

INSIDE:

News Nuggets	4
Easter Garden photos.....	6
Sports Shorts.....	8
Meet Your Neighbor.....	11
Tending Your Garden	11
Community Calendar	12

Wesson News

SPOTLIGHT

Wesson Bluesman Taught the Greats

Page 14

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PO Box 1028
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Volume 4, Number 4

"Good News You Can Use"

April 12, 2016

Founders Day shopping & fun April 29 & 30

Special to Wesson News

Concert performances by the Co-Lin Jazz Band and the nationally-acclaimed Freedom Quartet gospel singers will kick off Wesson's Founders Day celebration on Friday evening, April 29, with an array of events following into the evening the next day -- a parade, a flea market, a hot dog eating contest, musical entertainment, class reunions, dancing and a spectacular fireworks display.

Upwards of 1,000 persons are expected to shop and have fun at the event in and around the Spring Street area in downtown Wesson and the Old School Community Center. The Wesson Chamber of Commerce sponsors the annual festival for residents and other visitors to celebrate their community.

The Co-Lin Jazz Band will set the mood for the occasion at 6:15 p.m. on Friday, followed by a the Freedom Quartet gospel singers at 7 p.m.

The next day (Saturday, April 30) at 8 a.m., shoppers will begin looking at



Wesson News

Class reunions became a new Founders Day tradition last year. Reunion organizers will set up tents at the Old School Community Center.

what vendors are offering, and opening ceremonies at 10 a.m. will feature an exhibition by the Co-Lin Blue Wave Show Band Drumline, under the direction of Dr. Jason Mathena, followed by Chamber of Commerce President Stephen Ashley's welcoming comments.

At 11 a.m. on Saturday, the Founders Day parade will roll, with the Wesson

Garden Club as the Grand Marshall. They have chosen "Remember When" as the theme to guide participants in fashioning their presence in the event. Floats, for example, might be designed to remember when Wesson was a booming cotton mill town or to recall something that happened just last year as well as long ago, Garden Club president Beverly King explained.

Among the parade participants will be the Wesson High School band, the Wesson Fire Department truck, Co-Lin cheerleaders and mascots; Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts; Lions Club; John Green and his tractor; Brian King and his horse-drawn hearse; horse riders; wagons; buggies; and carriages from the Wesson Wagon Train; other colorful floats created by local businesses and service, civic and fraternal organizations, churches, and individuals; and cars carrying local dignitaries, including Senator Sally Doty and Representative Becky Currie.

Throughout Saturday, numerous street vendors, along with town merchants, will offer food and sell a variety of crafts, antiques, and fleas to visitors in the downtown area. The Wesson Garden Club will have a variety of plants, flowers, trees and pots for sale to help fund its beautification projects. The public library will also be open throughout the day.

The Mississippi Spirit has been
cont. on page 3

Outdoor signage law under study

Wesson News

The new citizens zoning committee is recommending that representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and Board of Aldermen study an ordinance that regulates outdoor advertising and suggest possible changes towards capturing business that town merchants may be losing.

The ordinance, implemented in 2011, prohibits businesses within the Wesson corporate limits to advertise on outdoor signs off their premises. An incident affecting Larry and Jarred

Ashley prompted the zoning board recommendation.

Jarred Ashley reported generating new business after posting an off-premises advertising sign for Ashley's 51 Shop's subs, ribs, and crawfish at the intersection of Highway 51 and Old Highway 51 on a property owned by his father, Larry Ashley. After the sign was knocked down by someone, he learned about the ordinance, was told he could not replace the sign and had to formally request a variance, which the Board of

cont. on page 7

Town looking at new ADA funds

Wesson News

Having completed the renovation of city hall through a Mississippi Development Authority Community Development Block Grant funds awarded under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wesson is looking to finance new projects in a similar way.

Wesson Mayor Alton Shaw says there is now \$50 million to \$60 million available for grants, which Wesson must seek under ADA eligibility.

"One of our biggest hurdles in seeking the available grant monies is the mean average income of Wesson," Shaw

noted. "For many reasons, it is good to have a relatively large average income, but not if you want grant funds."

A renovation project revolving around the public library is the most likely possibility for building an ADA rationale into a grant proposal. The town has also looked at police department renovations, but ADA criteria does not consider police departments public agencies, Shaw said.

"As the grant funders see it, police departments send personnel into the community," Shaw explained. "They are not considered public, because people from the community do not come to them, unlike a library."



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cont. from page 1

Founders Day Events

tentatively scheduled to begin the entertainment and fun at 12 noon on Saturday, with a competition cheer exhibition. At 12:30 p.m., children and adults will compete in separate hot dog eating contests. The Co-Lin Sojourners rock band (1 p.m.), the Jackson area-based Vibe Doctors (2 p.m.) and Brookhaven singer Natalie McKenzie (2:30 p.m.) will provide up-tempo music throughout the afternoon. The Vibe Doctors will bring a unique sound to the program, with Co-Lin Fine Arts instructor Dr. Jason Mathena playing a vibraphone -- an instrument unfamiliar to most people -- and Lucas Pettey and Owen Rockwell on bass and drums delivering familiar jazz and melodies in varied styles in non-traditional ways.

The venue of the festival moves to the Old School Community Center for a town party beginning at 5:30 p.m. with the Camellia Line Dancers and Good Times Line Dancers, under the direction of Sharon Langley, and then Elvis (Wesson's Ricky Bell) entertaining. Street dancing will be ongoing for the partiers in front of the Old School from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m., with timeout at 9 p.m., when it turns dark, for a fireworks display, sponsored by the Town of Wesson. Starting at 3 p.m., former students from local schools can start setting up tents for class reunions at designated areas on the Old School grounds. Reunion organizers should contact the Chamber of Commerce in advance at 601-643-5000 to reserve space for their get-togethers.

Proceeds from concessions sales at the Old School during the evening by the Town of Wesson will be used for purchase and installation of kitchen equipment at the community center.

Founders Day Schedule

Friday, April 29 (Downtown Wesson)

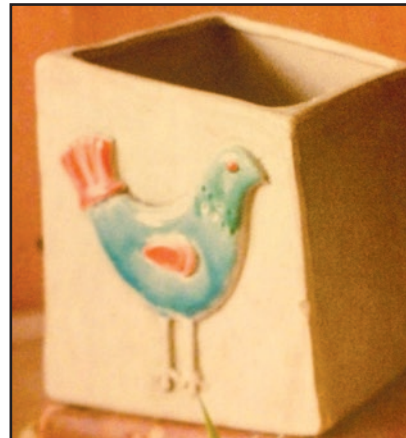
Co-Lin Jazz Band	6:15 p.m.
Freedom Quartet	7 p.m.

Saturday, May 2 (Downtown Wesson)

Flea Market vendors open for business	8 a.m.
Co-Lin Drumline exhibition	10 a.m.
Welcome by Chamber of Commerce President	10:30 a.m.
Stephen Ashley & Introduction of Chamber board & Junior Chamber members	
Founders Day Parade	11 a.m.
Mississippi Spirit cheer exhibition (tentative)	12 Noon
Hot Dog Eating Contest	12:30 p.m.
Co-Lin Sojourners Rock Band	1 p.m.
Vibe Doctors	2 p.m.
Natalie McKenzie	2:30 p.m.

Saturday Evening at the Old School Community Center

Class reunions setup	3 p.m.
Camellia Line Dancers & Good Times Line Dancers	5:30 p.m.
Elvis (Wesson's Ricky Bell)	6:30 p.m.
Street Dancing & Community Party	7 p.m.-11 p.m.
Fireworks Display sponsored by the Town of Wesson	9 p.m.



Photos by Wesson News

Wesson Garden Club will sell flowers, plants and pots like these to raise funds on Founders Day.

Police Blotter

Special to Wesson News

During March, Wesson Police Department activity encompassed:

Citations & arrests:

- Eight speeding
- Two driving with no license
- Four driving with no insurance
- Two driving without a license
- Three driving with an expired tag
- One reckless driving
- One contempt of court violation
- One failure to yield to blue lights
- One running a stop sign
- One DUI
- One possession of beer
- One false identification presented to a police officer
- One credit card fraud
- One order of protection
- One leaving the scene of an accident

On school days, the Wesson Police Department facilitates traffic flow at Wesson Attendance Center with officers on duty between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.

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Three men get prison terms

Special to Wesson News

Two Brookhaven men and a Wesson man have been sentenced to prison terms for the July 2012 armed robbery at the Dollar General Store downtown.

A Copiah County Circuit Court judge sentenced Desmond Williams of Brookhaven to fifteen years on a guilty plea to armed robbery and Vinshaun Motley of Wesson to two years on a guilty plea to accessory after the fact to armed robbery. Following a jury verdict in the court, Laterrence Lenoir of Brookhaven was sentenced to a sixteen-year prison term on conviction for armed robbery.

A joint investigation by Wesson police and the Lincoln Country Sheriff's Office resulted in the arrest of the three men in May 2015. The crime occurred on September 6, 2012, after closing time at the Dollar General. Two masked men robbed the store at gunpoint in the incident.

The three men will serve their time at a Mississippi Department of Corrections facility.

Water tower painting. Painting of

the Wesson water tower on the Co-Lin campus will begin in a little more than a month, Jeff Knight of WGK, Inc., reported to the Board of Aldermen. A grant awarded during the 2015 state legislative session is funding the \$250,000 project. Wesson was one of ten cities in Mississippi to receive funds for local work from the bond issue bill passed by the legislature. Before the painting can begin, WGK will conduct a physical inspection of the tank, Knight explained. "We make a list of all required safety improvements, look at the existing coating on the inside and outside of the tank and identify any modifications we have to make," he said. "The State Department of Health must approve the drinking water based on this report. This thirty-day review is the longest part of the process. Then the town can search for a contractor to do the painting." Wesson Mayor Alton Shaw acknowledged that \$250,000

seems like a lot for the painting job, but noted that similar work on the town's smaller water tower on Highway 51 cost upwards of \$150,000 ten years ago. "We're now looking at painting a bigger tank and are definitely appreciative for the state's help."

High response rate. During 2015, the Wesson Volunteer Fire Department

received 225 calls and missed only eleven to achieve a 95 percent response rate, among the highest of area volunteer fire departments. Of the eleven missed calls, two

were for assistance to another fire department and four were not followed with a second page.

Students hone leadership skills. Six Wesson High School students attended the three-day boys and girls state Lions Clubs leadership conferences last month. Erika Gemelli, Dakota Harris and Kimberly San participated in the girls event, and Dakota Gray, Noah

Martin and Tavontae Crosby went to the boys conference. Wesson Lions Club sponsored the local students.

Top Co-Lin performer. Co-Lin has awarded Bo Johnson, coordinator of its precision machine technology program, its Howell C. Garner High Performance Award.

Cost of electricity falls. Although rates are likely to bounce back in October, falling natural gas prices will mean a collective \$102 million reduction in electric bills for 442,000 Mississippi Entergy customers starting this month -- or a decrease of \$13 from \$93 to \$80 in July for residential customers who use 1,000 kilowatts of electricity per month. State law calls for privately owned utilities to recover their fuel costs without making a profit.

Worst in unemployment. Although jobs are increasing in Mississippi, the state had the worst unemployment rate in the nation at 6.8 percent at the first of the year because the labor force is growing more rapidly, the U.S. Department of Labor reports. The national unemployment rate was 4.9 percent at the beginning of 2016.

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Exhibits spotlight local artists

By Bob Arnold

The Brookhaven Regional Arts Guild (BRAG) spotlighted area visual artists at special shows over the last two months. A month-long exhibit featured thirty-one works of thirteen artists at Co-Lin's Mutton Gallery in February, and the photography of Bill Perkins was displayed at Lincoln County-Brookhaven Public Library during March.

The Mutton showing dramatized the diversity of talent and broad creative landscape of local artists whose backgrounds and experience are as varied as their work. It included work of Kathy Behan, Kay Calcote, Marilyn R. Driskell, Mona Giust, Stephanie Gustavson, Nancy Hank-Myers, Cheri Langston, Rosemary Leggett, Cathy McDonnieal, Maxine Minter, Sue Minter, Janet M. Smith and Perkins.

Some of the artists were born and grew up in the area. Others settled here. Some started working in their art as children and even worked professionally in the art world, while others turned to their art later in life. Most of them were painters, but others expressed themselves in quilting and embroidery, photography, and mixed media.

Several of the artists took time to talk to visitors about their work, background, and inspiration at a special reception:

- Hanks-Meyers doesn't create "paintings," but the two works she displayed at the exhibit demonstrated the possibilities of mixed media in the visual arts. "Makin Do" featured dolls she made, based on characters in a short story she wrote. She also employed a painted twig and bean shells to produce "Flower," a multi-colored work.

- Leggett exhibited "Turquoise on the Cads," an abstract oil, to prove she could paint loosely with free-flowing warm and cool colors in contrast to tight paintings with great detail. Yet "In the Eye of the Beholder" -- an extreme close-up of a horse's head in oil -- displayed her mastery of tight painting.

- Unlike Leggett, who started painting as a child and minored in art in college, Behan exhibited a product of her recent art classes -- "Still Life with Flower," a watercolor-pastel --

at the show. The painter of only two years also displayed "Coffee Pot Cafe" -- a watercolor of the well-known Brookhaven landmark.

- Smith, another childhood artist and later an art teacher, exhibited two cityscapes -- "Mist City," a watercolor which portrays Vicksburg, and "City

The Perkins exhibit reflected the life of a business manager who worked in fourteen different countries over thirty years and travelled in another one hundred, living, he says, "in a National Geographic article, constantly taking advantage of every opportunity to experience something different and always with a camera and lenses."



Photos by Wesson News

Among area artists who exhibited their work at Co-Lin's Mutton Gallery were (left to right) Marilyn R. Driskell, Kathy Behan, Janet M. Smith, Sue Minter, Bill Perkins, Maxine Minter, Kay Calcote, Rosemary Leggett and Nancy Hanks-Myers. Mona Giust, Stephanie Gustavson, Cheri Langston and Cathy McDonnieal are not pictured. Brookhaven Regional Arts Guild (BRAG), which sponsored the exhibit, also displayed the photography of Bill Perkins at the Lincoln County-Brookhaven Public Library.

on a Hill," an acrylic based on the photo of a European town. Quaint downtown areas are favorite Smith subjects.

- Although Calcote, who came to Brookhaven from Texas twenty-nine years ago, started painting as a child, she has only become a serious artist during the past eight years. She showed three pastels at the exhibit -- "Turn of the Screw," a close-up of a screw; "Oh Bouy," a bouy in the sea off the New England coast; and "Old Mill," an impressionistic landscape with a mill alongside a creek.

- Driskell's specialty is oil paintings of people. "103 Degrees," a close-up based on a newspaper photograph of a black worker mopping sweat off his face, is a dramatic painting of the Mississippi summertime heat. "Maui Two-Shoes" caputres her daughter on the beach; "Harrison," her proud grandson after a duck hunt; and "Music Maker," her young granddaughter preparing to play a violin. "With thirteen grandchildren, I have a lot more painting to do," she says.

Growing up in Brookhaven, Perkins started taking pictures with a Kodak Brownie camera at an early age, capturing memories of family summer vacations at scenic destinations like the

Grand Canyon. Moving to twin lens reflex and single lens reflex cameras, he earned a Boy Scout photography merit badge, took pictures for the Brookhaven High School yearbook and contributed photos to the *Purple & White* and *The Mississippian* at Millsaps College and Ole Miss while honing his skills with a camera and in the dark room.

Work in management, administration and finance for Western Geophysical Company of American, Parker Drilling Company and MEDCO Energi of Jakarta took Perkins to Scandinavia, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Egypt, The Sudan, Pakistan, Brazil, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Hong Kong and Kazakhstan. He used his photography and writing for corporate and industry publications and other media, but mostly for his personal pleasure. The library displayed a sampling of his photos, which he continues to organize for larger future exhibits.

BRAG, which has been involved in multiple community endeavors over its brief two-year life, is expanding its shows. It also sponsors workshops for artists, downtown Brookhaven art walks, and partners with Brookhaven Little Theater in providing works for silent auctions. In October, BRAG hosts a public art competition that presents more than \$2,000 in prizes.

Job fair held at Co-Lin



Photos by Wesson News

Upwards of 200 jobs seekers, including many from the community at large, visited prospective employers last month at the Pathways 2016 Job Fair produced by the Co-Lin Career, Technical and Workforce Education program. Representatives of forty-two companies met with college students and persons unconnected with Co-Lin, talked about their organizations, and discussed employment opportunities they offer. Officials attributed the large numbers of non-college job seekers at the event to special promotional efforts. Job seekers met with transportation, engineering and industrial employers in a morning session and computer, office, service and healthcare industry representatives during the afternoon of the day-long event at the Thames Conference Center on the Co-Lin campus. Eight new companies, including Nissan of America, joined the group of employers participating. Above, two prospective employees confer with a Trustmark representative.

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Thirty-Second Easter yard



Wesson News

Starting with this display made for her daughter thirty-two years ago, the Ratliffs have created more than three hundred decorations and replicas, which are arranged in cartoon-like displays -- bunnies at tea parties or peeping out of eggs or over a fence; Jesus carrying the cross and ascending into heaven. In the early days of the Easter yard, Agnes drew the animals and kids, eggs, and other pictures and designs freehand on plywood and Buck cut them out with a saber saw. As Agnes became adept with the saw, Buck, a retired electrician, focused on specialized electrical, mechanical, and other technical work required to make the yard the delightful experience it is. Agnes now typically works from patterns she creates or purchases, sands the wood for painting, traces the design from a pattern onto the wood, cuts out the design and paints to create the yard art.



Wesson News

For the thirty-second year, Agnes and Buck Ratliff wished Wesson Happy Easter on their 500 square foot Timberlanes Road front yard filled with their colorful hand-crafted wooden decorations and replicas with Easter and Spring motifs. The bunnies, chickens, pets and other animals; kids (depicting their own children and grandchildren), eggs and crosses; a church with real stained glass windows, a train, Ferris wheel and merry-go-around delight adults and children alike -- some two hundred every year who drop by, roam the yard and visit with the Ratliffs. Agnes gives specially-prepared Easter packages with candy and other treats to each child visitor.



Wesson News



Two displays in the Easter yard were created in response to requests of grieving parents to (above) memorialize a two-year child who played there before her death and an expectant mother and her unborn child who died in an automobile accident. But the Ratliffs seek to maintain an upbeat, joyful, family-oriented environment as the displays pictured here illustrate. These are a sampling of some of the displays added in recent years.



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cont. from page 1

Outdoor signage law under study

Aldermen would then need to approve in thirty days. Ashley's request to erect a temporary sign was not considered by Aldermen at their March meeting. Although the zoning committee recommended against the variance in April, the Aldermen approved a motion by Michael King to grant a ninety-day variance, with the stipulation that the sign be professionally created.

"Business owners cannot attract people to make purchases in parts of town where they do not know what is available," the Ashleys told members of the Board of Aldermen in March. Employees of Co-Lin, they pointed out, for example, go to Brookhaven for things they would buy in Wesson if they knew they could.

"Wesson businesses lose customers, and the town does not receive sales tax revenue," the Ashleys said. Larry Ashley also said he had surveyed the area and found off-premises outdoor signs around town, which apparently were grandfathered with the implementation of the 2011 ordinance.

"We have decided to recommend that the Chamber of Commerce and the Mayor get together and see if there are some ideas out there for advertising by our merchants in the downtown area," zoning committee chairperson Jeff Knight said. "There is a good bit of traffic that comes from Brookhaven to Wesson going through Co-Lin. I am one of them, but know where everything is. Many people do not, and outdoor signage looks like it would be a good economic development avenue for the town."

One idea is a common sign with several ads placed on it. The Ashleys, however, wondered if the impact of individual ads would be diminished among others. In April, Alderman King suggested the zoning committee might want to consider recommending wording changes to the ordinance and suggest standards for outdoor signage.

"There are a lot of ideas," concluded Knight. "We're suggesting the Mayor and Chamber come up with a good solution."

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Wesson Tennis



Wesson News

Members of the Co-Lin women's tennis team are (left to right) Bayli Battle of Jayess, Juli Kramer and Susanna Ratcliff, both of Brookhaven; Brandi McInnis of Wesson, Madison Warren and Chantel Quarles, both of Brookhaven. McInnis, who brought experience in the number three singles position from last year, and Warren, a demonstrated leader on the court, returned to the 2016 team and freshmen Quarles, Ratcliff, Kramer and Battle, contributed high energy and a willingness to work hard to improve their game. Ashley Windom, who won four state titles as Co-Lin tennis player, was head coach for her second season. Although the team finished 2-9 in 2015, it was the number two National Junior College Athletic Association academic team.



Wesson News

Members of the Co-Lin men's tennis team are (left to right) Will Pennington of Summit, Cole Moak of Wesson, Skyler Moody of Lake Charles, Louisiana, Cory Alderman of Brookhaven, Mateusz Kimelski of Piotrkow, Poland, Braxton Hinton of Brookhaven, Hayes Thompson of Summit, and Drake Nelson of Monticello. Brenda Smith, with a combined career record of 122-30 between the men's and women's tennis programs, coached the team for the third year. The 2015 team, which finished with 7-4 record, returned three sophomores -- Hinton, known for his strong serve and forehand; his doubles partner Nelson, a player who can return almost any shot taken at him; and Pennington, a very technical player from North Pike who has the ability to hit any ball that comes his direction.



Wesson News

Wesson High School's Mary Beth Munn leads tennis team.



Wesson News

Ray Drane returns shot in Wesson High School tennis match.

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Murray State signs gridder



Wesson News

Co-Lin linebacker Marico Paige of Wesson has signed with the Murray State University Racers. Paige, who was Mississippi Association of Community and Junior Colleges second team All State, recorded forty-seven tackles, two sacks, two tackles for losses, two forced fumbles, and one fumble recovery during the 2015 season in which Co-Lin was ranked number four in the nation by National Junior College Athletic Association. Here he is pictured with Co-Lin head coach Glenn Davis (seated left) and Tony McInnis (standing).

SCOREBOARD

March 8-April 12
WESSON HIGH SCHOOL COBRAS

Baseball (Boys)

Record: 13-3. Recent Wins: McComb. 5-4. Brookhaven. 13-9. Crystal Springs. 13-1. Port Gibson. 13-1, 18-12. Hazlehurst. 11-1, 10-0. Jefferson County. 15-1, 11-1. Recent Losses: Loyd Star. 10-2. St. Andrews. 10-6.

Softball (Girls)

Record: 5-6. Recent Wins: Port Gibson. 15-0. Tylertown 17-2. West Lincoln. 4-3. Recent Losses: Pearl. 13-6. Bogue Chitto. 3-2, 9-2. Florence. 11-8

Tennis

Combined boys & girls record: 4-1. Recent Wins: Cathedral. 4-3. Magee. 7-0. West Lincoln. 5-2. Lawrence County. 6-1. Recent Losses: Brookhaven. 5-2

CO-LIN WOLVES

Baseball (Men)

Record: 7-18. Recent Wins: Southwest. 16-6, 3-1. Delgado. 5-3. Baton Rouge. 10-6. East Mississippi. 8-6. Recent Losses: Delgado. 9-8. Southwest. 6-5. Meridian. 12-2, 11-1. Baton Rouge. 8-3. East Mississippi. 9-6. Jones 3-2, 11-1. Northwest. 6-2, 7-5.

Softball (Women)

Record: 28-8. Recent Wins: Mississippi Delta. 18-3, 17-2, 10-2, 9-1. East Mississippi. 11-2, 9-1. Northwest. 8-1, 8-3. Holmes. 10-5, 10-2. Hinds. 11-7, 7-2. Coahoma. 16-0, 17-0. Pearl River. 10-2, 8-5. Northeast. 14-4, 7-3. Recent Losses: Jones. 6-1, 9-0. East Central. 7-5, 9-5.

Tennis

Men's Record . 8-2. Recent Wins: East Central. 6-3, 6-3. Holmes. 9-0. Itawamba. 7-2. Hinds. 8-1. Holmes. 9-0. Recent Losses: Meridian. 8-1. Mississippi Gulf Coast. 5-4

Women's Record: 2-7. Recent Wins: Holmes. 9-0. Recent Losses: East Central. 5-4, 3-6. Itawamba. 9-0. Hinds. 9-0. Meridian. 9-0. Mississippi Gulf Coast. 9-0. East Central. 6-3.

Golf

First in Ron Marshall Spring Fling at Goose Pond Colony, Scottsboro, Alabama. Fourth in Mississippi College Invitational at Lake Caroline Country Club, Madison, Mississippi. Second in Mississippi Association of Junior Colleges Event #6/East Mississippi at Briarwood Country Club, Columbus, Mississippi.



UPCOMING SPORTING EVENTS

APRIL 12

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play Franklin County. 7 p.m.

APRIL 13

Co-Lin women's softball Wolves play Gulf Coast. 3 p.m.

Co-Lin baseball Wolves play Hinds. 3 p.m.

APRIL 14

Co-Lin men's and women's tennis teams in match at Jones. 2 p.m.

Wesson High School varsity girl's softball Cobras play at Tylertown. 4 p.m.

APRIL 15

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play at Franklin County. 7 p.m.

APRIL 16

Co-Lin women's softball Wolves play at Itawamba. 2 p.m.

Co-Lin baseball Wolves play at Coahoma. 12 Noon.

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play Brookhaven. 1 p.m.

Northwest hosts the Mississippi Association of Community and Junior Colleges State Golf Championship, which continues April 17, at Shiloh Ridge Athletic Club, Corinth, Mississippi; and the National Junior and Community Colleges Athletic Association (NJCAA) Region 23 Golf Tournament at Black Acres Country Club, Senatobia, Mississippi, on April 25 & 26. The NJCAA National Golf Tournament is at Swan Lake Resort, Plymouth, Indiana, on May 22-27.

APRIL 18

Co-Lin women's softball Wolves play Baton Rouge. 3 p.m.

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play at North Pike. 1 p.m.

APRIL 19

Co-Lin baseball Wolves play at Pearl River. 4 p.m.

APRIL 20

Community & Junior College men's and women's tennis teams begin state and regional tournaments, which continue through April 23, at Perkinson, Mississippi

APRIL 22

Community & Junior College women softball teams begin first round of state tournament to with continuing play on April 23, the state tournament on April 28 & 29 and the Region 23 tournament on May 5-7 at times and placed to be determined. The World Series is May 11-14 at Clinton, Mississippi.

APRIL 23

Co-Lin baseball Wolves play Holmes. 2 p.m.

APRIL 27

Co-Lin baseball Wolves play at Gulf Coast. 4 p.m.

APRIL 30

Co-Lin baseball Wolves play Itawamba. 2 p.m.

MAY 6

Mississippi Association of Community and Junior Colleges (MACJC) state baseball playoffs start and continue on May 7 with the MACJC state tournament May 12-14, the Region 23 tournament May 19-22 (times and places to be determined) and the NJCAA Division 2 World Series at Enid, Oklahoma, May 28-June 4.

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MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR



Michael Stogner : police officer



Photo by Wesson News

Wesson News

Michael Stogner, a Natchez native and ten-year Wesson resident, has worked in law enforcement since 2001, starting his career with the Hazlehurst Police Department. A graduate of Wilkinson County Christian Academy, Woodville, Mississippi, he worked in a variety of private sector positions before joining the staff at the Copiah County jail. He became a Wesson police officer in December 2007 and also serves the Copiah County Sheriff's Office and Co-Lin police force. He and his wife Misty have two children -- Laila and Zachery.

What is your hobby?

When I am not working, I'm in the woods hunting and fishing.

What is your favorite book or movie?

The Holy Bible is the only book I really have time to read. I like most action movies.

What kind of music do you like?

I am into classic Southern rock -- Credence Clearwater Revival and Lynyrd Skynyrd.

Do you have a favorite musician?

Lynyrd Skynrd. (Editor's note: The band was named by its members, Ronnie Van Zant, Gary Rossington and Bob Burns, as a "tongue-and-cheek homage" to Leonard Skinner -- their coach and teacher at Robert E. Lee High School in Jacksonville, Florida, who sent them to the principal's office for wearing their hair too long. Skinner, as a bar owner, later booked the band for performances and helped it become a rock legend.)

Do you have a wish you want granted.

I would like to see law enforcement officers across the nation and world respected for their jobs like they are in the Wesson area.

How would you spend a \$1 million?

I would start a business -- probably related to my interest in the outdoors, which my family could carry on after I retired.

Editor's note: Suggest neighbors you want to read about via email to bobarnold@wessonnews.com.

Choosing the right tomato

By Guest Columnist Rebecca Bates

America's favorite vegetable -- the tomato -- is really a fruit. But that's another story. There are more than 6,000 varieties available to gardeners, ranging from tiny cherry tomatoes (Tiny Tim, Wild Cherry), to large heirlooms weighing two pounds or more (German Giant, Goliath).

When ripe, they may be yellow, black, white, green, purple, orange and bi-colored. There are varieties for canning, paste, salad, stuffing and, best of all, for eating in a fresh sandwich with mayonnaise, salt and pepper!

TENDING YOUR GARDEN

common letters are: (V) verticillium wilt, (F) fusarium wilt, (N) nematodes, (A) alternaria and (T) tobacco mosaic virus. No varieties resist all diseases.

Transplant to harvest days. Tomato varieties can be classified as early season, mid-season and late season based on the number of days from setting out of plants until the first fruit is harvested.

Early season varieties range from 50 to 69 days to harvest -- Early Girl or Quick Pick. Mid-season varieties range from 70 to

79 days -- Celebrity and Better Boy. Late varieties require 80 days or more -- Ace and Arkansas Traveler. The actual days to harvest will vary from garden to garden according to weather, soil temperature, date of transplant and available sunlight.

Heirloom or Hybrid. Heirloom varieties can be family treasures passed along to each new generation or commercial heirlooms bought and maintained by seed companies. In either case, seed from plants raised in isolation from other tomatoes will give the same variety from year to year. Hybrid tomatoes have different parents and are combined to create varieties with specific traits for disease resistance, size and quantity, compact growth habit or other desirable plant characteristics. Saving seed from hybrid plants will not produce the original variety.

All of this information will be stated on the tag such as: "Better Boy -- Indeterminate, hybrid, has VFNT resistance, ready in 72 days." This old favorite will produce until frost, has verticillium, fusarium, nematode and tobacco mosaic resistance and is considered a mid-season variety. As a hybrid, its saved seed will not produce a true Better Boy the following year.

Knowing the basics will help you choose the best variety for your culinary needs. But truthfully, I never met a tomato I didn't like!

Editor's Note: Rebecca Bates is the Mississippi State University Agricultural Extension Agent based in Brookhaven at the Lincoln County Court House.



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Community Calendar

April weather forecast: The Old Farmers Almanac calls for an average temperature of 64 degrees F (one degree above average) and precipitation of 3.5 inches (one inch below average). Apr 6-14: Scattered t-storms, turning warm; Apr 15-20: T-storms, then sunny, nice; Apr 21-30: Scattered t-storms; cool, then warm.

APRIL 12

Sale of books by Friends of the Library throughout National Library Week (April 11-16) at Lincoln County-Brookhaven Public Library. Fill a bag with books for \$5. Choose from a wonderful selection.

Diabetes support group. Meets weekly on Tuesdays. Education Annex at King's Daughters Medical Center, Brookhaven. 1:30 p.m. For information, call Natalie Ybarra at 601-835-9489.

Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and VFW Auxiliary Post 2618 meet. \$5.00 for meal. VFW Hall on Industrial Park Road, Brookhaven. 5:30 p.m.

APRIL 14

Institute for Learning in Retirement luncheon celebrates the twentieth anniversary of the organization. Entertainment by Co-Lin Jazz Band. \$10. Make reservations by April 7. Thames Center on Co-Lin campus. 10:30 a.m.

Music and Art in Trinity Park brings local music and displays the work of area artists associated with Brookhaven Regional Arts Guild to the park next to Redeemer Episcopal Church (across from the library) in Brookhaven every Thursday at noon during April. The musical lineup features Tony Norton, Andi Cotten, Tyler Bridge, Gregg Smith and Betsy Berryhill. Bring a lawn chair and your lunch and enjoy spring days.

Friends of Library National Library Week party at Lincoln County-Brookhaven Public Library. Kim Sessums, renovation designer for the new look at the library, will speak about his vision for the library. Local authors will also sign books. 5 p.m.-7 p.m. Contact Imogene Ryan about contributing food for the pot luck meal. 601-320-9752

Widows support group meets second Thursday of each month. Furlow Senior Center, Brookhaven. 5 p.m. Call 601-823-6376 or email bvaugnfurlow@gmail.com.

CPR class. \$25 cash or check payable to ProHealth Associates. Wesson Volunteer Fire Department. 6 p.m. Limited class size. To make reservations, contact Frank Newell at 601-466-2941.

Wesson Lions Club meets. Conference Room at Co-Lin student cafeteria building. 6:30 p.m.

APRIL 15

Campfire for Christ starts and runs through April 17 with Jim Gunter as guest speaker and Melody Drinkard as guest musician. Sylvarena Baptist Church. 6:30 p.m. services on Friday and Saturday followed by picnic.

APRIL 18

Beginner clogging classes for persons of all ages beyond age five are held every Monday night. A small fee is charged each month. Brookhaven Recreation Department on Highway 51. Also on March 21 & 28. Call 601-833-3791.

APRIL 19

Brookhaven Regional Arts Guild (BRAG) monthly meeting for artists and patrons. Kaitlin Mullins, local photographer and journalist will demonstrate cynotype photography. Members present will select an Artist of the Month, who will receive \$25 in prize money and whose work will be displayed at Leamandi Studios (March winner was Kathy Behan). If you are an artist, bring a work for consideration. Light refreshments will be served. Lemanadi Arts & Interiors. Downtown Brookhaven just off Cherokee Street. 5:30 p.m. For information, visit Brookhaven Regional Arts Guild on Facebook or email Brookhavenregionalartguild@gmail.com. BRAG is in the final stages of creating t-shirts. Contact Kathy Behan (Kathybehan5@gmail.com) to place an order (\$15.00 for members sizes s-xl and \$17.00 for 2x and 3x).

APRIL 21

Forklift Recertification class provides four hours lecture and four hours of field time. Successful participants receive a completion certificate. \$40 fee. C-Lin Wesson campus. 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. For information, contact Toni Dobbins at 601-643-8716.

50-Plus Club. Under the direction of Denise Riley, the Ambassadors -- an auditioned Co-Lin choir -- will perform a varied repertoire of sacred music, gospel, and vocal jazz. Anderson Building on the Co-Lin campus. 10:30 a.m.

American Legion Post #79 meets. American Legion Lodge on Main Street, Wesson. 6:30 p.m.

APRIL 25

Blood drive every second and fourth Monday. King's Daughters Medical Center Hospital Annex. 1 p.m.-6 p.m. Also on March 28. Call 800-817-7449 for information

APRIL 27

Excel classes cover basic formulas, entering and sorting data, inserting charts, and printing options. April 20 registration deadline on a first-come, first served basis. \$15 fee. Thames Center on Co-Lin Wesson campus. Beginner class runs from 9 a.m.-12 noon and intermediate class runs from 1 p.m.-4 p.m. For information, contact Toni Dobbins at 601-643-8716.

APRIL 28

Movie day at Lincoln County Public Library, Brookhaven. 2 p.m.

Wesson Lions Club meets. Conference Room at Co-Lin student cafeteria building. 6:30 p.m.

APRIL 29

Relay for Life of Copiah County. Cancer survivors honored by American Cancer Society. Hazlehurst High School Football Field. Survivor registration at 4:30 p.m. Survivor reception at 5 p.m. Luminaria ceremony at 9 p.m. Awards ceremony at 10 p.m.

Wesson Founders Day celebration starts. Vendor setup at 5:30 p.m. Two concerts beginning with Co-Lin Jazz Band at 6:15 p.m. Continuing Saturday, April 30, downtown from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. and at Old School Community Center from 4 p.m.-11 p.m. Vendors open at 8:30 a.m. Opening ceremony at 10 a.m. Parade at 11 a.m. Entertainment throughout the day. Street dancing at Old School from 7 p.m.-11 p.m. with fireworks display at 9 p.m.

MAY 3

Wesson Board of Alderman meet. City Hall. 6 p.m.

MAY 5

Mississippi Spring Festival and Fair will host vocal talent competition for ages 13-21 preliminary to the Mid South Fair Talent Competition (MSFTC) the oldest and largest youth talent competition in the nation, which starts September 28. MSFTC awards prize money to first, second and third place winners (\$500 for first place.) Entry Deadline is May 2. Lincoln Civic Center, 1096 Belt Line Drive in Brookhaven. 6:00 p.m. For information or to enter, email jennifer.jackson@live.msa.k12.ms.us or call "601-669-1500. Entry forms are also available at the Brookhaven/Lincoln County Chamber of Commerce, South Whitworth Street, Brookhaven.

MAY 9

OSHA 10-Hour General Industry training starts & continues May 10. The course provides a broad awareness of recognizing and preventing hazards at general industry work site and an OSHA Safety and Health 10-Hour completion card is awarded to successful students. \$125 fee. Registration deadline is May 2 on a first-come, first served basis. Locations vary on Wesson Co-Lin campus. 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Contact Toni Dobbins at 601-643-8716.

MAY 16

ServSafe class, National Restaurant Association food safety training program for hospitality personnel recognized in all 50 states. \$150 or \$75 for test only. Registration deadlines May 2 on a first-come, first served basis. CoLin campus (locations vary). 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Contact Toni Dobbins at 601-643-8716.

MAY 23

Introduction for Forklift Operations, running through May 27, consists of eight hours of lecture and thirty-two hours of field time. Participants should wear loose fitting clothing, steel toe boots. Hard hats and safety classes are suggested. Successful participants earn a certificate of completion. \$100 fee. Limited to five persons. CoLin Wesson campus. 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. For information, contact Toni Dobbins at 601-643-8716.

CONTINUING

Alcoholics Anonymous meets at convenient times seven days of every week. First United Methodist Church, 215 West Cherokee Street, Brookhaven. Open meetings are Mondays at noon and Tuesdays (Big Book Study), Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. Closed meetings are Wednesdays and Fridays (Big Book Study) at noon and Thursdays and Sundays at 7:30 p.m..

Email Community Calendar items to bobarnold@wessonnews.com.

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Garden Club honors yard work

Special to Wesson News

Wesson Garden Club has honored one business and two home owners are Yards of the Month.

Receiving Yard of the Month awards from the Garden Club were:

- Copiah Bank for its shrubs and neatly, trimmed symmetrical landscape
- Scott and Sharon King in the Wesson corporate limits for their neatly cut lawn, clean beds and appropriately trimmed trees
- Mike and Sandy Graham on Beauregard Road in a rural area. for their balanced landscape and fountain as a focus feature

The Yard of the Month awards reflect the Wesson Garden Club's vision of constantly beautifying the Wesson area, maintaining its cleanliness and cultivating a citizenry that values and protects natural resources and assumes responsibility for enhancing the environment.

Each month through October, the program will recognize properties in the business, Wesson residential and rural residential (limited to Wesson School District) categories. Yard of the Month signs will be posted on properties of owners and tenants who are honored for their yard work.

The Yard of the Month selections are based on maintenance and principles and elements of landscape design.

The Garden Club selection committee will tour the Wesson area each month to choose yards for honors. Although formal nominations are not required, the Garden Club invites suggestions from persons. Call or text 601-757-7724 to nominate qualified yards, especially for those outside the Wesson corporate area.



Wesson News

Scott and Sharon King's yard was commended for its neatly cut lawn and clean beds.



Wesson News

Fountain-focus and balanced landscape were features of Mike and Sandy Graham's yard.



Wesson News

Copiah Bank was noted for symmetrical landscape.

Wesson Garden Club judges score contenders for the Yard of the Month as follows:

1. Fifty points for maintenance.

Are the beds weed free and mulched? (10 points) Clean bed lines,turf and ground covers edged, hard surfaces clean? (10 points) Lawn cut at proper height and clear of debris? (20 points) Trees and shrubs appropriately trimmed? (10 points)

2. Twenty-five points for principles of landscape design.

Unity: Does the design fit the architecture of the home? (5 points) Balance: Does the landscape have symmetrical or asymmetrical balance (no dominating elements)? (5 points) Proportion: Are the plants in scale with one another and the home? (5 points) Emphasis: What is the focus? Can you see the front door? Does the design draw you away from utilities? (5 points) Rhythm: Does the design keep the eye moving? Are colors and plant materials repeated consistently? (5 points)

3. Twenty-five points of elements of landscape design.

Lines: Do the bed lines provide focus? Are they distracting or impractical to maintain? (5 points) Texture: Are different plants used to provide inter-activeness within a bed? Fine textures for close beds and coarse textures for distant beds. (5 points) Visual Movement: Grasses, water, birds, butterflies, flags, wind chimes. (5 points) Color: Warm colors advance or excite. Cool colors calm or recede. Use of complimentary colors together. (10 points).

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Wesson bluesman taught the greats

By Guest Columnist Shaw Furlow

Houston Stackhouse, born Houston Goff in 1910 on the Randall Ford plantation in Wesson, is celebrated as THE local contributor to Mississippi's blues heritage and tradition.

While he never had the financial success and world acclaim of so many of his contemporaries, Stackhouse's influence was felt for generations.

As a young teen, he moved to Crystal Springs and assumed his stepfather's surname (Stackhouse). Most of his adult life was spent in Helena, Arkansas, where he died in 1980. He was not particularly known as a guitarist or singer, and, in the first heyday of the blues, he was mostly overlooked.

For the most part, he was not well known outside of the Mississippi and Arkansas Delta and made only one



trip abroad. I guess that could be the end of the story, which on the outside looks less than stellar. But as with a lot of these bluesman, the story lies somewhere beneath the surface.

Stackhouse first heard the blues as a boy in Wesson and was influenced by fiddle player Lace Powell, and later Crystal Springs' Tommy Johnson and Lonnie Chatmon of the Mississippi Sheiks. Stackhouse learned to play several instruments before deciding the guitar was for him. Over the years, he played in dance bands, entertaining both black and white audiences.

He found his first real success, however, after moving to Helena to join his cousin Robert Nighthawk. Nighthawk, who was born Robert Lee McCollum

and performed at different times as Robert McCoy before settling on Robert Nighthawk as his stage name, learned to play slide guitar from Stackhouse. McCoy already had name recognition and a regional following, thanks to a show he

did weekly on Helena's KFFA radio. Stackhouse joined the house band for a little over a year before striking out



Photo Special to Wesson News

Stackhouse

on his own. For several years, McCoy disappeared from the music scene, only to surface as Nighthawk playing a new electric slide version of the blues. Behind him on stage was his cousin Stackhouse accompanying him on guitar.

Stackhouse traveled the area like so many other itinerant musicians of the time, and along the way hooked up with all the greats. Among them, pianist Pinetop Perkins from Belzoni, Mississippi, with whom he performed live shows and made recordings. Perkins is in the Mississippi Musicians Hall of

Fame, the Blues Hall of Fame and a recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Grammy Foundation.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, Stackhouse tutored many area guitarists in slide guitar techniques -- the Father of Country Music, Jimmy Rogers from Meridian; and Sammy Lawhorn of Little Rock, who played guitar in Muddy Waters' band.

In 1967, musicologist George Mitchell, who has documented so many of the blues artists in Mississippi, recorded Stackhouse, drummer Peck Curtis and Nighthawk as the Blues Rhythm Boys. In 1972, Stackhouse recorded his only solo album, "Cryin' Won't Help You," which was not released as a CD until 1994, fourteen years after his death.

Houston Stackhouse is recognized in his home town with a Blues Trail Marker by the Old School Community Center in Wesson and the acoustic stage at the Arkansas Blues and Heritage Festival is named in his honor. Stackhouse continued to play locally until his death in 1980.

That's about it for this month. Until next time, support the arts!

Editor's Note: R. Shaw Furlow is director of the Mississippi Musicians Hall of Fame.

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Consider donating life during April

By Guest Columnist
Dr. Stephanie Duguid

During April -- National Donate Life Month, which has been sponsored by Donate Life America and its partnering organizations since 2003 - it is fitting to both celebrate and learn about one of the most remarkable success stories in the history of medicine: donation and transplantation. This amazing medical development gives hope to thousands of people with organ failure and provides many others with active, renewed lives.

Yet despite continuing advances, the need for organs and tissue is vastly greater than what is available for transplantation. More than 121,000 Americans (men, women and children) are on the waiting list for a lifesaving transplant -- almost 1,500 Mississippians. Every ten minutes, a new name is added to the National Transplant Waiting List. One organ donor can save up to eight lives and heal the lives of more than fifty others, but twenty-two people die every day waiting for a transplant they will never receive.



Misconceptions and inaccuracies about donations are part of the problem. Start with these facts: Anyone can be a potential donor regardless of age, race, or medical history. All major religions in the United States support organ, eye and tissue donation and see it as the final act of love and generosity toward others. If you are sick or injured and admitted to the hospital, the number one priority is to save your life. Organ, eye and tissue donation can only be considered after you are deceased. When you are on the waiting list for an organ, what really counts is the severity of your illness, time spent waiting, blood type, and other important medical information, not your financial status or celebrity status. An open casket funeral is possible for organ, eye and tissue donors. Through the entire donation process, the body is treated with care, respect and dignity. There is no cost to the donor or their family for organ or tissue donation. Information about an organ donor is only released to the recipient if the family of the donor requests or agrees to it.

Mississippi Organ Recovery Agency (MORA) /Donate Life Mississippi -- a

not-for-profit organization that seeks to motivate state residents to save and enhance life through organ, eye and tissue donation, can help. MORA has more than 730,000 Mississippians who have registered as organ donors, and its staff is committed to educating the public about the process of donation and to dispelling the common myths that surround it.

Mississippi residents who are at least 18 years old can enroll in the Mississippi Donor Registry. Do not eliminate yourself as a donor because you think you will not qualify or be able to help. Each potential organ, eye, and tissue donor is evaluated on an individual basis for suitability. Possible organ donations include the

**LIVING
+HEALTHY+**

heart, liver, kidneys, lungs, pancreas and small intestine. Tissue donations include corneas, eyes, skin, bone, tendons, ligaments, vessels and heart valves.

Registering as an organ, eye and tissue donor is granting first person authorization that this is your final wish. There are three ways to enroll in Mississippi's Donor Registry:

- Register online at donatelifems.org;
- Register when you renew your

Mississippi driver's license at a Mississippi Department of Public Safety examiner's station;

- Fill out a written form at a MORA registration table.

Be sure to tell your family you've made this decision.

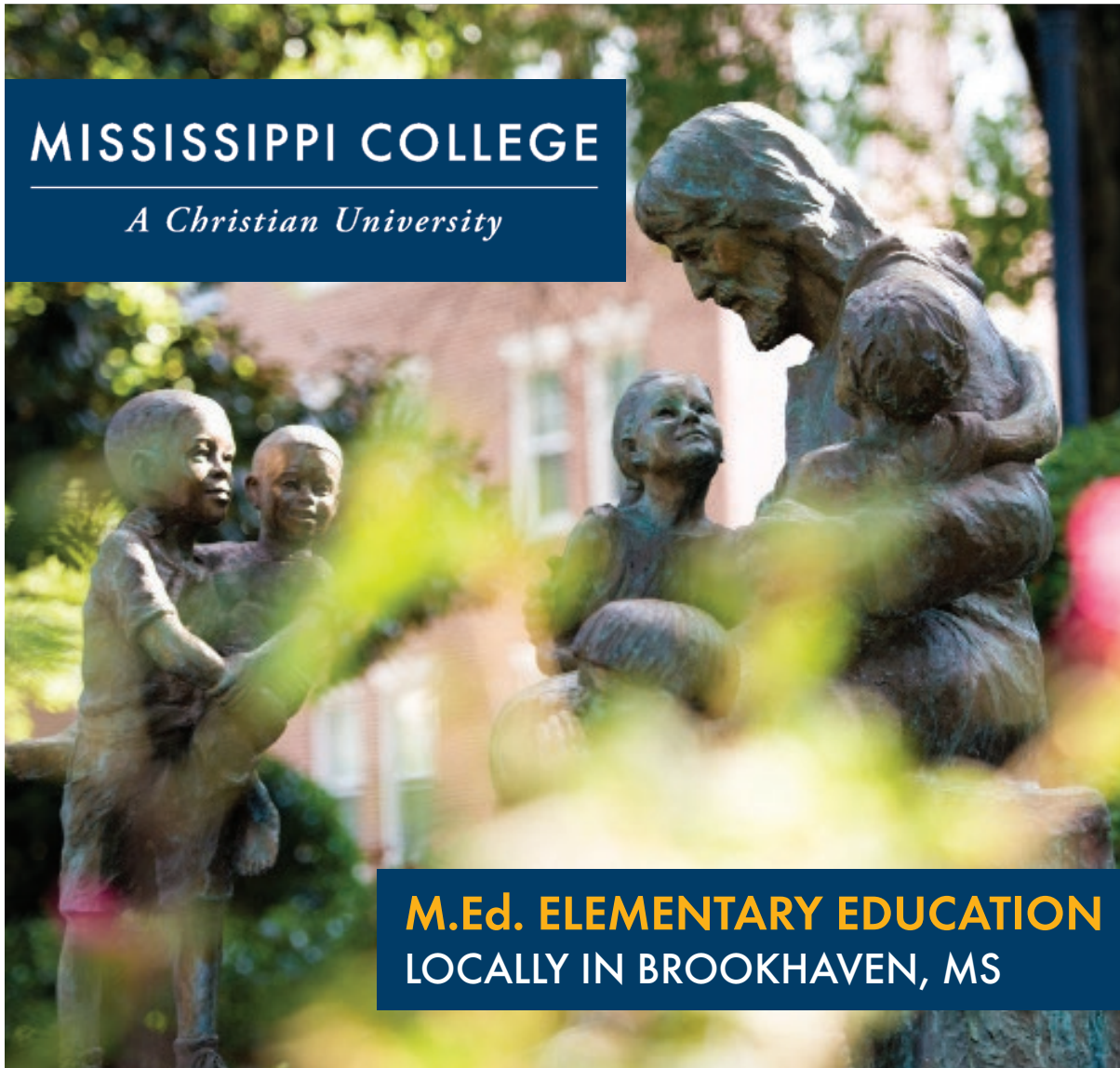
There are other things you can do. If organ and tissue donation is not what you had in mind, but you still want to help, you may consider raising awareness, volunteering or giving to the cause. You can also join the MORA Facebook page, follow MORA on Twitter or share your own story. You may simply want to be a part of one of the many outreach activities such as the Racing for Donation 8K Run/Walk starting at 7:30 a.m. on April 30 at MORA in Flowood.

Members of the MORA staff are available to speak on the importance of organ donation at most any time. Contact msora.org/education or call 601-933-1000 for details.

Editor's Note: Dr. Stephanie Duguid is Assistant Dean of Academic Instruction and the Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Division Chair 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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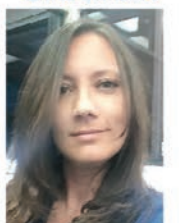
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