

INSIDE:

Meet Your Neighbor	2
Sports Shorts	6
Area Arts	8
Chow Time	11
Living Healthy	16

Wesson News

SPOTLIGHT

Annual Flea Market

Page 7

Volume 13, Number 10

“Good News You Can Use”

October, 2025

New Farmer's Market & Taco Tuesdays



Special to Wesson News

Photos Special to Wesson News

Wesson Chamber of Commerce has started a weekly Farmer's Market & Taco Tuesday.

The Chamber launched the ongoing event on Tuesday, September 30, and it will continue on Tuesdays at the concrete slab at the Lone Pine Shopping Center on Highway 51 at the south stoplight. The hours are 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. During inclement weather, the event will move inside. Otherwise, it will be outside under the Mississippi sun.

While shopping for fresh produce brought by local farmers, visitors can munch on tacos and tamales prepared by Hispanic Heritage Kitchens and Jonas

Hernandez from Beauregard.

Honey was sold at the first event by Broken House Farms and at the second event by Buffy Girls Farms. At the inaugural event, Patrick Kinkaid from Reservation Farms was the lone farmer offering mustard and turnip greens, okra and squash. At the second event, he brought along some tomatoes.

Chamber President Teri Bath says she is seeking more farmers for the Market, food vendors who complement the Taco Tuesday theme with Mexican specialties and arts and crafts vendors – all locals from Copiah County.

“We’ve started small and are looking to grow,” she says.

For information, contact Bath at 601-757-3949

Higher expenses propel millage rate

Special to Wesson News

Wesson Aldermen have adopted a 2026 fiscal year budget with revenues up 4.2 percent and expenditures up 10.8 percent that requires a 9.9 percent millage rate increase on property taxes.

For the fiscal year, the Town is projecting total expenses of \$1,430,550 with revenues of \$1,627,757 compared to FY 2025's revenues of \$1,561,757 and expenses of \$1,290,100.72



The millage rate increase will help cover lost income from the sales tax (\$10,000) and the Mississippi use tax (\$130,000 received from the state for infrastructure) along with higher costs reflected in the jump in budgeted expenditures.

The Town's budget encompasses revenues that pay for general government expenses, the police and street departments, Old School Community Center and public library; and revenues and expenses for the fire and water/sewer departments, and water meters.

Other budget highlights:

- General government expenditures budgeted at \$331,250 included increases in salary expenses (\$80,000 to \$145,000), retirement expenses (\$18,400 to \$23,000) and legal and audit costs (\$35,000 to \$45,000).
- Wesson Police Department (WPD) salaries rose to \$250,000 from \$235,000 while reduced personnel expenses accounted for a drop in the street department's budgeted expenses from \$91,050 to \$67,600.
- Estimates of Old School Community Center and library expenditures were up slightly.
- The fire department's projected income and expenses remained at \$32,532 and \$28,450 respectively.
- Garbage/waste management, repairs and administrative costs drove the budgeted increase in water/sewer department budgeted expenses from \$583,650.72 to \$647,200 on estimated revenues of \$697,000 with increases in metered sales to customers and sewer charges.
- Water meter revenues and expenses are again budgeted at \$7,025 and \$5,000 respectively.



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Artist brings works to Mississippi

By Bob Arnold

Through Wesson Public Library, which has been displaying her paintings in recent weeks, locals are becoming acquainted with the art of Miami transplant Joan Ritchie Boyd.

Boyd and her husband Ralph settled in Ruth three years ago where her cousin, Wesson Library director Marilyn Britt, discovered her realist and impressionist paintings, and thought they should be shared with the community.

"I started painting when I was 14 years old in high school in South Carolina," she relates.

Her first work was a large mural painted for a Boy Scout troop, and then she started doing set designs for plays, including backdrops for a *Guys & Dolls* production at AC Flora High School in Columbia, SC, and *Bye, Bye Birdie* for a Fort Jackson, SC, theater.

A self-taught artist, Boyd makes jewelry with beads and stained glass, paints in acrylics and oils, draws with pen and ink, creates pastels with chalk and uses silk screen for prints.

While art has been her ongoing hobby, Boyd has pursued a varied career since graduating from high school when she was 16 years old, starting in data processing and working as an executive secretary in the early 1970s. After working in Greensboro, NC, Columbia, SC, and Charleston, SC, she moved to Florida in 1978 – "a year after a landmark snowfall in Miami," she recalls. For 10 years, she worked on ambulances as a paramedic after studying Emergency Medical Technology at Broward Community College. In 1987, Boyd earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration at Nova Southeast University at Davis, Florida, went to work for the Center for Disease Control, and then joined the U.S. Postal Inspection Service as an administrative specialist before retiring.



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Boyd and her husband, a retired New York Institute of Technology physicist, whom she married in 1990, came to Ruth where she had inherited a property from her father, who had lived in McComb. They are living in an underground house there while building a two-story house. Boyd has one son, David, a technical mechanic, and four grandchildren.

What are your hobbies?

I guess art is my career now, since I even sell some of my works. So my hobbies are genealogy, sewing on a machine and hand embroidery.

Are you a reader?

I do a lot of research related to building a house, genealogy and other interests.

How about music?

In South Carolina, I played the violin – first chair in competition, and solo at special events. I also attempt to play piano.

Movies, theater, television?

I follow news and current events, enjoy sci-fi and shows and documentaries focused on nature and animals.

If you won a lot of money in the lottery, how would you spend it?

I'd help my family, buy a boat and invest in property locally and in Florida.

How would you change the world?

I would work for peace through common sense political non-partisanship, art and religion and strengthening nuclear families.

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR



October yard of the month



Special to Wesson News

Wesson Garden Club recognized the landscaping efforts of Laura and Shawn Moored at 1186 Springhill Road as its October Yard of the Month. The club makes Yard of the Month awards based on maintenance principles and elements of landscape design 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 awards honor properties in organizational, town residential and rural residential (limited to Wesson School District) categories.



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GOAT camp delights 250 kids

Special to Wesson News

The “God Over All Things” (GOAT) Kids Camp hosted by Ricky and Jessica Breazeale moved to Wesson Park on the evenings of September 30 and October 1 for the first time after spending the past five years in Brookhaven.

Some 250 campers were on hand for the free event made possible by individual and group volunteers who make it a great experience for the kids.

At the most recent camp, Copiah Nutrition hosted volleyball and science experiments that taught God’s love and Christ’s redemption. The American Legion Auxiliary hosted Storytime with Linda Mehri, who read Bible stories. Ladarra Newsome of Brookhaven did free face painting for the kids. KNOW Ministries of Jackson hosted kickball, and Bishop Barlow, its founder, talked to the kids about “loving the Matthews” of the world – the “tax collectors” not respected in biblical times in the modern world. As happens at each camp, there weren’t enough Bibles, but Barlow brought some free for kids who who wanted one.

Dinner on the first night was Shop and Wash pizza provided by Salmon Point Development and Teri Bath. The guest speaker during dinner was Lexi Pre-stridge of Wesson.

On the second and final night of camp, Strong Hope Baptist Church youth group hosted flag football and salvation bracelet-making. Copiah Nutrition led volleyball fun again and brought a new science experiment to teach putting on the helmet of salvation. Dinner was provided by the Wesson Chamber of Commerce, with McKinsey Blackwell of Brookhaven and a member of Co-Lin Baptist Student Union, who is very passionate about outreach, as speaker. She gave every camper a bracelet that she used to share the gospel and charged each camper to share what they learned with their friends.

The final guest speakers at camp were Heather Laird and Mary Margaret Woods, both of Wesson.

Organizers say Wesson High School BETA Club, Nena Smith, Grace Foam Solutions, Ginny Hart and many others contributed time and space to make it all happen.

The next camp is April 6 and 7 at Wesson Park. For information, contact Ricky Breazeale (admin@gracefoamsolutions.com).



Photos Special to Wesson News



KING'S DAUGHTERS MEDICAL CENTER NEWS



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PAIN MANAGEMENT



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All nursing students pass test



Special to Wesson News

By Bob Arnold

All ten Practical Nursing graduates in the Co-Lin Wesson Campus Class of 2025 passed the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nurses (NCLEX-PN).

The accomplishment highlights the dedication of both students and faculty within the program, Co-Lin officials say. The NCLEX-PN is a nationally recognized exam required for licensure as a practical nurse, and first-time pass rates are a key measure of program quality and student readiness for the workforce.

"We are incredibly proud of these graduates," said Practical Nursing Director Hope Berry. "A perfect pass rate is a direct reflection of the hard work and commitment of our students, as well as the excellence of our instructors who prepare them to meet the highest standards of patient care."

Students included Rebecca Adams and Kyla Barcenas, both of Brookhaven; Rebekah Carr of Bogue Chitto, Tyranesha Davis of Harrisville, Angela Freeman of Fayette, Cassidy Hunt of Bude, Erica Johnson of Clinton, and Ambria Mackey, Zarreyah Thompson, and Kaci Weeks, all of Brookhaven.

Co-Lin offers the one-year Practical Nursing program on all three campuses: Wesson, Natchez, and Simpson County. Students are trained with the knowledge, skills, and hands-on clinical experience needed to succeed in today's healthcare field upon graduation. For more information about Co-Lin and all programs offered, visit www.colin.edu.

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Thornton speaks



Special to Wesson News
Students in a Co-Lin public speaking class savored the stories and information brought to them by Bobby Thornton, Southern Area Vice Commander of the American Legion from Wesson Drane-Prine Post 79. Thornton, seated at center, surrounded by the students, spoke about his military career and how a big part of his life and career journey included Co-Lin. He also talked about the American Legion, how it was established, its “Four Pillar” program and how students can become part of the American Legion Family. “It’s always great to help influence our leaders of tomorrow,” said Thornton.



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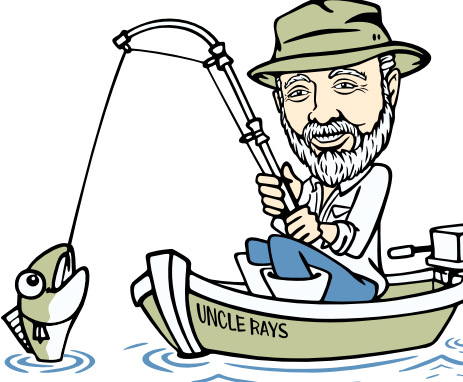


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Soccer seconds

Ole Brook FC Boys Blue 13/14 finished second in their division at the annual fall Rankin Super Cup. Going 2-0 into play, Ole Brook FC had its sights set on winning the championship, but lost 2-1 after tying the game on a penalty kick by Preston Kennedy. Meanwhile, the Ole Brook Futbol Club U11 boys also placed second with a 2-1 win in the Rankin Super Cup after a strong 3-0 win to start and losing 2-1 in a tough match.



Wesson News

FC Boys Blue 13/14 were (back left to right) players Mason Bales, Ellis Smithhart, Jameson Medlin, Barron Brassel, Kingsley Leopold, Gage Windham, Eli Medlin, Coach Cameron Newell; (front left to right) Preston Kennedy, Easton Bynum, Keller Porter, Griffin Newell, Konner Minton, Braxton Shoemake and Aiden Whittington.



Wesson News

U11 players were (left to right) Beckham Smith, Jackson Traylor, Finley Jordan, Liam Medlin, Aiden Arnold, Simms Hodges, Henry Hydrick, Leighton Chambers, Bishop Gaskin, Beckham Barney, Kash Leopold, Taylor Warren, Thatcher Hodges and Landon Byrd.

Cobras in playoffs



Wesson News

Wesson High School (WHS) Lady Cobras volleyball team is in playoff competition after its second place finish in the district with junior varsity and varsity victories against the Wilkinson County Lady Wildcats. Recognized on the team's senior night at its last home game were (left to right) Jer'Keivsha Edwards, Sydnee Westrope, Brianna Dixon, Jamirah Harvey, and Manager Dakiyah Butler.

Volleyball added to sports lineup

By Bob Arnold

Copiah-Lincoln Community College has announced the addition of women's volleyball as a varsity sport beginning in the Fall 2026 semester. The new program will expand athletic opportunities for female student-athletes and further enhance the college's commitment to providing a well-rounded student experience.

"We are excited to add women's volleyball to our athletic program at Co-Lin," said Bryan Nobile, Co-Lin Athletic Director. "This is a chance to grow women's athletics, compete at a high level, and add another exciting program for our fans and community to rally behind."

The volleyball program will compete in the Mississippi Association of Community Colleges Conference (MACCC) and the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA). With volleyball being one of the fastest-growing sports in Mississippi and across the country, Co-Lin officials believe the addition will attract talented student-athletes from across the college district and beyond.

Co-Lin President Dr. Dewayne Middleton said the decision reflects the college's mission to support students both in the classroom and through extracurricular opportunities.

"This is an exciting step for our athletic program and our entire college family," said Dr. Middleton. "We look forward to welcoming our first volleyball team in Fall 2026 and can't wait to see them represent the Wolf Pack."

Co-Lin joins other MACCC schools competing in volleyball including Jones, East Central, Meridian, Pearl River, MS Gulf Coast, Southwest MS, Northeast MS, Itawamba, and Northwest MS. Details on coaching staff and program structure to be announced in the coming months.

For more information about Co-Lin Athletics, visit www.colinathletics.com

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Annual flea market is October 18

By Bob Arnold

For the fifty-fourth time, the streets of downtown Wesson will be filled with vendors for the annual Wesson Flea Market, sponsored by the Wesson Volunteer Fire Department (WVFD).

On Saturday, October 18, crafters, artisans and more from around the Southeast will converge on Wesson to offer arts and crafts items, fleas, clothing, food, snacks and refreshments, among other things, to thousands of browsers and shoppers.

A day organized each year by the Wesson Volunteer Fire Department, the event typically has more than one hundred fifty vendor booths for shoppers to peruse. Individuals, church groups, clubs, civic organizations and businesses set up their tents and welcome market-goers from far and wide.

The Flea Market starts at 8 a.m. on Highway 51, and Factory, Spring and Beech Streets. It will be open until 4 p.m. Food offerings will be on Factory and Spring Streets.

For information about booth space and registration, visit the "Wesson-FleaMarket" Facebook page.

Vendors are encouraged to set up the day before the event, and streets will be open for setup after 6 p.m. on Friday, October 17. Vendors should



Special to Wesson News

check in at the Information Booth under the "Wesson Fire Department" banner prior to setting up. Vendors must furnish their own tables, chairs and displays.

Only vehicles with merchandise, tents, etc. will be allowed in the flea market area for setup.

Vendors must be set up and ready for customers by 8 a.m. on Saturday,

October 18.

Typically, vendors for the flea market come from throughout Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Texas and Tennessee. While parents shop, children can enjoy a special fun zone that will be set up near Dollar General.

Started by a local merchants' association, WVFD turned the event, known today as the "Wesson Flea

Market," into a major fundraiser held annually on the third Saturday in October. The volunteer fire fighters say the booth rentals from the event helps to generate approximately \$5,000 each year to purchase equipment for the fire department.

For more information, contact the fire department at 601-265-1694 or WessonFD@gmail.com.

WESSON AREA DINING GUIDE

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MSA dancers in special training



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Pictured (left to right) are Antonio Fini, Eydi Kitchens, Faith Alford and Tammy Stanford.

By Bob Arnold

A four week program during the summer under the artistic direction of Antonio Fini provided intensive training, mentorship, and performance opportunities for two Mississippi School of Arts seniors from Copiah County among just ten worldwide.

Faith Alford and Eydi Kitchens, both from Crystal Springs and MSA dance students, participated in the Villapiana, Italy, experience, on apprenticeships they were awarded with Fini Dance Junior Company, an elite pre-professional dance program that bridges the gap between student training and a professional career.

At the Italian town, which was recently named “City of Dance,” the Copiah County dancers worked with renowned choreographers and artists from both the European and American dance worlds. They engaged in daily ballet classes led by esteemed instructors, ensuring a strong technical foundation:

- Ballet. Michael Mao, Michael Mao Dance, New York.
- Ballet. Concetta Barillaro, acclaimed Italian ballet teacher with a distinguished national career.
- Contemporary and Modern Choreography, Yoshito Sakuraba, Abarukas Dance, New York.
- Choreography. Gianni Santucci, choreographer for ballet, opera, film, and Netflix Productions.
- Professional Performance Coaching. Abby Silva, Parsons Dance.



“This immersive experience provides an extraordinary opportunity for young dancers to train and perform at a pre-professional level, giving them a taste of what it means to be part of a professional company” said Tammy Stanford, Director of the Dance program at MSA.

As part of the Fini Dance Junior Company, dancers also have the honor of performing at the Fini Dance Festival, an internationally recognized dance event.

The apprenticeship is a rare and prestigious opportunity for dancers at this stage in their careers. Only 10 apprenticeships are awarded world-wide. It provides direct mentorship from industry professionals, builds connections with international artists, and prepares them for the next step in their journey—from student to professional dancer.

MSA is an eleventh and twelfth grade visual and performing arts residential, public high school in Brookhaven. Students not only meet and exceed the traditional Mississippi high school curriculum, they receive special instruction in visual arts, vocal music, dance, writing/literary arts and filmmaking/media arts and theatre. MSA also has a “Collegiate Academy” program in which qualified students can earn their high school diploma and an associate degree at the same time at no cost. In addition to MSA students winning awards for their work on the state, regional and national levels, the school consistently has one of the highest ACT averages in the state.

Students interested in MSA apply their sophomore year. MSA also offers a Summer Camp for rising 8th-10th graders with scholarships available. For more information, contact admissions@msabrookhaven.org, visit www.msabrookhaven.org or call 601-823-1300.

Blue Wave scholarship recipients



Wesson News

Four Co-Lin Blue Wave Show Band scholarship recipients were recognized at the annual scholarship reception at Co-Lin. Pictured (left to right) are Jessica Breazeale, Co-Lin Alumni and Foundation Band/Colette chapter president; Mara Norwood, Ralph and Dot Franklin Colette Scholarship recipient; Hayden Huffman of Magee, Mark Hamilton Memorial Scholarship recipient; Jarvis Wilson, recipient of the Clyde Wilson Band and Colette Scholarship; Geralyn Russell, band/Colette alumni chapter vice president; and Antwone Peters of Prentiss, Stanley Stewart Band Scholarship recipient. The Franklin Colette Scholarship was established by former Colettes in 2000 for deserving returning sophomore Colettes in the Co-Lin district. Dot Franklin was instrumental in establishing the Colettes in 1949 and Ralph Franklin was band director noted for devising innovative performances and use of props. The Hamilton scholarship was established to honor Mark Hamilton, a 1979 graduate and past president of the Band and Colette Alumni Chapter. He was instrumental in the development of the Princess Ball fundraiser, which has raised thousands of dollars to support the college and the Blue Wave Show Band. A recipient must have at least a 3.0 GPA and be a member of the band. The Wilson scholarship was established to honor Clyde Wilson, a 1950 graduate who returned as band director for 10 years. Under his leadership, the Blue Wave Band became one of the most outstanding community college bands in the nation. A recipient must be a member of the band, a member of the auxiliary, a Colette, or a manager in good standing, and have completed at least one semester and have a minimum of a 2.0 GPA. The Co-Lin Band and Colette Alumni Chapter established the Stewart scholarship in 2015 to honor the former band director who was involved with the Co-Lin music program for more than 40 years. The auditorium in the Maggie Flowers Ewing Building is also named in his honor. A recipient must have completed at least one semester with at least a 2.0 GPA and be a member of the band, a Colette, in the auxiliary, or a manager. Co-Lin's Alumni Association's Bluewave Band and Colette Chapter raises money for student scholarships, with the annual Princess Ball, a father-daughter dance held in the college's Thames Center every February, generating the most funds.

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Co-Lin enrollment surpasses 3,000

By Bob Arnold

Co-Lin is celebrating a major milestone with enrollment for the Fall 2025 semester surpassing 3,000 students for the first time since 2019. A total of 3,018 students are currently enrolled across the college's three campuses and online programs.

Enrollment at Co-Lin has been steadily increasing since the spring of 2023, marking a period of consistent growth. College leaders attribute this success to the dedication of Co-Lin's students, the commitment of faculty and staff, and the support and vision of the administrative team and Board of Trustees.

"The continued success of our college is a direct reflection of the people who make up the Co-Lin family," said Co-Lin President Dr. Dewayne Middleton. "We are proud of our students, grateful to our faculty and staff, and thankful for the leadership and support of our Board of Trustees. Most importantly, we are honored by each student who has chosen Co-Lin as the place to further their education."

Known as The Place To Be, Co-Lin serves students across southwest and central Mississippi by offering academic, career-technical, workforce, and adult education programs with a vibrant student life experience.

For more information about Co-Lin or to schedule a personalized campus tour, visit www.colin.edu.

Co-Lin workplace wins recognition

By Bob Arnold

Co-Lin is one of the best colleges in the nation to work for, according to the Great Colleges to Work For program.

The results, reported in a special insert of The Chronicle of Higher Education, are based on a survey of nearly 200 colleges and universities across the nation. In all, 76 of those institutions achieved "Great College to Work For" recognition for specific best practices and policies.

Co-Lin won honors in six categories this year:

- Job Satisfaction & Support
- Mission & Pride
- Compensation & Benefits
- Professional Development
- Confidence in Senior Leadership
- Faculty & Staff Well-being

In addition to selection in these six categories, the college also earned special distinction as an Honor Roll institution, a designation awarded to the top 10 four-year colleges and top four two-year colleges in each size group that are recognized in the greatest number of categories. This is Co-Lin's seventh time being recognized as a Great College to Work For, and the third time with Honor Roll distinction.

"This recognition reflects the incredible people who make up the Co-Lin family," said Co-Lin President Dr. Dewayne Middleton. "Our faculty and staff are deeply committed to serving students, supporting one another, and carrying out our mission day in and day out. To be named not only a Great College to Work For, but also to earn Honor Roll distinction, is evidence of the pride, purpose, and teamwork that defines Co-Lin."

Out of the 15 community colleges in Mississippi, Co-Lin was one of only three community colleges that achieved Great College to Work For status.



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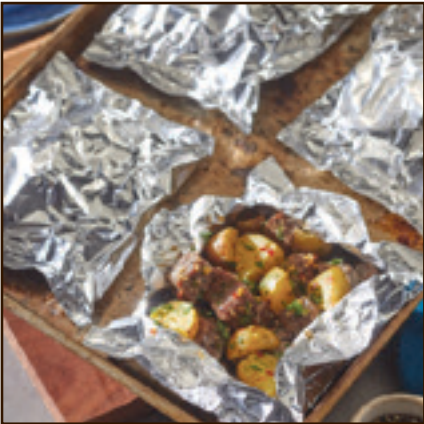
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Busy cooks fold and go

By Charles R. Fortson



Special to Wesson News

Preparing a meal after a long day doesn't have to be a daunting task, Mississippi State Extension Agent LaToya Evans reassured participants in a Co-Lin Learning In Retirement (LIR) workshop.

Stock your favorite fats, proteins and vegetables. Quickly throw them together on 12 to 14 inches of aluminum foil. Flavor with spices, a splash of something liquid, herbs, salsa and/or cheese. Fold the foil over the preparation and cook for 30 to 40 minutes in the oven or 10 to 15 minutes at medium to high heat on a grill.

Evans calls them "fold and go" meals.

She suggests choosing ingredients from:

- **Fats to prevent sticking:** Olive, avocado, canola, vegetable or pesto oils. Brush or drizzle. You only need a little bit.
- **Proteins:** Skinless, boneless chicken chunks, sliced sausage, shrimp, fish, slice steak, pork, lentils or beans (kidney, black, navy, pinto, chickpeas or soybeans), tofu. Layer lean protein ground or cut into small chunks to cook evenly.
- **Vegetables:** Broccoli, bell peppers, carrots, squash, zucchini, potatoes, green beans, onions, garlic, beans, lentils, corn, spinach, mushrooms, cabbage, greens. Fresh, frozen or canned are all great. Cut firm carrots and potatoes into small pieces, vegetables like squash and tomatoes into larger chunks, and thinly slice leafy greens like kale and collards.
- **Spices:** Pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, chili powder, paprika, cumin, turmeric, lemon pepper, cayenne, taco seasoning. Don't stop with salt and pepper. Try salt-free spices like garlic powder or salt-free seasoning. Create spice blends with special flavors -- Greek, barbeque, chili lime, lemon pepper, cajun, chili, garlic pepper, taco, ranch and Italian – for rubs, or combined with oil, vinegar, lemon juice or other seasonings to make a marinade, sauce or dressing.
- **Toppings:** Liquid flavorings, including worcestershire, balsamic vinegar, wine, lemon/lime juice or slices, soy sauce, sriracha, ketchup, barbeque sauce, stock (veggie, chicken or beef), teriyaki, jerk sauce. Dry or fresh herbs, including cilantro, parsley, Italian seasoning, oregano, basil, rosemary, thyme, dill, sage. Salsa. Cheese.



Among an array of meals, Evans cites a variety of possibilities: Cheesy Chicken and Greens, Bacon Ranch Potatoes, Philly Cheese Steak, Barbeque Hamburger and Veggie Delight, Sweet Potato Tacos, among many, many others.



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KC Family Pharmacy in Brookhaven

Special to Wesson News

KC Family Pharmacy, which is celebrating its second year in Hazlehurst, is now opening in Brookhaven at 543 Brookway Boulevard in the old WIN Job Center building beside the new Extended Care Clinical Services.

The community was invited to the pharmacy's opening day on Thursday, October 9, with a giveaway and refreshments. KC Family Pharmacy and Extended Care Clinical Services will share a joint ribbon-cutting on a later date to be announced, and the community will be invited again to celebrate these two newly opened businesses. They will offer sales, specials, giveaways and refreshments on the day of the ribbon cutting.

New pharmacy owner Dana Brooks Shoemake of Wesson always wanted to give back to the community and patients she served in her previous job in Brookhaven in 2023.

"We strive to provide personalized care and go the extra mile for our patients in any way we can," said Shoemake. "We truly enjoy getting to know our customers and spending time meeting their needs."

KC Family Pharmacy Hazlehurst is owned by Carlos and Abby Garcia of Wesson. The Hazlehurst location just celebrated its two-year business anniversary on May 2025.

The Garcias and Shoemake own the Brookhaven location together, with Shoe-

make a first-time, excited business owner.

"It's very exciting to be able to offer the care that I feel our patients deserve and to be able to shape our business around providing the things that I felt were missing in my past experiences," says Shoemake. "We truly love serving the Hazlehurst community in this way, and we are excited to continue that for the people of Brookhaven and surrounding areas."

The Garcia's grandparents, Lester and Katie Furr, owned Wesson Drugstore from 1948 to 1971. Wesson Drugstore was not a typical drugstore, with a wedding registry, comic books, fancy chocolates, tie-dye t-shirts, film drop-off, bus tickets, and even serving as a bus stop.

Shoemake and the Garcias are maintaining the family tradition at their two pharmacies, offering more than just the



Dana Brooks Shoemake (left) and Abby Furr Garcia.

Special to Wesson News

"We are excited to provide healthcare and pharmacy services to our community," says Shoemake. "KC Family Pharmacy offers the perfect combination of professional skills and personal care. Let us make your life easier with affordable prescriptions, refill reminders and prescription transfers."

Abby Garcia and Shoemake were college roommates, received their pharmacy degrees at Ole Miss and have worked together for many years.

basics. The families are close personal friends and colleagues, and now, as co-owners of the Hazlehurst and Brookhaven pharmacies, plan to keep gifts, treats, apparel, and more in stock, and offer unique items, like Laurel Mercantile and Scotsman products, and a personal experience -- just like Garcia's grandparents did at Wesson Drugstore.

"I was at Mississippi College in pre-med," Shoemake recalls. "I got a job as a tech at a small, independent pharmacy in Clinton, and I loved it. I loved seeing people and being able to take care of them. Now I have come full circle, seeing people, hugging them, being able to talk to them -- different, when I was too busy at my other job and something I haven't been able to do in previous years."

Both KC Family Pharmacies have multiple experienced pharmacists who provide quick and friendly service. The new Brookhaven location will have a full service drive-thru window allowing convenient refill and pick up of prescriptions. They also have a mobile app to facilitates easy refills, reminders and communications, and accept most insurance plans, including Medicaid and most Medicare. Call KC Family Pharmacy Brookhaven at 601-515-9684 for more information or get your prescription filled or transferred.

"We value being able to serve you and treat you like family," concludes Shoemake. "We want your trip to the pharmacy to be a pleasant experience instead of something frustrating that you hate to do. Just call us. We will handle everything for you."

KC Family Pharmacy takes customer care personally. With more than 50 years combined between them, the pharmacists and staff said they strive to make sure that everyone in the community is provided convenience in pharmacy care.

Tea shop promotes natural care

By Bob Arnold

According to Chinese legend, tea drinking started around 2737 BC when Emperor Shennong set an example for his subjects whom he had ordered to boil water before drinking it. The wind blew a few leaves from a nearby tree into his water, changing its color and taste and creating a flavorful brew with restorative properties.

Now, in 21st Century Wesson, Joanna Busby is helping people around town discover the similar pleasant surprises that leaves, stems and roots of various plants can produce when brewed in boiling water.

Last month, Busby officially opened Lemons & Thyme Apothecary at a grand opening ribbon cutting at the small cottage retail site in front of the Milltown Mall across from Perkins Hardware Store on the east side of Highway 51.

There locals can acquire customized tea mixes for tasty thirst quenchers and/or addressing health concerns. Busby makes them to order from an array of herbs, spices, flowers, fruits, roots and even grains, demonstrating why next to water, tea is the world's favorite beverage. While teas are the featured product, other natural products on the shelves are coffee, raw honey, candles, an African Shea butter skin care application, drops for ear aches, nausea, fever and sleep problems, a spice blend for autoimmune support, elderberry cold and flu elixir, fire cider to prevent colds, cough syrup, goat milk soap, a mushroom blend and even chapstick.

Customers can relax and test the teas and other products in the cozy interior at Lemons & Thyme, which has a couple of small tables with chairs, and at an outdoors table when weather permits.

Busby, who assists Christy Shaw at C&L Treasures, isn't new to Wesson, although her new business here comes after a fire destroyed a bed and breakfast she owned and managed off Highway 51 in north Brookhaven.

Lemons & Thyme is open Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Busby will meet customers by appointment on days when the store is closed.



Joanna Busby

Special to Wesson News

Wall That Heals visits area



Special to Wesson News

By Bob Arnold

Crystal Springs will host The Wall That Heals, a traveling replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. from Thursday, November 13, through Sunday, November 16.

The exhibit, which honors the more than 58,000 men and women who gave their lives during the Vietnam War, will be on display at the Old Rogel Building on the corner of Highway 27 and 51 in Crystal Springs.

Visitors will have the opportunity to view the three-quarter scale replica of the memorial wall, which stretches 375 feet in length and stands 7.5 feet high at its tallest point. Accompanying the wall is a mobile education center that provides additional insight into the history and impact of the Vietnam War.

Educational group tours will be available on November 13 and 14, giving students and community groups a meaningful opportunity to learn about the Vietnam War, its veterans, and the memorial's significance. Educational tours are 46-60 minutes. Contact Cathy Stroud to book a tour by emailing her at cathyrstroud@gmail.com.

Local organizers are encouraging residents, schools, veterans, and families to attend the event. They emphasize that The Wall That Heals is not only a tribute to those who lost their lives but also a place of healing for veterans, their loved ones, and communities across the nation.

The exhibit will be open 24 hours a day during its stay in Crystal Springs, and admission is free.

This historic event is made possible through the generous support of sponsors. Platinum Sponsors are Hitachi and WGK Engineers and Surveyors. The Regiment Sponsor is Element Wealth Management. Stars and Stripes Sponsors are Tiffany and Dustin Shaver and Kathleen and Larry Bouman. Community Sponsors include Knights of Columbus and St. Paul II Council #17364.

Along with the City of Crystal Springs, Mississippi Patriots and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Founders of The Wall are hosting the exhibit.

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Creating certified spray foam installers

Special to Wesson News

Grace Foam Solutions (GFS), a spray foam distribution company based in Wesson, hosted the Roadshow Professional Certification Program (PCP) for spray foam installers in September.

Roadshow, a partnership between GFS and the Spray Polyurethane Foam Alliance (SPFA), seeks to make spray foam installers professionals who adhere to understood and accepted standards by providing necessary credentialing for their work. The event held September 23 and 24 at the Event Room on Spring Street provided foam installation training and credentialed attendees as certified installers.

Quadrant Performance Materials helped bring the event to Wesson, and more opportunities will be available in the future for spray foam installers to take PCP Assistant and Insulation Installer exam prep courses and the required testing to become recognized professionals in their field.

GFS promotes #sprayfoam industry standards by credentialing installers in “YOU are TRUSTING with #buildingscience in YOUR home or business.”



Grace Foam Solutions owner Ricky Breazeale was Roadshow Professional Certification instructor at Wesson event for spray foam installers.



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Rally on Runway November 15



Special to Wesson News

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The Rally on the Runway – an annual event to introduce locals to Copiah County Airport – will be November 15.

This year, motorcyclists as well as pilots will be on hand with the food – BBQ chicken plates for \$10 -- to lure folk to the airport to learn about its importance to Copiah County and shop in a market in which vendors bring varied goods.

Copiah County Airport is a mecca for pilots due to the reasonable fuel costs and location. On any day at the airport, one can meet people there from across the United States and North America.

In the past, the airport day has featured a fly-in for pilots across the continent to show off their aircraft and mingle with locals who appreciate what they see. This year, a motorcycle rally will coincide with the fly-in and market.

There is no entry fee for the popular event.

Lions selling sweet potatoes again

Special to Wesson News

For the eleventh consecutive year, the Wesson Lions Club is importing product from the "Sweet Potato Capital of the World" and selling it at unbeatable prices to generate funds for the international and local charities the club supports.

The world's best sweet potatoes, grown at Landreth Farms in the Vardaman area in north Central Mississippi, have arrived again and will be available at bargain basement rates for folk who savor them in Lincoln and Copiah Counties, thanks to the Wesson-based organization.

Members of the club started selling them late this month and expect to be sold out by the Wesson Flea Market on October 18 - 720 forty-pound boxes of sweet potatoes sold for \$20 per box, or fifty cents per pound. Individuals and area restaurants stocking up on the quality sweet potatoes are supporting the Lions Club's annual fundraising effort.

Landreth Farms officials say it's the loamy soil – along with timely rains – in the Vardaman area that make their potato crops sweet and special. Landreth plants sweet potatoes on 600 acres, among Mississippi farmers, who raise sweet potatoes on more than 18,400 acres across the state. The farm sells commercially to national food stores,



Special to Wesson News

Wesson Lions Club receives sweet potatoes for local fundraising sales from Landreth Farms in the "Sweet Potato Capital of the World."

such as Kroger and Wal-Mart, and canners, like Gerber, and produces a line of pre-wrapped sweet potatoes for microwave cooking.

The annual sweet potato sale is the main fundraising activity of the Wesson Lions Club. It disburses some \$10,000 every year to assist deaf and blind persons through the International Lions Club and to support local organizations and causes related to community improvement, children and youth, veterans, hospice care and other issues and concerns.

To order sweet potatoes or for information about where to get them, call Wesson Lions' Alton Ricks at 601-643-2466 or Hubert Greer at 601-643-2002.

Wesson student in linemen class



Special to Wesson News

Recent graduates of Hinds Community College's (HCC) Electrical Line Worker program on a bucket truck with HCC staff. Pictured (left to right in front row) are graduates Lake Hutchinson of Clinton and Sawyer Smith of Madison, Program Instructor Craig Davis, Executive Director of Workforce Development Lee Douglas and graduates Kaeded Strickland of Brandon and Jonathan McCallum of Wesson; and (back row) graduates Brain Morrow of Brandon and Craig McCraney of Clinton.

Special to Wesson News

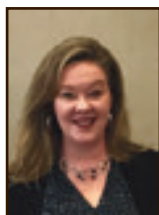
Six students graduated from Hinds Community College's Electrical Line Workers program in July, the third class of program graduates since fall of 2024.

Those completing the non-credit workforce program included Lake Hutchinson of Clinton, Jonathan McCallum of Wesson, Craig McCraney of Clinton, Brain Morrow of Brandon, Sawyer Smith of Madison and Kaeded Strickland of Brandon.

Among other tasks, the sixteen-week program requires students to be able to climb forty-foot and sixty-five-foot poles, set poles by hand, build and take down electrical lines, operate bucket and digger trucks, learn about electrical components, including transformers, and perform safety tasks, including CPR. The students also earn a Class A Commercial Driver's License through Hinds' partnership with KLLM Driving Academy.

Building a heart-safe community

By Guest Columnist Dr. Stephanie Duguid



Every day, thousands of lives are lost to sudden cardiac arrest, but many of those lives could be saved with one simple skill: CPR. According to the American Heart Association, nearly 70% of cardiac arrests happen at home.

That means the life you save is most likely that of a loved one. This reality underscores the importance of

CPR education.

It is not just for healthcare professionals. Anyone can learn it, and everyone should. A trained bystander can mean the difference between tragedy and survival.

That's why Do Good Pro Health, a CPR training company, is offering two unique opportunities this fall for the Wesson community -- one designed to help anyone gain confidence in lifesaving action, and a second designed to equip future instructors who want to multiply that impact.

- On Thursday, October 23, at 5:30 p.m., Grace Foam Solutions will host a hands-on Community CPR class. This class is open to the public and perfect for parents, teachers, coaches, and community members who want to be prepared. Location: Grace Foam Solutions. Cost: \$40 per person (use promo code COM50 for discount). Space is limited. So early registration is encouraged. Participants will leave with the knowledge and skills to respond confidently in an emergency, whether at home, at school or on the ball field.

- For those ready to step further into leadership, the CPR Instructor Course will be offered on Friday, November 8, in Wesson. Becoming an instructor allows you to teach others and extend the ripple effect of lifesaving skills throughout the community. You must have Basic Life Support (Advanced) Certification in order to take this course. To learn more and determine if you qualify, call Dr. Stephanie Duguid at 601-669-6784. This class is ideal for educators, trainers or anyone looking to make a bigger impact by helping others gain lifesaving confidence.

The chain of survival -- the process that gives cardiac arrest victims the best chance at recovery -- begins with a bystander. Immediate CPR can double or triple survival rates, but too often, hesitation or lack of training keeps people from stepping in. By taking a community class, you prepare yourself to act. By becoming an instructor, you help prepare dozens, even hundreds, of others. Both roles are essential, and both strengthen the safety net that protects families, schools, and neighborhoods.

Imagine being the one who can save a life. Imagine knowing your family, your students, or your teammates are safer because of the skills you gained. These classes are about more than checking a box -- they're about building confidence, leadership, and resilience in moments that matter most.

Consider joining us for one of these sessions. Whether you're stepping up for the first time in October's community class, or stepping forward to lead in November's instructor course, you are taking action that could change everything for someone in need.

Let's make Wesson a heart-safe community -- one class, one person, one heartbeat at a time.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dr. Stephanie Duguid is owner of Do Good Pro-Health (CPR Classes) and Do Good Leadership (motivational speaking, and leadership and success coaching). She is also a Mississippi Health Ambassador.

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WORKING FAMILIES TAX CUT H.R.1 SECTION 70201 - NO TAX ON TIPS?

By Pamela C. Stamps CPA



You may have heard recently that there would be no tax on tips. Well, the answer is maybe.

It applies to individuals that customarily receive tips in their line of business. IRS has provided a list of occupations that qualify.

The "tax" referred to in the bill is federal income tax. All other taxes do not qualify.

The maximum tip income that can be claimed is \$25,000.00. This deduction phases out with adjusted gross income of over \$150,000 for singles and \$300,000 for married filing joint. A joint return is required if you are married.

This law is effective January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2028.

It only applies to voluntary tips received. Employers should provide this information. Keep detailed records to ensure accuracy.

This is a great opportunity to report all eligible tips to increase your adjusted gross income. An IRA could be funded or allow qualification for other credits.

As one of my college professors used to ask, "Is this clear as mud?" There are several conditions to be met and some tax savings opportunities with this new tax law. I would advise making an appointment with your CPA or enrolled agent before year end and providing your total tip income earned year to date to adequately plan for year end. Please do not file your own return even if free. At least, let a professional review before filing.

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