

INSIDE:

Meet Your Neighbor	6
Tending Your Garden	10
Sports Shorts	11
Living Healthy	13
Area Arts	14
Chow Time	16



SPOTLIGHT

Library Reaches out to Babies

Page 4

Volume 13, Number 5

"Good News You Can Use"

May, 2025

Nine vying for Wesson posts

Wesson News

Nine candidates are vying for Mayor, Alderman-at-Large and Aldermen representing Wards 1, 2, 3 and 4 in Wesson municipal elections June 3.

Only two races – the contests for Mayor and Alderman-at-Large – are competitive, with the incumbent Aldermen in the four wards running unopposed.

In the Mayoral contest, incumbent Alton Shaw faces a challenge from Teri Bath, a relative newcomer to town with family roots in Wesson.

Shaw has served 22 years as Mayor, more than half the nearly 40 years he has been a resident-citizen of Wesson after settling here with his father, who served as police chief, and his mother, a church secretary.

The Mayor graduated from Wesson Attendance Center, worked with the Wesson Volunteer Fire Department when he was 19 years old, and has a Master's Degree qualifying him as a Family Nurse Practitioner. He has been involved with the Chamber of Commerce, Friends of the Library and Wesson Lions Club. He and

WESSON MAYORS RACE



ALTON SHAW



TERI BATH

his wife Christy started a Christian non-profit organization that raises funds to combat human trafficking. They have two children, Benjamin and Parker.

Bath resettled in Wesson with her husband Ron, a real estate developer, four years ago from Reno, Nevada, bringing a background in economic development that has shaped her perspective and vision of leading the Chamber of Commerce, which she now serves as president.

Bath's husband of 43 years, Ron Bath, is a real estate developer, and she also worked in commercial real estate for 20 years as a property owner and agent. She and her husband have six children, 13 grandchildren and one great grandchild.

The crowded Alderman-at-Large race pits community activist Cathy Stroud, who directs Keep Copiah County Beautiful and whose volunteer activities encompass veterans organizations and Mississippi Health Ambassadors, against Stanley Martin, who is active in church leadership, and businessman Chad Sills.

cont. on page 14

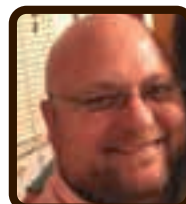
ALDERMAN-AT-LARGE RACE



CATHY STROUD



STANLEY MARTIN



CHAD SILLS

Small events venue opens

Wesson News

A venue for small events has been opened by C&L Treasures (CLT) around the corner on Spring Street from its store on Highway 51.

Birthday parties, baby showers and a workout coach have already been using The Event Room since its opening on March 22, says CLT owner-manager Christy Shaw.

"We have an 825 square foot main room, kitchenette and bathroom," she adds. "It's ideal for relatively small events, including meetings, receptions and classes and trainings."

The building that houses it has been a project in the works for several years, evolving from a shell building with a dirt floor, walls and a roof that needed to be finished and required installation of electrical and plumbing systems.

Before moving into its current Highway 51 location, Shaw used it for CLT where customers acquire fleas, arts and crafts and boutique items, support home-operated

businesses around town that make many of the special gift products it sells and help victims of child sex trafficking, all at the same time.

Like CLT, the profits generated by The Event Room will support Life View Ministries (LVM), which Shaw started with her husband, Wesson Mayor Alton Shaw "to help people view their lives and inform their life through Christ" with a specific focus on child sex trafficking.

"The Events Room is LVM's latest step beyond yard sales that became a store," Shaw relates. "We grew as donors started giving us items to resell, and home-based businesses in the community looked to us to sell their products. Our profits go to one home for child sex trafficking victims, and we hope our work can support other places where they can not only find a safe place, but get help in ongoing recovery."

Rental fees for The Events Room are \$75 for a half-day, \$125 for a full-day and \$100 per day for multiple-day use. For more information call 601-918-3344.



Special to Wesson News

The Event Room is a new Wesson venue featuring a 825 square foot main room.

SULLIVAN SULLIVANFORD.COM



WHY GO ANYWHERE ELSE?

759 Magee Dr. - Exit 40 - Brookhaven - Next Door to Walmart - 601-833-7521

Lawmakers finish, but will return

Wesson News

The 2025 Mississippi regular legislative session has come and gone, but Governor Tate Reeves will be calling lawmakers back to the Capitol to finalize the state's \$7 billion Fiscal Year 2026 budget, after deliberations between the House and Senate broke down in the waning days of the session.

The lingering question is whether Reeves will add other policy items to the special session call, namely legislation aimed at expanding education freedom, all of which died in the regular session, or reducing the regulatory burden on the state's healthcare system by way of further certificate of need reforms.

Here is a look back at some of the most talked about headlines from the 2025 regular legislative session:

1. Governor Reeves signed the most significant tax reform legislation in state history.

The flat income tax rate in the state will drop from 4.4 percent this year to 3 percent in 2030 (an annualized cut of \$647 million). Additional cuts to the income tax rate down to 0 percent will occur beginning in 2031 based on the state meeting revenue growth triggers. The sales tax applied to grocery purchases drops from 7 percent to 5 percent on July 1, 2025 (an annualized cut of \$127 million).

Approximately \$200 million in additional revenue for roads and bridges will be produced through a 9-cent increase in the fuel excise tax over a 3-year phase-in period. A Tier 5 in the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) for newly hired government workers is created based on recommendations from the PERS Board (does not impact existing workers or retirees).

2. A new law will prevent universities, community colleges, public schools, and charter schools from using Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion practices when selecting faculty, providing academic opportunities, and offering student engagement.

3. Three measures to increase education options for families in the Magnolia State died without a vote in the Senate. One would have made a process already in Mississippi law for a child to transfer between public schools slightly easier by removing the veto power of the school the child wants to leave. The Tim

Tebow Act would have allowed homeschool students to participate in extracurricular activities at the public school where they live. Another one sought to expand where public charter schools could be opened in C-rated districts.



Special to Wesson News

4. An early voting proposal was not well received by Governor Reeves, resulting in a social media battle that carried over into the Capitol. After Reeves expressed his displeasure with a 15-day, no excuse proposal, the House decided to back away and offer tweaks to absentee voting.

5. The Governor vetoed raising the threshold for a medical facility to seek a Certificate of Need (CON) when purchasing medical equipment, and tasking the Mississippi Department of Health with conducting a study to see what other changes may need to be made to CON laws, particularly as they relate to small hospital dialysis units, geriatric psychiatric units, and acute adult psychiatric units.

6. State consumers using e-cigarettes will now have to buy exclusively from only three manufacturers, and virtually all flavored vaping products have been banned.

7. Mississippi residents are now allowed to receive direct shipments of wine. Mississippi was one of

only three states that prohibited this.

8. Governor Reeves vetoed a bill that would have modified several provisions within Mississippi's Medicaid program. Reeves said the Medicaid Technical Amendments Bill essentially expanded Medicaid, something he has adamantly opposed and repeatedly spoken against. In his veto message, Reeves said that the bill would have incurred additional recurring costs of \$40 million to the overall annual Medicaid budget, of which the state would have to fund 24 percent.

9. Legislation meant to conform Mississippi's Medicaid provisions regarding presumptive eligibility for pregnant women to federal regulations has gone into law without the signature of Governor Reeves. Presumptive eligibility refers to the process of granting Medicaid services to those who may qualify before their eligibility is verified by the program.

10. Each chamber of the Legislature has now adopted the other's redistricting plans, setting up special elections for House and Senate seats later this year.

11. Lawmakers have agreed to form a task force to study workforce and social service reform in Mississippi towards improving the state's labor force participation rate and raise the earning capacity of working Mississippians. The ultimate goal is to integrate social safety nets and workforce development in a manner that moves people off of welfare and into a sustainable job through a one-stop-shop holistic approach.

12. State employees will now be eligible for paid parental leave through a law that will provide a state employee who is the primary caregiver of a newborn with six weeks of paid leave.

13. Mississippi lawmakers have agreed to deal with kratom by taxing products containing the opioid-like substance at a higher rate.

14. Lawmakers agreed to outlaw camping on any sidewalks, streets, sports fields, sports complexes, highways, alleys, roads, passageways or any other public property, except a public property that is otherwise designated for camping by a municipality, county, political subdivision or state, or by state law.



P.O. Box 1028
Wesson, MS 39191
601-990-3003

ClayMansell@WessonNews.com

Volume 13, Number 5

Publisher/Owner

Clay Mansell

ClayMansell@WessonNews.com

Editor in Chief

Stephanie Tracy

Editor

Bob Arnold

BobArnold@WessonNews.com

Designer

Brad Henderson

Designer@WessonNews.com

Special Contributors

Dr. Stephanie Duguid

Healthy Living

Rebecca Bates

Tending Your Garden

Sales

Angie DeLaughter

Angie@ourhometownpaper.com

Wesson News is published on the second Tuesday of every month in Wesson, Mississippi.

For submission information, email ClayMansell@WessonNews.com

Copyright © 2025 All rights reserved. Materials may not be reproduced in whole or in part without written permission of the publisher.

For reprints of any article, please contact the editor.

www.WessonNews.com

CHECK US OUT ON

facebook

Skeetburger in Beauregard
Best Burger in Town
Salads, Baskets, Plates lunches,
PoBoys & Beverages

Wednesday - Saturday 11am - 6pm

601-643-0048

Checks and all major credit cards

WESSON ACE HARDWARE
2057 Hwy. 51 South • PO Box 547
Wesson, Mississippi 39191
wessonacehardware.com
TIM SUTTON - owner
YETI 601-643-2636
601-643-9906 fax
601-695-4144 cell

NEED SERVICE? PARTS? TIRES?

CALL ON SULLIVAN FORD **WHY GO ANYWHERE ELSE?**

759 MAGEE DR. • BROOKHAVEN

SERVICE

**Ford and
Lincoln Service
and Warranty
Repairs**

**Certified Diesel
Tech**

**Two Senior
Master
Technicians**

PARTS

**Expert Advice
Well-Stocked
Inventory**

**Delivery to
Commercial
Accounts
Available**



**Low Price Tire
Guarantee**

**Motorcraft and
Omnecraft Parts**

**Friendly,
Courteous
Service and
Attention to
Detail**

601-833-7521 • OPEN 7 A.M. - 5 P.M. M-F
Located next to Walmart • Take I-55 Exit 40

LEARN MORE @ SULLIVANFORD.COM

Library reaches out to babies

Wesson News

No one is too young to use a library.

That's how Marilyn Britt at Wesson Public Library (WPL) sees it, and she has been guiding a unique program there over the past few weeks to reach an age group she thinks libraries forget. Babies. The little ones from zero-years old to two-years old.

A prize basket full of baby goods for moms lured mothers with their babies to WPL to participate in a special drawing that was the centerpiece of the local library's Books & Babies program during April.

"Mothers came to the library with their babies to sign them up for library cards and, in the process, register for the drawing," Britt explained.

On their visits to the library, the moms learned about library resources for babies, read to their babies and also allowed their children to use the special books that feature not easily damaged hard board covers and colorfully illustrated simple short stories, often with Christian themes, and nursery rhymes.



"We hope the visits started reading and library use habits for moms and their babies alike," Britt says.

According to Britt, reading to babies provides numerous developmental and relational benefits for them: fostering language skills, building vocabulary, promoting brain development, and strengthening the bond between parent and child. It also helps babies learn about the world around them and develop their attention and listening skills.

"Babies hear and learn new words through reading, expanding their receptive and expressive vocabulary," she pointed out. "Reading aloud helps babies become familiar with the sounds of language, which is a crucial foundation for later reading skills. Reading to babies early on lays the groundwork for future literacy development, such as understanding that words are written and that print carries meaning. Reading aloud stimulates brain development, especially during the early years when the brain is rapidly developing."

Britt says she knows of no other libraries with programs geared to babies – "certainly not in the area, probably not in the state, and only a few nationally."

"Wesson Public Library is a leader in bringing resources to all age groups," she says.



KING'S DAUGHTERS MEDICAL CENTER NEWS

Education Classes Available

CPR
First Aid
AARP Safe Driver Class

To register:
Call Tyson Kirkland, LPN
601.835.9406

Smoking Cessation Classes

To register:
Call Tyson Kirkland, LPN
601.835.9406

KING'S DAUGHTERS
WELLNESS CLINIC

Cathe Knott, FNP
Sarah Wilson, FNP

WALK-IN CLINIC
NO APPOINTMENT NEEDED
MONDAY - FRIDAY
8 AM TO 5 PM

827 Highway 51 North, Brookhaven, MS 39601 | 601.823.5190
(located by the coffee shop and retail pharmacy inside the hospital)

KING'S DAUGHTERS
PEDIATRIC AND
ADOLESCENT CLINIC

Expanded Walk-in Hours
Monday - Friday
8AM to 4:30PM

FIRST AVAILABLE PROVIDER

509 Brookman Dr. Brookhaven, MS 39601 | 601.823.5204

THE VEIN CENTER
at
King's Daughters
Medical Center

For many, even a short walk can be painful due to vein issues. If you experience aching, cramping pain, tiredness, redness, burning, throbbing, tingling, or heaviness in your legs, we can help.

Schedule your FREE vein screening today by calling 601.823.5342.

1020 BIGLANE DRIVE, BROOKHAVEN, MS 39601

FOUNDERS DAY 2025

Wesson Chamber of Commerce Thanks all who supported the 2025 event.
Next Founder's Day, Friday May 1, Saturday May 2, 2026



- Sponsors of the 5K**
- Super Sounds DJ/Karaoke
 - Brookhaven Anesthesia and Pain management
 - Mobile Diesel Service
 - Pamela C. Stamps CPA
 - The Skin Center and Spa
 - Grace Insulation
 - Copiah Nutrition
 - Destiny's Delights
 - Yeager Auto Sales

The Doggie Palooza was won by an Irish Setter Golden Retriever named Winnie, 1 1/2 years old owned by Mia Therman from Brookhaven Animal Clinic.

EXPERIENCE MATTERS



RE-ELECT 
ALTON SHAW
WESSON'S MAYOR



ABOUT ALTON!

- ★ He is a former Paramedic and Firefighter, currently working as Certified Nurse Practitioner
- ★ Earned a Master's Degree from University of Southern Mississippi
- ★ Founder of Life View Ministries, a Christian non-profit which raises awareness for and helps combat human trafficking
- ★ Previous recipient of MS Business Journal Top 40 Under 40 Leaders in MS
- ★ Past President and current Executive Committee Member of MS Municipal League
- ★ Completed and continue to expand our first municipal park with splash pad and other amenities
- ★ Restored and preserved the Old Wesson School
- ★ Helped bring new businesses and jobs to Wesson, including Dollar General and Family Dollar
- ★ Renovated and expanded public library and built new police department
- ★ Graduate and former adjunct faculty at Copiah- Lincoln Community College
- ★ Established veterans memorial and have broken ground on upcoming pickleball courts
- ★ Revitalized downtown with new sidewalks, signage, green space and more

“ I have lived in Wesson nearly 40 years and Mayor for 22 of those years. Your trust in me has led to great things for our community. Together, we completed and continue to expand our first municipal park, revitalized our downtown, helped secure over \$8 million in grants to improve our infrastructure, and much more. I am humbly asking for your support on June 3, so we can keep this progress going. ”

Florida artist finds new home

Wesson News

If you're curious about those whimsical paintings that are, increasingly, adding interest to otherwise ordinary windows of stores, restaurants and other businesses, Lilly Harrison may be the culprit.

An Atlanta native who grew up around Pensacola, Florida, Harrison came to the area with her now ex-husband in 2021 and decided to stay and make her life here after her marriage ended. With her, she brought her art.

Harrison was a year old when she came to Gulf Breeze with her parents – her dad, an entrepreneur and inventor of pickup truck tool boxes and knee braces for athletes among products to his credit, and her mom, who worked in children's ministries and encouraged her daughter to express herself through painting Vacation Bible School and other church-related décor.

"Growing up, I was mostly a beach kid," she recalls. "I was on the beach all the time." In the third grade, she started playing soccer, but quit the sport in the seventh grade after knee surgery.

Harrison graduated from Gulf Breeze High School in 2019 and studied early childhood education briefly at Pensacola State College before marrying at age 18 a young man from Brookhaven she had met at a church camp three years earlier.

"Instead of staying on at college where I planned to change my studies to chemistry, I relocated to Brookhaven and started building a life in the area," she says.

Harrison's work life has been the key to making new friends and becoming part of the community.

She now lives with two dogs, a boyfriend and his eight-year old and 10-year old two sons at a mobile home in Bogue Chitto and is the office assistant at Brookhaven-based SOG, which grows, processes and packages medical marijuana and distributes it to dispensaries throughout Mississippi. She also moonlights at the Ice Daiquiri Shop, continuing her involvement in the Brookhaven food service industry that started at Tortilla Soup and later working at Magnolia Blues.

Painting, although a growing part of her work life as she meets people who want custom pieces or art for their businesses, remains a sideline that she aspires to make a career.

"My dream is doing my art full time on site at a business that wants to create a more interesting décor and in my studio listening to music," Harrison says.

She describes her painting as "fluid and funky on the verge of tacky."

"I like collages," she says. "They're abstract, a bit weird with a twist, reflecting a Florida influence. I'm pleased when kids pass by my paintings on store windows and I hear them oohing and awing."

What are your hobbies?

There's my art, of course. I missed the beach when I first came to Brookhaven, but found Lake Lincoln State Park, where I can enjoy primitive camping, fishing and hiking.

Are you a reader?

I am into sci-fi and thriller audio books, to which I listen when I am painting or driving.

How about music?

I am a listener, and enjoy live music – concerts and music festivals. I am into Indie and rock 'n metal music.

Do you go to the theater or movies?

I follow *The Office* on television, enjoy comedies and suspense movies.

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

I would buy a small house on a lot of land. I would have an art shed where I paint and drink coffee.

How would you change the world?

Assuring the human rights to food and water, shelter and clothing, and health care for all.



Special to Wesson News

Award winner



Wesson News

Precision Dance Company of Wesson, led by director Kaila Denton, won three overall first place group awards in the Star Systems National Talent Competition in Slidell, LA, and was recognized as the highest scoring studio. Its awards included overall first place for production, top overall scoring routine award, Top Studio Award and multiple individual and group awards. Precision Dance Company will hold their recitals May 17 and May 19 beginning at 6 p.m. at CoLin's Rea Auditorium.

VOTE

CATHY STROUD

ALDERMAN-AT-LARGE WESSON

WHY VOTE FOR CATHY?

- LEADERSHIP**
 - LEGION'S DISTRICT VICE PRESIDENT
 - COLLINS VA REPRESENTATIVE FOR POST #79
 - FOUNDER OF SOCKS FOR HEROES
 - SGT AT ARMS FOR AMERICAN LEGION
 - AUXILIARY PRESIDENT FOR VFW
 - DISTRICT PRESIDENT FOR VFW
- PATRIOTISM**
 - VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR 2024 - AMERICAN LEGION
 - PATRIOT GUARD MEMBER
 - WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA, ANNUAL VOLUNTEER
- COMMUNITY**
 - DIRECTOR OF KEEP COPIAH BEAUTIFUL
 - MISSISSIPPI HEALTH AMBASSADOR 2024-2025
- FAMILY**
 - WIFE, MOTHER, GRANDMOTHER
 - WESSON RESIDENT OF 31 YEARS

KEEP WESSON BEAUTIFUL

VOTE
JUNE 3, 2025

VOTE CATHY STROUD

#CathyStroudForWessonAlderman

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR



SPRAY FOAM INSULATION

Is your home ready for hot weather?

MENTION THIS AD FOR 10% OFF!



SAVE MONEY ON ENERGY BILLS WITH SPRAY FOAM!



601.757.0630

SPECIALIZING IN SPRAY FOAM
WWW.GRACEFOAMSOLUTIONS.COM

2134 US-51
WESSON, MS 39191

 FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

FREE ESTIMATES!
601-757-0630

Cottage baker now has bakery



Wesson News

Nekitha Jackson

By Bob Arnold

A local cottage baker is moving to her first permanent retail location outside her home in the 6,700 square foot mini shopping and office complex under construction on the southwest corner of Church Street and Highway 51.

Nekitha Jackson will open Destiny's Delights in the first of three commercial spaces Salmon Point Development has rented – a 1,000 square foot structure.

Jackson says she makes cakes, cookies and all kinds of treats, with love being the secret ingredient. Since 2014, she has done the bulk of her baking at her Wesson home on Lott Smith Road and sold her products and baked some of them on site at farmers and other outdoor markets throughout southwest Mississippi.

Now she'll go to work in her own bakery, where three or four workers will also help her serve customers regularly. It's a status that has been a dream since her childhood, Jackson says, being known as a baker in her community beyond her home base. The pink and brown colors that she has made a trademark of her business as a tribute to her sister who died in a car crash will also be part of the new status.



Ron Bath, a former Reno, Nevada, commercial and residential developer who retired to Wesson and transplanted Salmon Point Development here, expects construction of the bakery to be completed this month. His goal is to find tenants for the 2,100 square foot and 3,600 square foot units and finish the new development by year end.

The additional units will be built as commitments are made for occupancy. Bath estimates total cost of the complex will be approximately \$700,000.

Over 52 years, Bath developed two million square feet of shopping center space in and around Reno, Nevada, before resettling in retirement with his wife Teri in the Wesson area, where she had family roots and now serves as Wesson Chamber of Commerce president.

Bath found Jackson, who has long been active in community service, on the Wesson Chamber of Commerce board. For many years, Jackson also served as president of the Wesson Attendance Center Parent Teachers Organization.

CONGRATS TO ALL GRADUATES!



RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL

TAYLOR'S

601-754-3096

SERVICE • REPAIR • INSTALL

HVAC SERVICE

Museum building progress continues

Special to Wesson News

A museum that will tell the story of Wesson is nearing reality next to the municipal park in a building formerly a venue for Boy Scouts.

“With purchase of equipment and building materials related to moisture-proofing the building, we are moving forward with the first phase of the project,” says Marilyn Britt, on behalf of Friends of the Library (FOL), which is sponsoring and coordinating the development of the museum.

An initial \$9,500 Home Depot grant has jump-started the work and has so far been used to purchase a steel back door, seven windows, a dehumidifier and mini-split air conditioner and dehumidifier.



Wesson News

FOL expects Town of Wesson public works personnel and citizen-resident and Home Depot volunteers to provide the labor required for installations, necessary repairs and cosmetics.

Britt singled out Home Depot’s Elisha Howard for helping to identify needed work.

“She did a walk-through and showed us what needed attention to turn the building into a museum,” she explained.

Britt said the next phases of the building project will include:

- Ceiling lighting
- Lighting for display cases
- Making the building handicap-accessible
- Electrical repairs
- Painting walls
- Repairing floors

The Town of Wesson has agreed to seal the front and north doors of the building to maintain its character.

FOL hopes the museum building will be ready for occupancy by the end of July, but additional funding and volunteer assistance will be needed.



- Honoring ALL policies and arrangements made and written by any other funeral service provider
- Most Experienced Staff to serve your family
- Most Spacious Facility offered in our area
- Best Priced and Most Thoughtfully arranged services
- Offering the most affordable pricing on Pre-Arrangements or Time of Need Services
- Also offering Monuments and Markers for all Cemeteries for any budget

601-833-6680

76 US-51, Brookhaven www.riverwoodfamily.com

Pharmacy & Gifts



We're more than just a pharmacy. As a hometown community pharmacy, we are able to provide the personal service you deserve.

(601) 717-5279

657 Caldwell Dr, Hazlehurst, MS

Become an **AVON** Independent Sales Representative!

Only \$25 to start!

THE COST OF LUNCH COULD CHANGE YOUR LIFE
Set your own hours! Unlimited earnings!
Work from home! No inventory to keep!

For more information, contact Julia at

601-643-2704

www.youravon.com/juliaarnold • 113streetman@msn.com



TOP QUALITY MEMORIALS

WHEN IT'S PERMANENT, TRUST THE PROFESSIONALS
 CHECK OUT OUR HUGE SELECTION

REMEMBER THE PEOPLE YOU LOVE

WITH A TOP QUALITY MEMORIAL FROM BROOKHAVEN MONUMENT COMPANY.
 SPRINGTIME MEANS NEW INVENTORY ARRIVING WEEKLY

**BROOKHAVEN
 MONUMENT
 COMPANY, INC.**
 YOUR FIRST CHOICE FOR OVER 70 YEARS

DAVE PACE
 KEVIN LAIRD



807 HIGHWAY 51 NORTH • R.D. BOX 727 • BROOKHAVEN, MS 38602

601-833-5701

ELECTION DAY IS JUNE 3, 2025



FRESH
LEADERSHIP
FOR A
BETTER
WESSON

OTE **TERI BATH**
FOR WESSON MAYOR

 **PROVEN LEADERSHIP**

With years of experience in community service and local government, I have a track record of effective leadership and delivering tangible results for our city.

 **COMMUNITY FOCUSED**

I am dedicated to listening to and addressing the concerns of our residents, ensuring that every voice is heard and that our policies reflect the needs and aspirations of our community.

 **INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS**

Committed to bringing fresh ideas and innovative solutions to the table, I aim to tackle our city's challenges with creativity and forward-thinking strategies to foster growth and development.

LOCAL, HOMEGROWN ROOTS

TRUST **E**NGAGED **R**ESILIENCE **I**NTEGRITY

Attracting pollinators to gardens



Special to Wesson News

By Guest Columnist Bonnie A. Coblentz

Plants that are irresistible to pollinators should be part of every garden.

In Mississippi, my favorites include liatris, coreopsis, gaillardia and gaura. These plants are beautiful and bring life to my garden through the pollinators they attract. With the right care, they truly thrive.

Liatris, which is known as blazing star or gayfeather, produces tall, upright spikes of feathery purple blooms. Each tall spike is made up of lots of tiny individual flowers packed with nectar, which gives pollinators a buffet in one spot. My liatris is growing in full sun and part shade. Once established, these plants are very drought tolerant. You can cut back the flower stalks in late fall to clean up the garden or leave them for winter interest and to let birds enjoy the seeds.

Coreopsis, which is also called tickseed, is one of the carefree native perennials in my garden. It lights up the space with cheerful blooms that vary in shades of yellow, depending on the variety. My coreopsis is planted in full sun and well-drained soil. Avoid overly rich soil to prevent the plant from becoming floppy. I water them moderately and deadhead spent flowers to encourage continuous blooming. Shear lightly after the first flush of flowers to keep them tidy and stimulate new growth.

Gaillardia, or blanket flower, is a heat- and sun-loving plant that blooms in fiery shades of red, orange and yellow. It thrives in poor, sandy or well-drained soil and needs very little fertilizer. In fact, too much feeding can reduce flowering. Once established, gaillardia is incredibly drought tolerant, although I do water my plants during long dry spells in the summer. Deadhead regularly to keep it blooming, and divide older clumps every few years to maintain their vigor. Leave seed heads on the plants for added winter interest and for the birds.

Gaura, often called whirling butterflies or bee blossom, is another graceful addition that I adore. Its delicate

wands of white or pink flowers flutter in the breeze and seem to dance above the foliage. Bees and butterflies are drawn to gaura all season long. I grow gaura in full sun and very well-drained soil. It's important not to overwater, especially during rainy periods because it can be prone to root rot. Once established, this plant is extremely drought tolerant. I prune gaura back in early spring to encourage bushy new growth. I also give it a light trim in midsummer to prevent it from looking leggy and to encourage a second bloom in late summer.

Having these native plants in my landscape supports pollinators and creates a colorful, low-maintenance garden that reflects the beauty of our natural environment. Becoming a place where you can watch bees buzz, butterflies flutter and flowers sway in the breeze is one of the best rewards a garden can give.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Bonnie A. Coblentz writes for the Mississippi State University Extension Service.



Let us ease the pain of making the change.

Receive a
**\$200
BONUS**

We know opening a new checking account isn't always easy. That is why we want to pay you! Switch to us today to be eligible for a \$200 account bonus.

Bonus paid on Sept. 15, 2025 | New personal accounts only | Terms apply

- Open an E-Checking 2.0 account
- Enroll in Internet/Mobile Banking
- Sign up for E-Statements
- Make at least 60 debit card purchases between June 1st - Aug. 30
- Receive at least a \$1000 in reoccurring direct deposits between June 1st - August 30th
- Offer begins May 1st and may end at anytime but will not go beyond May 30th
- Minimum opening balance is \$50.
- If the account has met requirements, the bonus will be paid September 15th.

Member
FDIC

ELECT

**STANLEY
MARTIN**



**YOUR
VOICE
MATTERS!**

**WESSON
ALDERMAN
AT LARGE**



Bolden new Co-Lin hoops coach

Special to Wesson News

Randy Bolden, who has coached basketball at Mississippi College and Jones Community College, has joined Co-Lin as its new head men's basketball coach.

"I am truly honored and humbled to be named the head men's basketball coach at Co-Lin," Bolden said. "This is a tremendous opportunity, and I'm incredibly excited to get started building on the rich tradition of Co-Lin basketball. I want to thank Co-Lin President Dr. Dewayne Middleton and Athletic Director Bryan Nobile for their faith in me and for entrusting me with the leadership of this program. I'm eager to connect with our student-athletes, get to know their strengths, and begin working together towards our shared goals."

Bolden comes to Co-Lin after spending the last four seasons at Mississippi College, where he guided the Choctaws to the GSC Tournament in the 2022-23 and 2023-24 seasons, the Choctaws' first appearance since the 1995-96 season. Prior to his time at MC, Bolden was the head coach at Jones, where he led the Bobcats to a 59-31 record in four seasons. His tenure there featured back-to-back 20-win seasons, a South Division title,

conference runner-up, and Region 23 runner-up. Seventeen of his players went on to play at the Division I level during his first three seasons with the Bobcats.

The Jackson native attended Forest Hill High School and then played at Texas Southern, where he earned the South West Athletic Conference (SWAC) Player of the Year honors his junior and senior seasons and SWAC Freshman of the Year for the 1994-95 season.

Bolden also finished Top 10 nationally in scoring and helped lead the team to the NCAA Tournament in 1995, where it almost upset defending national champion Arkansas, losing by one point, 79-78.

"We are excited to welcome Randy as our next men's basketball coach,"

said Nobile. "We are fortunate to hire someone with experience in the Mississippi Association of Community Colleges Conference (MACCC), and who is well known in the high school ranks statewide. He brings the passion, drive, and leadership to the program that we want, and I look forward to Coach Bolden getting to Wesson and starting work."

Before his time at Jones, he spent one season as an assistant coach at Hinds after a successful nine-year stint as the head coach at Meridian High School

from 2007-2016. During his time at Meridian, he had a career 227-55 record while guiding the Wildcats to the 2011 6A Mississippi High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) championship along with back-to-back South State titles in the 2010 and 2011 seasons. Bolden was also the head coach at Pearl High School from 2004-07 after beginning



his coaching career as an assistant at Provine High School from 2002-04.

"My vision for Co-Lin Basketball is simple: we will be a program built on hard work, discipline, and a commitment to academic excellence," said Bolden. "We will play an exciting brand of basketball focused on aggressive defense and an up-tempo offense. More importantly, we will strive to develop young men of character who will be successful both on and off the court."

"We will be active members of the Wesson community and represent Co-Lin with pride and integrity. I understand the high expectations that come

with this position, and I'm embracing that challenge! I'm confident that, together, we can achieve great things, and I can't wait to get to work and share this journey with the entire Co-Lin family. Go Wolves!"

After he graduated with a Bachelor of Science in kinesiology from Texas Southern, Bolden played professional basketball in Iceland, Brazil, and Canada from 1998-2002. He also earned a Master of Science in health, physical education, and recreation from Jackson State University in 2006.

Bolden has one son, Rashad, who played for him at Mississippi College and was a First Team All-GSC honoree in the 2023-24 season after leading the team in assists and finishing second in the nation in Division II in scoring. Rashad was also named to the NABC South All-District Second team that season.

"We are thrilled to welcome Coach Randy Bolden to the Co-Lin family," stated Co-Lin President Dr. Dewayne Middleton. "With Coach Bolden at the helm, we are excited about the future of our men's basketball program. His dedication to fostering high character and leadership in his players will undoubtedly inspire them to reach their full potential. His vision and leadership will be instrumental in continuing our tradition of athletic excellence and community engagement."

WESSON AREA DINING GUIDE

Takeout Food & Groceries

Monday - Saturday 4 a.m.- 9 p.m. Sunday 4 a.m.- 6 p.m.





CHICKEN ON A STICK • SWEET TEA • **HUNT BROTHERS PIZZA**

Whole or By the Hunk



SHOP 'N WASH

510 Main Street • Wesson
601-643-5676 • Open Everyday



Sports Bar & Restaurant

Rated by Mississippi Magazine:

- Top 5 for Steaks, BBQ Specials & Burgers
- Number 1 for French Fries

Enjoy Our Bourbon Bar Selections
Watch Sports on Our Wide-Screen TVs
Live Music Friday & Saturday
Open Mic Wednesdays
Hours: 3 p.m.- 9 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday
3 p.m.-10 p.m. Friday & Saturday
Happy Hour 3 p.m. - 6 p.m.
Deliveries to Your Door

218 S. Whitworth Avenue, Brookhaven 601-990-2366




DINE IN AND PICK UP WINDOW

CALL INS WELCOME

MONDAY-FRIDAY 5:30 AM-8:00
SATURDAY 5:30-1:00

GOOD HOME COOKING

1096 HIGHWAY 51, WESSON, MS (601) 643-5100

New Founders' Day Queen crowned



Special to Wesson News

New Wesson Founders' Day Queen Kate Norwood served as a page for State Senator Andy Berry for District 35 encompassing Copiah, Jefferson Davis, Lawrence and Simpson counties.

Special to Wesson News

Kate Norwood is the new Wesson Founders' Day Queen 2025-2026.

The daughter of Brian and Babs Norwood of Wesson is a current junior at Wesson High School (WHS) who plans to attend Co-Lin and then Mississippi State to pursue criminal psychology.

Norwood served as class secretary during her sophomore and junior years. She has been involved with Beta Club and the yearbook staff, has been on the tennis team since her eighth-grade year and was a junior high cheerleader.

Norwood has been on the WHS honor roll every year, having the highest average in web design, ranking in the gold club for ACT scores, recognized for outstanding achievement in multiple classes and a Girls State attendee this summer.

She enjoys reading, traveling, learning new things like crochet, listening to different types of music, going to church, and spending time with friends.

She attends Easthaven Baptist Church and is a youth team leader.

She says history is her favorite class: "I love history and have some of my favorite and funniest memories in the class. I also like psychology because it's so interesting."

Norwood was a page with Copiah State Senator Andy Berry. She's a member of Junior Auxiliary of Copiah County and the Crown Club.

Her goals are to travel to Greece, travel whenever possible to new places, go to college, do well in her classes, and "find a cool job."

"I love Wesson and enjoy showing people what an awesome town we have," says Norwood.

Wesson's new Founder's Day Queen was crowned on May 3 on the Wesson Municipal Park stage by Jessica Breazeale, the first Founders' Day Queen 25 years ago, at the same time townspeople bid farewell to 2024-25 Queen Abbey Berch.



LOWERY, PAYN, LEGGETT & BELLIPANNI

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

Lowery, Payn, Leggett & Bellipanni (LPLB) strives to ensure our clients accomplish their financial goals by providing the highest quality accounting, tax, audit and consulting services

(601) 833 - 1456

207 S. Railroad Avenue | Brookhaven, MS

310 E. Broad Street | Monticello, MS

Senior
**ASSISTED
LIVING
COMMUNITY**

residents get the freedom & independence of home



with the added assistance of therapy, healthcare, meals, programs & more!

Brookhaven, MS

769-300-5380

aspenofbrookhaven.com



CHECK US OUT ONLINE AT:
WESSONNEWS.COM

SAVE \$350 when you transform your patio into an outdoor oasis.



- **Instant shade**—at the touch of a button.
- Enjoy **more quality time** with family and friends.
- Up to **10-Year Limited Warranty**.



Call 1-844-693-9399 now to
SAVE \$350 TODAY!

America's #1 Awning!



1055 Kori Ln, Summit, MS - \$495,000



This exceptional, custom-designed five-bedroom, 3.5-bathroom residence offers 3,787 square feet of luxurious heated and cooled living space, gracefully situated on just over 5 acres in one of Summit, MS's most desirable neighborhoods.

Tyler D. Smith
REALTOR®
It's not professional until it's personal!



📞 **Cell: 601-754-7205** 📞 **Office: 601-833-6305**

✉ **tyler@betsysmithproperties.com**

📍 **415 Hwy 51 Brookhaven, MS**



www.tylerdwithbsp.com

Making your best self daily

By Guest Columnist Stephanie Duguid



In today's fast-paced world, the idea of self-care is often misunderstood. Many associate it with spa days or vacations, assuming it's a luxury rather than a necessity. But true self-care goes much deeper. It's about sustaining your mental, emotional, and physical health so you can show up as your best self every day.

Whether you're a parent, educator, business leader, or student, life demands a lot from us. But constantly giving without refueling leads to burnout, stress, and even long-term health problems. Self-care is how we refuel. It's the intentional practice of taking care of our own well-being so we can better care for others.

Studies show that individuals who prioritize self-care experience improved focus, reduced anxiety, stronger relationships, and better productivity. In fact, the World Health Organization recognizes burnout as an occupational phenomenon, proving that managing your stress and setting boundaries is essential, not selfish.



Self-care doesn't have to be complicated. It can be as simple as:

- Getting enough sleep
- Taking a daily walk
- Saying "no" when your schedule is too full
- Spending time in nature or with loved ones
- Journaling or meditating
- Attending regular health checkups

The key is consistency. Self-care isn't something we do only when overwhelmed; it's a regular part of a healthy lifestyle.

Here are a few ways to embrace self-care in your everyday life, right here in our own communities:

- Practice mindfulness, as many institutions are now encouraging.
- Take advantage of mental health days offered by your workplace.
- Set aside a few minutes each day to breathe deeply and reset.
- Pause between tasks to clear your mind and reduce stress.
- Look for simple, consistent ways to support your well-being throughout the day

This month, I challenge you to carve out 10 minutes a day for your own well-being. Reflect, rest, move your body, or simply unplug. You'll not only feel better, you'll lead better, love stronger, and live more fully.



"Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you," according to Anne Lamott.

It's a powerful reminder that even the smallest moments of self-care -- pausing, breathing, unplugging -- can restore our energy and clarity.

Remember: You can't pour from an empty cup. Taking care of yourself isn't a break from your responsibilities. It's what allows you to meet them with strength, clarity, and purpose.

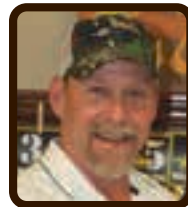
EDITOR'S NOTE: Dr. Stephanie Duguid is owner of Do Good ProHealth (CPR Classes) and Do Good Leadership (motivational speaking, and leadership and success coaching). She is also a Mississippi Health Ambassador.

cont. from front page

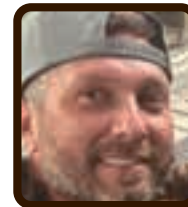
Nine vying for Wesson posts

In the uncontested Aldermen races, the incumbent candidates are:

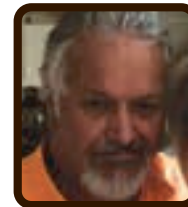
- **Ward 1's Larry Hall**, who visited Wesson in 1985, decided to stay, and met and married his wife of 29 years, Melanie Wilkinson Hall. He does volunteer work, including fundraising for Socks for Heroes and various local charities.
- **Ward 2's Jarrad Ashley**, who was born in McComb, grew up in Brookhaven and worked in construction with his father Larry. He studied business for two years at Co-Lin, while also working for his father at the Shop 'N Wash, and worked six years in Atlanta area restaurants. He manages a local restaurant, with seafood specialties, which he calls Z&Z in honor of the children he and his wife Brittany are raising -- Zoey, Zada, and Zane.
- **Ward 3's Billy Ellison**, who was born in Dr. Friedman's office in September, 1960, one hundred yards from where he grew up and has continued to live and work in sales-related and maintenance jobs in the area.
- **Ward 4's Mike King**, President and CEO of Summerwind Consultants, Inc., which develops antiterrorism and risk management decision-support software tools. He spearheaded development of the Wesson Veterans Memo-



LARRY HALL



JARRAD ASHLEY



BILLY ELLISON



MIKE KING

rial. A Brookhaven native, he graduated from Florida State University and started a law enforcement career with the Brookhaven Police Department, which he continued as a military policeman after being commissioned as a U.S. Marine Corps officer in 1983.

He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy and U.S. Army Command and Staff College, holding a Master of Military Art and Science. He received the Legion of Merit Award, Defense Meritorious Service Medal and the Presidential Service Badge.

Wesson City Hall is the voting site for the election from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on June 3, with absentee voting underway throughout May on weekdays (8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.) and on Saturdays, May 24 and 31 (8 a.m. to 12 noon).

Realism in Mississippi horror film

Special to Wesson News

Sinners, a new Warner Brothers release directed by Ryan Coogler, may be a unique horror film coming out of the imagination of a filmmaker who has emerged as one of Hollywood's new top talents, but it has won accolades for its realism in presenting local cultures.

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, for one, said that from the very beginning of the production, Coogler and his team at Proximity Media made it a priority to ensure authenticity by casting actual Mississippi Choctaws, using accurate Choctaw language, and paying close attention to period-specific dress and cultural representation.

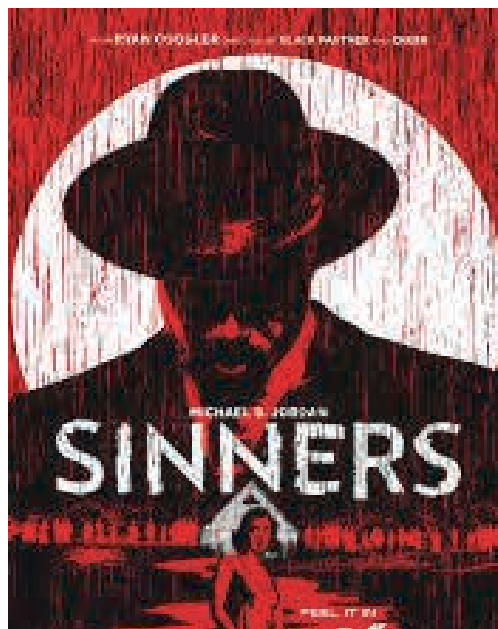
"We extend our heartfelt thanks to Director Coogler, Proximity Media, and Warner Bros. for their commitment to accurate and respectful representation of Native Americans," the group said. "Your dedication to using accurate Choctaw language and culture makes a meaningful difference."

Sinners is Coogler's fifth film. He became a quick favorite of movie fans with *Fruitvale Station* set in his hometown of Oakland, California, which explored the last day of Oscar Grant; *Creed*, dreamed up for his father, who loved *Rocky* unabashedly; and *Black Panther*, which let him grapple with the idea of what it means to be African.

"I knew it would be a period piece and a horror movie, so I knew film made the most sense for that," Coogler told the Associated Press. "But after getting into the research of the project and learning the epic scale of the contribution of Delta Blues when it comes to global popular culture, how this music kinda launched pop music as we know it ... I realized that this was a larger-than-life story."

Sinners blends elements of supernatural horror, gangster drama, romance, blues music and action across one eventful day in Clarksdale, Mississippi, in 1932 in which a community opens a juke joint and then has to defend it from a vampire army growing outside.

Coogler's family's ties to a Mississippi of the past -- his maternal grandfather from Merrill, Mississippi, who moved to Oakland, where the family remains, and his Uncle James, who introduced him to blues



music and died while Coogler was making *Creed* -- inspired the film's setting

A lot of films, with *Jurassic Park*, *Get Out* and *The Shining* suggesting the horror elements incorporated in *Sinners*, also inspired the director.

In the film, Coogler's longtime collaborator Michael B. Jordan plays identical twins -- Smoke and Stack, who served in the war, worked with Chicago gangsters and are returning to their Mississippi home with plans to open a juke joint.

Smoke is a little grumpier, a little more serious and haunted by a loss. Stack is a little lighter -- a charmer who smiles through the pain. Co-stars Hailee Steinfeld and Wunmi Mosaku play Stack's ex Mary and Smoke's longtime love Annie, and deal with the twins' personalities.

Coogler also brings a new face to the screen -- Miles Caton, a 19-year-old newcomer who is essentially third lead to Jordan's twins as Sammie (or Preacher Boy), a blues prodigy who wants to play music and not follow his father to the church. For

his part, Coogler introduced him to some great blues artists -- Howlin' Wolf and Charlie Patton, Buddy Guy.

The film's ensemble includes Jayme Lawson as a local singer, Omar Miller as a sharecropper, and Jack O'Connell as an Irish vampire.

The Mississippi Choctaws involved in *Sinners* include Tobiah Ben as a stunt driver, Mark Patrick as a horseback scout, Marco Patrick as a horseback stunt rider, Jaeden Wesley as a chanter, Jay Wesley as a Choctaw posse member and cultural consultant, Eric Willis as a Choctaw posse member, Cynthia Massey as a cultural consultant, and Sherrill Nickey as a cultural consultant.

Choctaw realism is only a part of the film's story. *Sinners* also presents a more accurate version of the Deep South at the time than audiences may be used to seeing in Hollywood films, with Li Jun Li and Yao as Asian American shop owners.

In their roles, cast members said they all seemed to learn a bit about themselves in the filmmaking process, according to Associated Press. "This film brought me closer to my family and my family history," said Steinfeld, whose grandfather was half-Black and half-Filipino. "I think that it will serve as such an amazing conversation starter for people and maybe encourage them to look into their genealogy."



MARKETPLACE MOTORS

LITTLE LOT - BIG SAVINGS



2017 Chevy LT-Z71
4wd Crew Cab, Bucket seats, 5.3 L, Rear View Camera, Tow Pkg, Heated Seats, Super Nice



2017 Ford E350
2017 E350 Super Duty Pass Bus with Braun wheel chair lift, 6.8L Gas, One owner, Low Mileage, Now only \$18,500!



2009 Chevy Silverado,
Crew Cab LT, 2wd, 5.3L, Chrome wheels, Chrome side strips, Trailer tow pkg



2015 GMC Yukon XL Denali,
Leather, 22" wheels, loaded



2013 Lexus GX460 Premium
One Lady owner, Fully Loaded, AWD, Low Mileage.



2010 Ford F150 Crew Cab King Ranch
4wd, Loaded, 5.4L, Super Nice, Low Mileage



2015 Chevy Camaro LS/RS
Low miles, RS gauges, Leather, Rear view camera Premium audio, spoiler, like new

MARKETPLACE MOTORS II OVER 50 TO CHOOSE FROM!

Be sure to go by Marketplace Motors II in Brookhaven on Union Street, Extended at the North Brookhaven Exit!

"HOME OF GUARANTEED FINANCING"



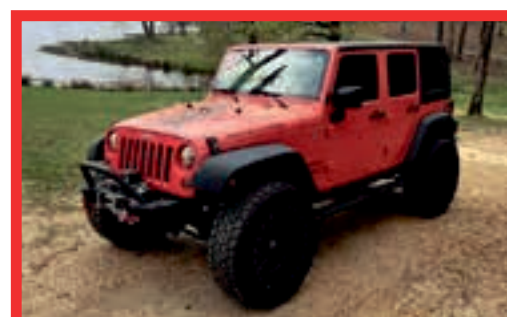
2011 Ford Edge Limited pkg
Low Low Miles, Leather, Rear view camera, loaded!



2014 Lexus Rx350
One owner, low mileage, super clean



2013 Toyota Tacoma
Double Cab 4x4, low mileage, TRD Offroad, Rare find!



2013 Jeep Wrangler Unlimited Rubicon
6 speed, Hard top, Winch with custom bumper, lift kit, custom wheels, Awesome!



Roland Price
110 Market Place
Hazlehurst, MS 39083

MarketplaceMotors.net
601-750-2277
Across from Walmart



WE FINANCE

Just bring in your last pay stub and your down payment and drive out TODAY!

Classic soups for summer meals



By Guest Food Columnist Charles Raymond Fortson

With the summer months just around the corner, lighter fare for meals will be in order. Soups are easy to make, and you can keep them in a freezer to pull out for a quick meal when you don't want to work over a hot stove. Two classics are Leek & Potato Soup and Cauliflower Soup.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Charles Fortson, Jr., is proprietor-chef at Uncle Ray's across from Lake Lincoln State Park. He makes lunches and dinners to take out or for table service, while also operating a convenience store and bait shop at his Sunset Road location. Follow his cooking tips on Uncle Ray's Facebook page or call 601-643-0174 to check on his daily specials.



Cauliflower Soup

Ingredients:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1 tbsp olive oil | 1 large head of cauliflower |
| 2 tbsp butter | 3 ¼ cups vegetable stock |
| 1 coarsely chopped large onion | Salt and pepper |
| 2 sliced leeks | Finely grated cheddar cheese and extra virgin olive oil to serve |

Directions:

Heat the oil and butter in a large saucepan and cook the onion and leeks for 10 minutes, stirring frequently, taking care not to allow the vegetables to color. Cut cauliflower into florets and cut the stalk in small pieces, add to pan and saute with the other vegetables for two to three minutes.

Add the stock, bring to boil, cover and simmer over medium heat for 20 minutes. Process soup in blender or food processor until smooth, return to rinsed out saucepan, reheat, salt and pepper to taste and serve in warmed bowls topped with a spoonful of grated cheese and a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil.

Leek & Potato Soup

Ingredients:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ¼ cup butter | 3 ½ cups vegetable stock |
| 1 onion (chopped) | Salt and pepper |
| 3 leeks (sliced) | 2/3 cup light cream to serve (optional) |
| 8 oz/225 g potatoes cut into ¾ -inch/2-cm cubes | 2 tbsp snipped fresh chives to garnish |

Directions:

Melt the butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion, leeks and potatoes. Saute gently for two to three minutes until soft but not brown. Pour in stock, bring to boil and then reduce heat and simmer covered for 15 minutes.

Process mixture in food processor or blender until smooth. Return to rinsed-out saucepan to reheat. Salt and pepper to taste and serve in warmed bowls. Swirl in cream, if using, and garnish with chives.



Find it at Farmbelt!

2231KW-42

- 21.5 Gross HP,† Gasoline, Air-Cooled V-Twin Engine
- 42" Welded Mower Deck
- Ultrascaper Z Rear Tires
- Sliding High-Back Seat with Plenty of Legroom

\$89.99/mo¹



\$0 DOWN, 3.1% A.P.R. FOR 84 MONTHS!¹



87 Hwy 84 E
 Brookhaven, MS
 601-833-3501
farmbeltequipment.com

Kubota

1. Payments of \$89.99 per month on new Kubota 2231 Series equipment based on sales price of \$4,399.00 at \$0 down, 3.1% A.P.R. for 84 months. Financing available from Kubota Credit Corporation, U.S.A.; subject to credit approval. Offer expires 6/30/25. Terms subject to change. This material is for descriptive purposes only. Kubota disclaims all representations and warranties, express or implied, or any liability from the use of this material. For more information, see Dealer or go to KubotaUSA.com. † For complete warranty, safety and product information, consult your local Kubota dealer and the product operator's manual. Power (HP/KW) and other specifications are based on various standards or recommended practices. KOD-24-152168-2

DSU honors Hazlehurst student

Special to Wesson News

Alexis Hartley from Hazelhurst, a student in the Master of Science Natural Sciences program at Delta State University, earned a second place award in DSU's annual Academic Research Showcase, which recognizes outstanding achievements of graduate and undergraduate students and celebrates their dedication to academic inquiry and innovation.

Hartley's "Creating Animations and Videos to Aid in Teaching Chemistry" was among 20 academic projects in the showcase organized by DSU Director of Library Services Fawn Ussery and hosted by the Office of Academic Affairs and Roberts-LaForge Library. The showcase provides a platform for students to present their individual research projects in a poster session format. Other winners were:

- Dajanae Prout, a senior Psychology major from Gulfport, who earned first place for "The Impact of COVID-19 on Undergraduate Utilization of Counseling Services at Delta State University."
- Olivia Pharr, a senior Environmental Science major from Charleston, Mississippi, who received second place for "Vehicular Collisions with Raptors in the Mississippi Delta."
- Keveon Beavers, a senior Music major from Horn Lake, Mississippi, who received a Special Recognition Award for "Exoticism in Verdi's Opera Aida."
- Jacob West Gray from Olive Branch, who is in Master of Arts-Liberal Studies with a History concentration and received a first place award for "Election of 1912."

"This year's Academic Research Showcase was truly special, as



it brought together a remarkable range of disciplines—from humanities, fine arts, and music to chemistry, biology, and counselor education," said Ussery.

Delta State University is a four-year public institution whose nearly 2,700 students come from most U.S. states and more than 45 countries. The University, which stated as a teachers' college, sustains excellence in teacher education while continuing to expand offerings in traditional as well as unique fields of study. Delta State offers top-notch academic programs in business, arts, sciences, nursing, education, and more.



1055 Kori Ln, Summit, MS - \$495,000



BETSY SMITH PROPERTIES

This exceptional, custom-designed five-bedroom, 3.5-bathroom residence offers 3,787 square feet of luxurious heated and cooled living space, gracefully situated on just over 5 acres in one of Summit, MS's most desirable neighborhoods.



Tyler D. Smith
REALTOR®
It's not professional until it's personal!

Cell: 601-754-7205 Office: 601-833-6305
tyler@betsysmithproperties.com
415 Hwy 51 Brookhaven, MS



www.tylerdwithbsp.com

LET THE PROS HANDLE IT! LeafFilter® GUTTER PROTECTION




20% OFF + **10% OFF**
Your Entire Purchase* Seniors + Military

USA ACCREDITED BUSINESS A+ ++ We offer financing that fits your budget!¹¹
Promo: 285

CALL TODAY FOR A FREE INSPECTION! 1-833-343-1315

* See Representative for full warranty details. *One coupon per household. No obligation estimate valid for 1 year. †Subject to credit approval. Call for details. AR 365920923, AZ ROC 344027, CA 1035795, CT HIC 0671520, FL CBC056678, IA C127230, ID REC-51604, LA 559544, MA 176447, MD MHIC111225, MI 262300173, 262300318, 262300328, 262300329, 262300330, 262300331, MN IR731804, MT 226192, ND 47304, NE 50145-22, 50145-23, NJ 13VH09953900, NM 408693, NV 86990, NY H-19114, H-52229, OR 218294, PA 179643, 069383, RI GC-41354, TN 10981, UT 10783658-5501, VA 2705169445, WA LEAFENWR232, WV WV056912.



BEFORE AFTER

We're looking to install our **NEXT GENERATION** gutter guard on your home!

LIFETIME WARRANTY

FULL SERVICE GUTTER PROTECTION – SCHEDULE YOUR FREE INSPECTION NOW! 1-833-343-1315

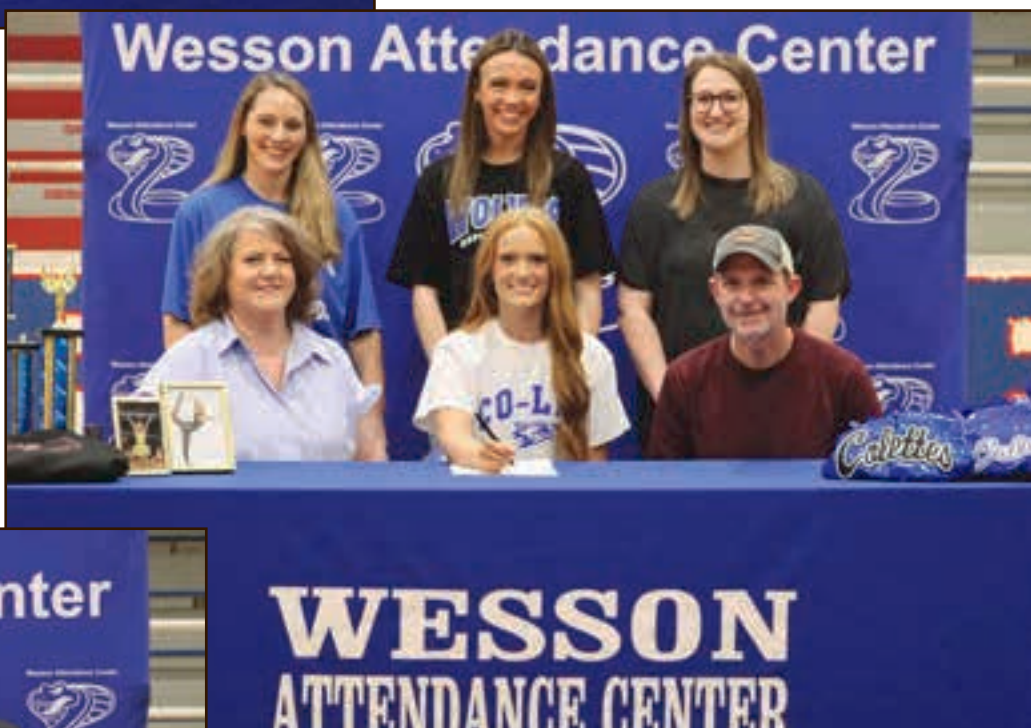
Three New Co-Lin dancers

Wesson High School (WHS) cheerleaders Abbey Berch, Maggie Runnels and Aubree Smith will dance at the college level as members of the Co-Lin Collettes.



Berch inked a full scholarship to dance with the Collettes. Berch is a member of the WHS varsity cheer team and Precision Dance Company competitive team and assistant studio dance teacher at Precision Dance. Pictured front (left to right): Amanda Berch (her mom), Berch and Mason Berch (her brother). Back (left to right): Michelle Berch, WHS Cheer Coach; Kennedy Moore, Collette Coach; and Anna Traxler, WHS Cheer Coach.

Runnels inked a full scholarship to dance with the Collettes. She is currently co-captain of the WHS varsity cheer team, a member of the Precision Dance Company competitive team and assistant teacher at Precision Dance. Pictured front (left to right): Amy Runnels (her mom), Runnels and Todd Runnels (her dad). Back (left to right): Michelle Berch, WHS Cheer Coach; Kennedy Moore, Collette Coach; and Anna Traxler, WHS Cheer Coach.



Smith inked a full scholarship to dance with the Collettes. She is currently co-captain of the WHS varsity cheer team, a member of Brookhaven Dance Company competition team and an assistant teacher at Brookhaven Dance Academy. Pictured front (left to right): Lisa Earls (her mom), Smith and Briley Smith (her dad). Back (left to right): Michelle Berch, WHS Cheer Coach; Kennedy Moore, Collette Coach; and Anna Traxler, WHS Cheer Coach.

Co-Lin student gets MSU scholarship

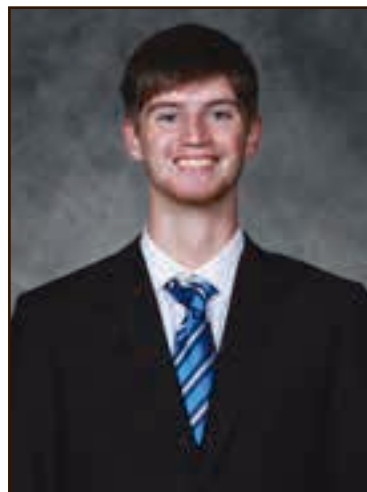
Special to Wesson News

Co-Lin sophomore Clifton Jernigan of Eupora has been named a Mississippi State University (MSU) Presidential Partnership Scholarship recipient.

The Presidential Partnership Scholarship will cover the cost of full-time tuition at MSU for two years, totaling over \$20,000. This scholarship is only for community college transfer students who are members of Phi Theta Kappa and have showcased academic excellence and leadership on campus. Recipients are nominated by the president at their community college and selected by the MSU Scholarship Committee.

"I am beyond grateful to Dr. Middleton [Co-Lin president] and everything he has done for me while at Co-Lin, and his nomination for the Presidential Partnership has been one of my highlights at the college," said Jernigan. "He made my transition from Eupora to Wesson seamless. I would also like to thank all faculty and staff on campus. If I were to name each person, I would go way behind the word count, but I can tell you that if it was not for every single faculty and staff on campus, I would not be where I am today. These people do not get enough recognition."

Jernigan was recently inducted into the 2024-2025 Co-Lin Hall of Fame. He is a Pitts Presidential Scholar and serves as President of the Trailblazers and Vice President of Student Government Association. He also serves as President of the Eta Omega Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa and the Co-Lin C.A.R.E.S Club. Jernigan is active with the Baptist Student Union and serves on the leadership team and in the praise



Clifton Jernigan

Special to Wesson News

band. He is a member of the Alpha Omega Science Club, Mu Alpha Theta and Co-Lin Honors College, and serves on the *Wolf Tales* student newspaper.

He is also on the Co-Lin Cheerleading team, serving as the college's mascot, Mr. Wolf. He was named Phi Theta Kappa Officer of the Year and Most Distinguished Regional Member for its MS/LA region, and to Who's Who at Co-Lin. He was elected by his peers as Mr. Co-Lin. Jernigan was a member of the Wolves Tennis team during his freshman year and named to the Mississippi Association of Community College Conference (MACCC) All-Academic First Team.

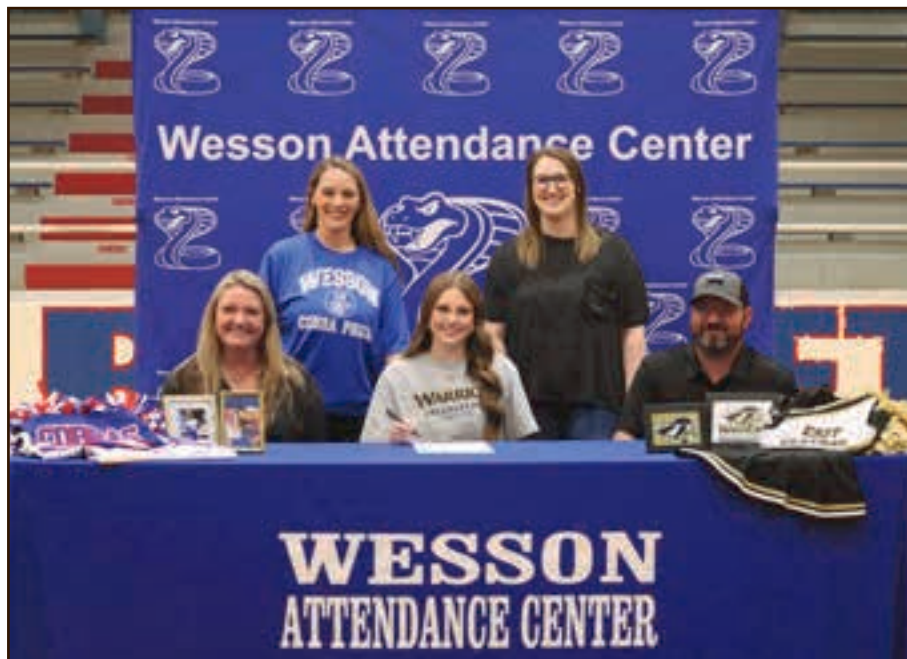
"If you would have told me about Co-Lin two years ago, I would have said, 'yeah, that's the place south of Jackson that has a wolf mascot, right,'" Jernigan said. "Standing where I am now, I can personally tell you that Co-Lin is way more than just that. It is truly my home away from home! Ever since I first stepped foot on campus, everyone from faculty to staff to students have been extremely kind and inviting."

After Co-Lin, Jernigan will pursue a bachelor's degree in microbiology with plans to attend medical school to become a pediatric physician. He is the son of Bubba and Randee Jernigan of Eupora.

"I will miss Co-Lin more than most people realize," he said. "For those of you who do not know me, Cracker Barrel is literally my favorite part about Brookhaven, Mississippi. I love it so much that it was one of my main deciding factors for attending Co-Lin. So, I say with all my heart: I love y'all more than Cracker Barrel. Thank y'all for everything that you have done for me, and I hope I can repay the favor someday."

Continuing to cheer

Wesson High School cheerleaders Courtney Carr and Allison Hamilton will continue leading cheers in college.



Carr inked a scholarship with East Central Community College Warriors Cheerleading squad. She is captain of the Wesson High School cheerleading team.

Pictured front (left to right): Laura Curtis (her mom), Carr and Justin Curtis (her stepdad). Back (left to right): Michelle Berch and Anna Traxler (WHS Cheer Coaches).



Hamilton will continue her cheerleading career as a member of the Mississippi College Choctaw cheerleading squad. Pictured front (left to right): Brad Hamilton (her dad), Hamilton and Kimberly Hamilton (her mom). Back (left to right): Michelle Berch and Anna Traxler (Wesson Cheer Coaches)

Three cheerers

Wesson High School (WHS) seniors Lilly Kate Channell, Trevor McRee and Hunter Meredith have inked scholarships to cheer for Co-Lin.

Special to Wesson News



Front Row (left to right): Johnna McRee (Trevor’s mom), McRee and Jon McRee (Trevor’s dad). Back: Lucas McRee (Trevor’s brother).



Front Row (left to right): Layne Channell (Lilly’s dad), Channell and Laranda Channell (Lilly’s mom). Back Row (left to right): Michelle Berch, WHS cheer coach, and Marley Channell (Lilly’s sister).



Front Row (left to right): Lee Meredith (Hunter’s dad), Meredith and Melissa Meredith (Hunter’s mom).

Students can explore medical careers at UMMC



Special to Wesson News

The University of Mississippi Medical Center is inviting college students who are considering a career in medicine to participate in the UMMC School of Medicine Pre-Med Day, beginning at 8:15 a.m. Friday, May 16. Breakfast will be served at 8:15 a.m., with the program commencing at 9 a.m. in the UMMC School of Medicine. “Medical School: Understanding the Journey” is a chance to discover firsthand what life is like for medical students. Students who register for Pre-Med Day will be able to participate in a Q&A panel with current medical students and physicians, while learning how to apply to the School of Medicine. They will also attend a mock medical school lecture and a presentation from the associate dean of admissions. Registration is available online. Please note that Pre-Med Day is for college students only. Students planning to apply to medical school this cycle are asked to make an individual appointment with the Office of Admissions by calling 601-984-5010.



Let us ease the pain of making the change.

Receive a

\$200 BONUS

We know opening a new checking account isn't always easy. That is why we want to pay you! Switch to us today to be eligible for a \$200 account bonus.

Bonus paid on Sept. 15, 2025 | New personal accounts only|Terms apply

- Open an E-Checking 2.0 account
- Enroll in Internet/Mobile Banking
- Sign up for E-Statements
- Make at least 60 debit card purchases between June 1st - Aug. 30
- Receive at least a \$1000 in reoccurring direct deposits between June 1st - August 30th
- Offer begins May 1st and may end at anytime but will not go beyond May 30th
- Minimum opening balance is \$50.
- If the account has met requirements, the bonus will be paid September 15th.

Member FDIC

“Life’s brokenness just creates cracks to let the light in so Jesus can shine brighter.”

By Guest Columnist Misty Strieff Prine

“God rebuilds you right in front of people who broke you. Trust me, you don’t need revenge, you need faith.” – Unknown.

This was on my heart to write as one of my devotionals on my Facebook devotional page “The Upward Way” the other night, and I wanted to share with all of you in case you are not a member of that page to have seen it. I really feel like it was meant for everyone to see.

Trust me when I say, this is one of God’s BIGGEST ways to not only draw you closer to Him but for you to truly see God’s ability to turn complete brokenness into something beautiful. I am a living, breathing, walking testament of this more times than I can count. In many ways, being hurt by the very people that are supposed to lift you up, pray for you, celebrate and help further your ministry, encourage you, and love you through the rough stages in your life is one of the most difficult things a Christian can experience and overcome. But here’s the thing. When you’ve had years upon years of that same hurt from multiple avenues, (church, career, life in general, etc.) but EACH time God shows up, you can sit back and just are in complete and utter awe when you see what God turns that brokenness into! Wow. He does it every time!

His plan is SO grand and thought out and perfectly timed and

every event has to happen for it to fall into place. As they say, we all must be broken for the light to shine through. For a moment, I experienced weakness, and the enemy would start to get the upper hand, and my first thought would always be to quit writing, singing, be sad and gloomy...but that would be quitting ALL of the things GOD was having me do. That’s when it hit me. The enemy would win. No, no, NO! My Mama would always come through in a clutch and say, “Baby, the devil wouldn’t be fighting so hard to get you to quit if you weren’t doing something right.” So every time I find myself broken, no matter what the case may be, God gives me HIS strength and He always finds me a way to turn a mess into a message and a test into a testimony.

Revenge is never needed. You may feel that human emotion at first. After all, we are all human. However, if you have faith that God is going to work it all out for the good of those who love Him like He promises and you TRULY do, He’s going to work EVERYTHING OUT right in front of the very ones that broke you but do it in such a way that is humbling and shows your heart is in the place it should be. If you handle it correctly, you will turn it around and become a witness to them. Now how about that?

**For daily devotionals, you can follow me on Facebook at The Upward Way or on Instagram at the_upward_way.

The three estate-safety keys

Wesson News

Anyone who wants to preserve and grow the savings they earn over many years needs to practice common sense investment management, protect themselves from fraudsters and assure wise legal management of their estates, a team of Trustmark Bank executives told members of Co-Lin’s Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) at a special Lunch and Learn seminar last month.

On hand for the event was a portfolio manager, commercial banking president and private wealth advisor.

1. On investment management, they told seminar attendees not to panic when markets go down or on scary predictions of news commentators.

They showed charts that put the recent stock market downturn based on the implementation of new tariffs into perspective. In fact, the S&P 500 Index is up 2,500 points over five years with a normal correction in response to relatively modest tariff rates and a trade

policy environment that shows potential for negotiations. Another chart showed investors fare better when they don’t bail out of the market when prices of stocks fall.

The Trustmark team reminded its audience of the advice of Wall Street veteran Art Cashin: “Never bet on the end of the world because it only happens once.”

2. On fraud, the Trustmark team said scams and schemes globally have bilked \$485.6 billion from people and the unsuspecting and have poured \$3.1 trillion into illicit funds.

They red-flagged tech support scams in which criminals access devices and get personal information and money by claiming they can fix hacking and other problems that have already occurred or are occurring; money mules who transfer and launder illegally-acquired money through online job ads, social media, enticing investment opportunities, prize offers or dating websites; phishing scams that disguise email to look and sound like a trusted bank or vendor; and



check fraud, including forgery, theft and “washing” in which scammers alter unprotected checks and acquire names and contract information, account and routing numbers and signatures.

3. Estate planning involves preparing legal documents that specify actions and decision-makers in case someone becomes incapacitated or dies – Advance Healthcare Directive, Living Will, Power of Attorney, Last Will & Testament, the Trustmark team explained. They cover how assets will be

passed, legal titling and beneficiaries. The estate planner can change revocable documents, while irrevocable documents require a third party to change.

Everyone, the Trustmark team pointed out, needs a will to protect their estates after death during probate from state and people who think they should be beneficiaries.

Draft documents with the help of an attorney, execute multiple original copies, and know how to amend documents because of marriage or divorce, accidents and illnesses or retirement, they advised.

SAVE \$350 when you transform your patio into an outdoor oasis.



- **Instant shade**—at the touch of a button.
- **Enjoy more quality time** with family and friends.
- **Up to 10-Year Limited Warranty.**



Call 1-844-693-9399 now to
SAVE \$350 TODAY!

America's #1 Awning!