation and job growth. Currently, Mississippi's regulatory burden leads the way among southern states with roughly 118,000 restrictive regulations on the books, MSSO says. According to the Justice Institute, Mississippi loses out on more than 13,000 job-creating opportunities each year due to licensing regulations. In the 2020 legislative session, House Bill 1104 gave the Occupational Licensing Review Commission's (OLRC) new authority to review all existing regulations subject to the jurisdiction of an occupational licensing board, not just newly proposed regulations. The OLRC is composed of the Governor, Secretary of State, and Attorney General. "Tackle the Tape" is seeking to partner with the 29 licensing authorities under OLRC jurisdiction, encouraging them to "help lead the charge to a freer, more business-friendly Mississippi," MSSO says.

Reporting census data. The laid-back way of life in Mississippi has a downside when it leads to very low U.S.

Census participation: Inaccurate population counts can cause the state to lose money, political representation and participation in beneficial programs. Mississippi currently has a 57.5% response rate to the U.S. Census. Census data informs many federal, state and local decisions and impacts funding of roads, health care, medical assistance, family violence prevention, public water systems, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and children's health insurance and welfare program. The U.S. Constitution requires a complete count of the U.S. population every 10 years. There is still time to self-report Census information. Respond now by mailing in the paper form, calling 844-330-2020 or submitting data online at http:// www.2020census.gov. Door-to-door canvassing for non-respondents begins August 11.

West Nile Virus. Two cases of West Nile Virus (WNV) have now been reported in Mississippi this summer, compared to 15 cases last year with no deaths. Peak WNV season in Mississippi is July through September. Symptoms may include fever, headache, nausea, vomiting, a rash, muscle weakness or swollen lymph nodes. In a small number of cases, especially in persons over 50 years old, the infection can result in encephalitis or meningitis, which can lead to paralysis, coma and possibly death. The Mississippi State Department of Health suggests

the following precautions: Use a mosquito repellent with an EPA-registered ingredient such as DEET while you are outdoors. Remove all sources of standing water around your home and yard to prevent mosquito breeding. Wear loose, long clothing to cover the arms and legs when outdoors. Avoid areas where mosquitoes are prevalent. For more information on mosquito-borne illnesses, visit the MSDH website at HealthyMS.com/ westnile.

Senator wants small business loans. Mississippi Republican U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith from Brookhaven says the next coronavirus relief act should include legislation she cosponsored to provide greater and more flexible support for small and mid-sized businesses most affected by COVID-19. Hyde-Smith is among a growing group of bipartisan Senators cosponsoring the Reviving the Economy Sustainably Toward a Recovery in Twenty-twenty (RESTART) Act (S.3814) that would create a follow-on loan program to the successful Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). The RESTART Act loan program would provide funding to cover six months of payroll, benefits, and fixed operating expenses for businesses that have taken a substantial revenue hit during the COVID-19 pandemic. The bill also outlines a flexible loan forgiveness formula that would act as a backstop against ongoing economic

challenges. Eligible businesses would include most nonprofits, veterans' organizations, self-employed individuals, independent contractors, and tribal business concerns with fewer than 5,000 full-time equivalent employees. Businesses with fewer than 500 full-time equivalent employees will receive more generous loan forgiveness.

Career aid website. Middle and high school students who dream of pursuing careers that require credentials beyond high school can find help determining the pathway via a new streamlined website. Adults considering pursuing a degree or credentials to enhance or change course on their career path can also use the website as a resource. Developed through a partnership between the Institutions of Higher Learning, the Mississippi Department of Education, Mississippi Office of Student Financial Aid and Woodward Hines Education Foundation, www.MyWayMS.org hosted by Mississippi State University helps prospective students determine what degree they need to enter a chosen career field, the community colleges and universities that offer the degree, understand how to apply and learn how to pay for college when accepted. The website has links to information about state Student Financial Aid, including the awards process and timeline, the online application, news and updates and frequently asked questions.

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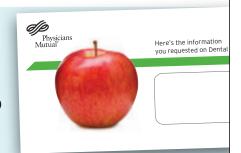
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Legislature passes bills despite stalls

Special to Wesson News

The on-again, off-again 2020 Mississippi Legislative Session, stalled twice by the COVID-19 pandemic, still has unfinished business centered around budget issues, particularly related to the Department of Education and Department of Marine Resources. The latest session ended with some 30 lawmakers testing positive for the coronavirus.

Easily the most publicized bill of the 2020 session solidified the removal and replacement of the controversial state flag. The Governor vetoed two criminal justice reform measures that would have made 2,000 more prisoners eligible for parole, and most of the education budget because it changed a pay bonus plan for some teachers.

Other notable pieces of legislation passed so far by both chambers and put into law:

Prohibition-ending (House Bill 1087) bill means individual counties in the Magnolia state, as of January 1, 2021, will no longer have the choice to prohibit the sale and possession of alcohol, which they have had since 1966.

Wine delivery (House Bill 1088) bill allows wine-lovers 21 and older to get at least 10 cases of their favorite beverages shipped in from other states to a local package store.

New abortion (House Bill 1295) bill bans abortion in the state of Mississippi based on the race, sex, or genetic anomalies of a fetus—exempting an emergency situation.

Compassionate parole (House Bill 1476) act allows inmates with terminal illnesses or a life expectancy of a year or less, except those convicted for capital murder or sentenced to death, to be eligible for parole.

Poll workers (House Bill 1523) bill removes the limitation on how many election commissioners can be appointed and allows the election commissioners and Board of Supervisors to decide how many poll workers each location needs.

Human trafficking (House Bill 1559) bill provides additional services for victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

Broadband expansion (House Bill 1788 & Senate Bills 3044 & 3046) act advances broadband expansion and K-12 distance learning initiatives across the state of Mississippi, establishing the "Mississippi Pandemic Response Broadband Availability Grant Program" that dedicates \$50 million of the \$1.25 billion Mississippi received under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to the Mississippi Department of Education for grants to schools in areas lacking internet access.

Carly's Law (Senate Bill 2009) prohibits convicted sex offenders from

contacting their victim(s) unless specific direction is received from a victim or the family of a victim.

Teacher Licensure (Senate Bill 2511) allows a person to apply for a teaching license if they have an ACT score of 21 or an SAT score of 1480, a minimum GPA of 3.0 on prior coursework, and a passing grade on the Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators exam

Legal Age to Buy Tobacco (Senate Bill 2596) increases the legal age to buy tobacco and vaping products to 21 and imposes fines of \$250 for first-time offenses and subsequent penalties of up to \$1000 for sellers to minors. Minors caught possessing a vaping product would face a \$100 fine and 15 hours of community service and larger fines and longer community service for subsequent offenses.

Pet Abuse (Senate 2658) makes it a felony to abuse a domesticated cat or dog. with fines up to \$5,000 and three years within the Mississippi Department of Corrections for first offenses and \$10,000 and 10 years behind bars for subsequent offenses.

Growers regulation (Senate Bill 2725) act authorizes growers with licenses from the Mississippi Department of Agriculture to cultivate, process, and transport hemp containing no more than 0.3 percent THC. Growers of hemp that contains a THC concentration exceeding 0.3 percent will be prosecuted by the attorney general's office.

Small business relief (Senate Bill 2772) bill pledges \$300 million of the \$1.25 billion in federal COVID-19 money to the state's small businesses. The Mississippi Development Agency (MDA) will disburse \$240 million through an application process, with the other \$60 million sent out immediately by the legislature to impacted businesses -- \$2,000 a pop.

The devices for K-12 (Senate bill

The devices for K-12 (Senate bill 3044) bill appropriates \$150 million of federal COVID-19 funds for distance learning, makes sure students have the necessary equipment to access the internet (laptops, iPads, etc.); and provides \$300,000 for the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) to update its data collection system, \$129,700,000 to public school districts and \$20 million to MDE to distribute as needed to districts.

The COVID-19 connectivity (Senate Bill 3046) bill creates a grant program that will expand services across Mississippi in cooperation with the the state's 26 member-owned electric coops. For every dollar the co-ops spend on service expansion, the government will match up to \$65 million. Combined with Senate Bill 3044 and Hourse Bill 1788, some \$265 million is pledged for distance learning and broadband expansion.



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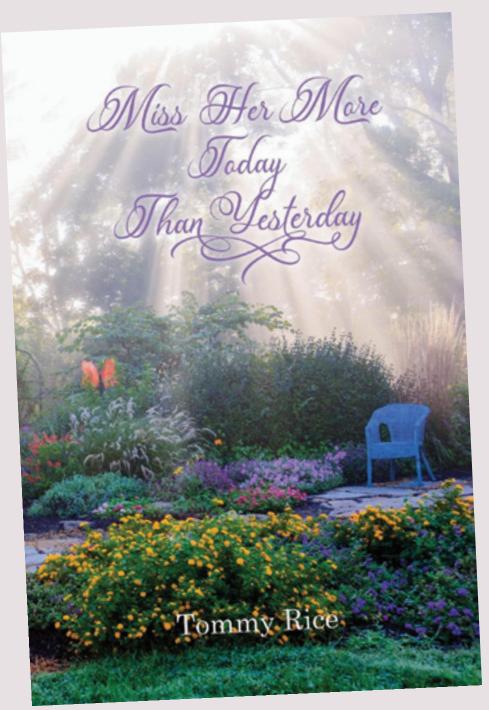


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"I heartily recommend my friend Tommy Rice's new book "Miss Her More Today Than Yesterday". Tommy's work is an open, honest, compassionate and at times raw look at a loved one's handling of a spouse's terminal illness. Tommy writes unapologetically from a Christian point of view. It is a testimony of how one couple of faith handled a devastating personal crisis. In 47 years of pastoral ministry I have witnessed many who have walked by faith "in the valley of death". "Miss Her More Today Than Yesterday" is a story of one couple's faith intersecting a terminal illness. Tommy Rice tells that story in literary form."

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A successful entrepreneur for many years, Tommy Rice has flourished in the car business with Tommy Rice Motors in Byram, Mississippi, and also as a real estate broker in Byram (Tommy L. Rice, Real Estate LLC). An accomplished songwriter, he has ties to the music scene in Nashville that go back several decades. An Alabama native, he's a lifelong Crimson Tide fan. Miss Her More Today Than Yesterday is his first book.

Helping children adapt to new rules

By Guest Columnist Susan Collins-Smith

Parents can help children understand how to stay healthy at school amid the COVID-19 pandemic at the start of the academic year.

"Parents are children's first teachers, and it is important for them to reinforce the benefits of safe practices when returning to school or participating in any public activities," says David Buys, Mississippi State University Extension Service health specialist. "Children need to know the risks of COVID-19, and we have to devote time to giving them developmentally appropriate messages and explaining the importance of preventive behaviors like good hand hygiene, wearing a face covering, physical distancing and others."

Based on current knowledge, most children who contract the illness exhibit limited or no symptoms. Whether or not they have symptoms, children who contract COVID-19 can transmit the disease to family members, school employees and other adults, who could become very ill or die, Buys explains.

Many children going back to the classroom will be required to wear face coverings. Explaining why this is important is just part of the process, especially for young children, says Melissa Tenhet, director and instructor at the Mississippi State University (MSU)



Child Development and Family Studies Center

She notes that parents may need to try different masks for their children to find the right one.

"There are a lot of different types of masks out there," she says. "There is not a one size fits all. In my experiences with children at the center in the last 6 weeks, young children need a mask with ear loops or elastic straps. They have a hard time with tying masks."

In addition to practicing wearing masks at home, Tenhet also offered these tips: Make wearing a mask fun. Let them choose from two appropriate options when they pick out their clothes. This helps the child feel in control, and the adult also will be happy. Pack an extra mask in a zip-top bag in case the one they are wearing gets

wet or soiled. Washable masks must be cleaned in the washing machine. Have enough to get through the week. Wear one mask per day unless it becomes contaminated. Wash reusable masks after each day of use. Throw away disposable masks daily. Wear the mask correctly at all times. It should cover the nose and mouth. Do not remove it to talk to others. Touch only the ear loops, ties or elastic to put on and take off the mask. If the front of the mask is touched, wash hands afterward. Be a role model. Practice with your children, and wear a mask when appropriate. Watch a kid-friendly video that explains the process and why we should all wear masks. It can help start the conversation.

"Tell children what you want them to do instead of what you don't want them to do," Tenhet adds. "Replace negative words, like stop, no and don't with what you want them to do. For example, instead of saying, 'Stop touching your mask,' say, 'Keep your hands away from your mask."

Parents should closely monitor their school's requirements throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Tenhet advises. Although some parents, guardians and other adults in children's lives may disagree with the school's policies, she says adults should not discuss this issue with children or in front of them.

"Don't express or share negative feelings about the school's policies," she says. "Remember, children are always listening, even when you think they aren't. Adult talk needs to be between adults."

Buy adds: "Do the same things at home that you should do elsewhere: good hand hygiene, physical distancing, cleaning spaces frequently, wearing a face covering and minimizing visits in public spaces. It is a good idea to avoid face-to-face contact, especially with older adults in the family."

Learn more about the Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidance for schools on its website at https://bit.ly/2CYPpCv.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Susan Collins-Smith writes for the Mississippi State University Extension Service.

BANKRUPTCY



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