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# Wesson News

## SPOTLIGHT

### Upcoming ILR Trips

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our complete issue!

Volume 10, Number 9

“Good News You Can Use”

September, 2022

# Learning program resumes post COVID

*Special to Wesson News*

Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) is ending its COVID-19 pause with resumption of a full program during the Co-Lin 2022 fall semester with seven workshops, a movie day, a special fun day for play and creative expression, three luncheons with entertainment and a learning event, a brunch with a guest speaker and a Christmas Party that will combine holiday cheer and learning.

At the group's first luncheon and workshop of the fall semester today at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., Co-Lin student Haden Stephens played the acoustic guitar and sang, and Kathy McKone from Co-Lin's Bio-Medical Research Class focused on the basics of DNA pipetting with a hands-on activity. ILR participants started the semester last week at *National Treasure*, a movie starring Nicolas Cage and Sean Bean in a treasure



Wesson News

*ILR program introduced to membership.*

hunt linked to the Declaration of Independence.

ILR, a Co-Lin-sponsored membership organization, provides continuing education experiences for retired and semi-retired older adults who define

their own informal educational goals and pursue them at their own pace, based on their own choices and talents. Members, who design the group's program, come from wide ranging backgrounds and bring varied

experiences to the organization. Co-Lin staff administers ILR and the college provides facilities for the organization, which is fully funded by member dues.

*cont. on page 3*

# Alumni & friends celebrate Co-Lin Homecoming

*By Bob Arnold*

Alumni and friends of Co-Lin will celebrate the college's Homecoming on Monday, October 6th, with social events, business meetings, awards presentations and a football game at Stone Stadium with pre-game and half-time ceremonies.

A retiree brunch will start the day-long festivities at the President's Home at 10:30 a.m. The event is free and open to all Co-Lin retirees. The Homecoming football game pitting Co-Lin's Wolf Pack against the Mississippi

Gulf Coast Bulldogs ends the events-packed day at 6:30 p.m., including a pre-game recognition of the college's Sports Hall of Fame inductees and half-time show by the college's Blue Wave Band and presentation of the Homecoming Queen and court as well as the confrontation on the gridiron.

In between the brunch and games, will be:

**2 p.m.** Alumni chapter meetings. The Athletic Alumni Association at the Henley Building and the Band/Colette Alumni Chapter at the Anderson



*Special to Wesson News*

Building.

**3:15 p.m.** Alumni Awards reception social time followed by Awards program at 3:45 p.m. Dr. Michael Henderson will be recognized as Alumni of the Year, Becky Yarbrough and Daniel

Bush as Band/Collette Alumni Chapter Hall of Fame inductee and Young Alumnus of the Year, and Chris Caughman, Latoria Holder, Time Johnson, Matt Mooney and Chandler Roger as Sports Hall of Fame inductees. The 50-Year Class will also be honored.

**4:30 p.m.** Alumni Association annual business meeting.

**5 p.m.** Community-wide tailgate party at Stone Stadium open and free for all Co-Lin alumni and friends. Live music, burgers provided by Alfa Insurance, kids' activities and other entertainment.

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# WGC August Honor Yards

In its August Yard of the Month awards, Wesson Garden Club recognized the landscaping efforts of Rick and Dana Gunter at 1024 West Street, and Steve and Brenda Smith at 9171 Sylvarena Road for the town and rural residential categories. Salon 51 and Oh Babies Children’s Clothing Store, operated by Vera Boyles at 2064 Highway 51 North, was recognized in the organizational category. The Club also recognized the Wesson Fountain Garden butterfly sculptures on Highway 51 North with its Special Summer Award. The Yard of the Month awards that recognize maintenance principles and elements of landscape design seek to encourage ongoing beautification and cleanliness of the Wesson area and cultivate a citizenry that values and protects natural resources and assumes responsibility for enhancing the environment. The Garden Club's Yard of the Month awards honor landscapes during the spring, summer and fall.



Wesson Fountain Garden



Smith property



Salon 51/Oh Babies Children’s Clothing Store property



Gunter property



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cont. from page 1

# Learning program resumes post COVID

For the past two years, the COVID-19 pandemic halted the organization's activities. Other events scheduled in the coming weeks are:

**September 27.** Brunch. In a pre-mid term elections talk, Lincoln County Circuit Clerk Dustin Bairfield will discuss free and fair elections in a time of political controversy. \$12. Co-Lin Thames Center. 10 a.m.  
"Painting Your Masterpiece." A hands-on workshop in which Dawn Marks guides participants in painting thematic works on cypress wood. \$25 for supplies. Take home your completed project. Co-Lin Thames Center at 11:30 p.m.

**October 4.** "Chair Yoga." A fun workshop led by Co-Lin Fitness Instructor Cheryl Myers teaches physical exercises you can continue to practice at home. \$10. 10 a.m. at Co-Lin Thames Center.  
**October 18.** Luncheon with entertainment provided by the Dulcimer Group, which includes ILR member Jennifer Templeton. \$12. 11 a.m. at Co-Lin Thames Center.  
"History of Country Music." A workshop led by Josh McCreary, an officer of the Co-Lin Centurion history club. 1 p.m. at Co-Lin Thames Center.

**October 24.** Fun Day. An opportunity to express your creativity by painting pumpkins and compete in playing corn hole – throwing fabric bean bags at a hole on a raised, angled board. Refreshments served. \$3 fee. 1 p.m. at Co-Lin Thames Center.

**November 8.** Luncheon with cooking demonstration/class led by Co-Lin Aladdin Campus Dining Executive Chef Chris McSweyn, former owner-partner and cook at Porches Restaurant in Wesson. \$22 for meal and class fee. 10:30 a.m. at Co-Lin Thames Center.  
"Safety & Situational Awareness." Retired police officer and ILR member Allen Cupit will teach participants how to protect themselves by keeping alert in their surroundings. 1 p.m. at Co-Lin Thames Center.

**November 15.** "Chair Yoga." A second fun workshop led by Co-Lin Fitness Instructor Cheryl Myers teaches physical exercises you can continue to practice at home. \$10. 10 a.m. at Co-Lin Thames Center.  
"DNA II: Electrophoresis." A follow-up to the September 13 workshop introducing electrophoresis and analysis of agarose gels. Co-Lin Bio-Medical Research Class Science Instructor Kathy McKone leads the hands-on exploration of DNA. 1 p.m. at Co-Lin Thames Center.

**December 12.** "Christmas Cookie Exchange." A combination holiday party and workshop in which participants share their favorite seasonal cookie recipes or baked samples of them with recipes. In addition to the treats prepared by members, hot chocolate, coffee and other refreshments will be served. \$15. 10:30 a.m. at Co-Lin Thames Center.  
For information, contact Co-Lin Program Coordinator and Events Coordinator Erin Johnson (erin.johnson@colin.edu, 601-643-8702).

# Unknowns who deserve our attention

By Guest Columnist R. Shaw Furlow

Tucked away, unnoticed, in Rosehill Cemetery in Brookhaven, are the graves of Charles Henri Ford and his sister Ruth Ford. The names may not be familiar to you, because they weren't around here very long. Just long enough to be born here in 1908 and 1911, respectively. Their father managed hotels in the area, including Hazlehurst and Brookhaven, but their family left in short order, as well.

Yet they made something of a name for themselves in the art world, and, along with that, their births and burials in the area make them worthy of our attention.

Henri was originally Henry, but didn't want to be confused with Ford the car maker. So he changed the spelling of his name, giving it a suave French air. He would later



be recognized in his own right as an actor, painter, director and writer.

Ford is considered the first American surrealist poet. He was friends with author and poet Gertrude Stein and visited her in Paris, where he became a regular of her Saturday evening salon often frequented by Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, Thornton Wilder, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway.

His contribution to the art world included his gritty novel *The Young and Evil*, which chronicles the lives of young New York artists and their struggles, successes and loves, while frequenting the speakeasys of Greenwich Village. One critic said his book was one generation ahead of the Beat Generation.

Along with the novel, Ford published books of poetry, had art displays in Europe and was the editor of *View*, the premiere surrealist and figurative art and literature magazine of the 1940s. Considered a bohemian, he was one of the first of the New York school of writing style. His first poem was published in

*The New Yorker* while he was still a teenager. In all, he published 16 books of poetry.

After graduating from Ole Miss, his sister Ruth followed Henri to New York City, where she was intrigued by her brother's group of friends, and fell right into it. She first found success as a model, with her pictures appearing on the covers of *Vogue*, *Harpers Bazaar* and *Mademoiselle*. She became great friends with Orson Wells and

one of the regular players on his radio show, *The Mercury Theatre*. She had met and befriended William Faulkner at Ole Miss and was reacquainted with him one evening at her brother's apartment. Tennessee Williams and Truman Capote cast her in roles in plays they wrote.

Ruth eventually moved to Hollywood to try her hand in the movies. She started working in B films, but the quality of her scripts never improved. So she decided to return to Broadway, where the quality was better, and she appeared in Faulkner's *Requiem for a Nun*.

Ruth and Henri both had apartments in the famed Dakota in New York City. Like Stein, she hosted a weekly salon of artists, musicians and writers.

Henri died in 2002, leaving his apartment to Ruth, who died in 2009. Their two apartments were valued at eight million dollars.

I first learned about the Fords from my son. My research about them wasn't easy, and there is much more deep digging into their lives to do if you are interested. Our little corner of the world is like so many other places, with stories of people about whom you have never heard, but have done extraordinary things. The Fords deserve a bit of our time and attention.

That's it for this month. Read a book, catch a movie, listen to good music and remember, support the arts, my friends.

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



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# Members guide adult learning group



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## Special to Wesson News

The Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) is a member-driven organization. Its 2022-23 officers are Tommy Sasser, president; Sarah Lloyd, vice president; Joy Wesbrooks, secretary; Nora Berch, associate secretary; Martha Lightsey, treasurer; Bettie Bullard, immediate past president; members-at-large Kim Whittington, George Huffman and Dian Summers.

Five committees manage the organization, develop its program and handle meeting arrangements:

- **Luncheon/Lecture.** Bob Arnold (chair), Allen Cupit and Sylvia Buie.
- **Scholarship.** Mary Ann Smith (chair), Diane Clopton and Sonya Cowen.
- **Decorating.** Jennifer Templeton (chair), Sarah Lloyd, Melanie Dufrene and Colleen Bomesbach.
- **Travel.** Suzanne Vaughn (chair), Cherie Langston, Brenna Smith, Lanell Strait and Martha Lightsey.
- **Finance.** Martha Lightsey (chair), Marilyn Brown, Mary James and Lanell Strait.
- **Governance.** Jean Ricks (chair) and Zoula Huffman.
- **Hospitality.** Diane Clopton (chair), Sarah Lloyd and Linda Wall.

ILR program coordinator is Erin Johnson (erin.johnson@colin.edu, 601-643-8702).

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# Charles Ray Fortson : A man of many trades

By Bob Arnold

For more than two decades, area folk knew Charles Ray Fortson as their insurance man. Today, they know him as the source of good country cooking, bait for their fishing, and varied food and convenience store items at the venerable lake store, which he now calls Uncle Ray's, across from the entrance to Lake Lincoln State Park.

A man of many trades, Fortson also spiced up his resume as a young farm boy, a teenager on tugboats, offshore oil worker and commercial carpenter.

A Houma, Louisiana, native, he settled with his family at age five at Summit, Mississippi, when they came to care for his ailing grandmother. His mom reared the kids at home, while his father was an offshore oil worker.

Growing up, Fortson remembers large family functions with thirty to forty relatives, where he learned his cooking skills and developed his love of the art of preparing barbeques and other Southern style meals. He also fished in the area's rivers and ponds, tended a garden and raised animals – chickens, hogs and horses – on his family's mini-farm. His father took him and his brothers and sisters to movies when he was home from his offshore work, and Fortson still enjoys science fiction films like *Godzilla*.

When he was 16 years old, Fortson worked on tug boats in Louisiana for \$45 a day, and bought his own clothes to contribute to a big family. After graduating from North Pike High School in 1981, he tried following his father's career path offshore, but didn't like it because "you couldn't go anywhere after work."

"So I went to work in construction for a McComb company and learned carpentry," Fortson recounts. "I still have the tools and my old belt." Over almost a decade, he was involved in building the EOLA hotel at Natchez and Walmart stores throughout the area for the commercial construction firm.

Fortson gave up the seasonal work of construction for the stability of the insurance business in 1990, joining Florida-based Independent Life's Brookhaven office as a debit agent in Claiborne and Jefferson Counties, where he would go door-to-door in the neighborhoods and develop relationships with families, selling them life, health, home and property insurance and collecting their premiums before they spent their meager incomes on something else.

"It opened my eyes to the world, and the lifestyles of people who often live hand-to-mouth," he says.

Fortson became a successful agent, earning \$1,000 a week. "During the first two years in the insurance business, you sell to people you know – friends and relatives, and then to people you don't know," he says. "After five years, you are a good agent." Fortson was good enough to become a staff manager at Independent Life, teach classes on the insurance business at Farm Bureau, and open his own office in Brookhaven under contract with Alfa Insurance in 2001.

For Alfa, Fortson developed a client base of second-generation sons and

daughters of immigrants from India who owned a variety of small retail businesses. He became the company's top insurance salesman in Mississippi before a reorganization that led him to take an early retirement. In 2016, he joined Woodmen of the World in insurance, but started looking for new opportunities as a store owner – something he had always wanted to do. In 2019, he opened Uncle Ray's in the store location across from Lake Lincoln State Park.

With the help of his friend Diane Sullivan and sister Vicki Westmoreland, Fortson has been building a business at Uncle Ray's that has focused on three distinct income streams as a convenience store, food service and bait shop. Fortson is also installing hookups and infrastructure for campers and buying rental campers as well to complement Lake Lincoln's facilities and provide a fourth income stream that assures a viable full-year business without a late fall and winter slow season.

Previous owners of the lake store, Fortson believes, focused too narrowly on the kind of business they operated and had to close. He thinks he is on the right track there, and even fantasizes that the business model he is developing could be the basis of a franchise.

As well as a man of many trades, Fortson is also the father of four daughters – Kayla – the mother of his two granddaughters; and Carley, Nikki and Asia.

## What are your hobbies?

I still enjoy carpentry – making small wood crafts; and farm stuff – hunting, fishing, growing cucumbers, tomatoes and okra.

## Are you a reader?

I read the Bible every day, because I know I need to do so, but otherwise I really don't like to read. I was a Gideon for ten years, and spoke before groups.

## Do you enjoy movies or theater?

I like movie houses. The popcorn and Coke, as well as sci-fi, westerns, thrillers and comedies. I am a Harry Bronson, Clint Eastwood and Don Knotts fan. I recently enjoyed *Where the Crawdads Sing* and like Pink Panther and Abbot and Costello films.

## Do you enjoy music?

I can't sing or play, although I can sing in tune with someone next to me who does. I likes gospel, jazz and blues.

## What would you do with lottery winnings if you were so lucky?

I would invest it, give to the church, help my family. I would set myself up for an enjoyable retirement with travel.

## How would you change the world?

I try to be a good neighbor one person at a time and try to live the Gospel.

## MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR



Wesson News

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## Five trips for ILR members

By Bob Arnold

Institute of Learning in Retirement (ILR) members begin their fall semester travel next Thursday appropriately on the first day of autumn with a day trip to Mississippi Aquarium at Gulfport.

Three other day trips and a four-day/three-night experience are on the ILR agenda as it renews its travel program following a two-year interruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Mississippi Aquarium is a premier institution that delivers an entertainment and learning experience focused on the aquatic world and supported by animal research and conservation. The Deluxe Motorcoach day trip will include a luncheon stop at Salute Seafood and Italian Restaurant, for which travelers will pay on their own.

Through December, the travel opportunities available through the Co-Lin sponsored continuing education organization for retired and semi-retired persons will include:



Special to Wesson News

Grand Ole Opry will be part of ILR Nashville trip.

### October 28

Day trip to Mississippi Supreme Court building and “The World of Marty Stuart” at Two Mississippi Museums. The first stop on the Jackson trip is the Two Mississippi Museums, including the Museum of Mississippi History and Mississippi Civil Rights Museum, where the people of the state tell their own stories of the state’s rich and complex history. The current feature exhibit there is “The World of Marty Stuart,” which explores his life and his legacy of collecting country music’s stories with hundreds of items never shown before -- Marty’s first guitar, original handwritten Hank Williams manuscripts, guitars from Merle Haggard and Pops Staples, costumes from Porter Wagoner and Dolly Parton, personal items from Johnny Cash, and much more. After lunch at George’s Museum Café on Lakeland Drive, Justice James W. Kitchens from Copiah County will host a tour of the Mississippi Supreme Court building with a discussion about what has happened inside its walls throughout the state’s history. \$80 per person. Registration deadline: October 7.

### November 11

Day trip to Thalia Mara Hall at Jackson. At the 2,000-seat theater in the Municipal Auditorium of the City of Jackson -- a facility managed by the Department of Human and Cultural Services, Male A Capella Group will perform “Straight No Chaser.” There will be a pre-show stop for dinner at Monte’s Steak & Seafood. \$57 per person.

### November 29-December 2

Nashville Music & Lights, a four-day/three-night tour. The travel experience begins with a stay on the first night at the Drury Inn at Franklin, Tennessee, and breakfast the next morning. Then it’s off to the beautiful Gaylord Opryland Hotel in Nashville for two nights with a show at the Grand Ole Opry, a Delta flatboat cruise, a Christmas show and lunch on the General Jackson Showboat and dinner show featuring the Oak Ridge Boys. \$1,000 per person double occupancy, \$910 per person triple occupancy and \$865 per person quad occupancy. Non-refundable \$150 deposit due by September 26, with final payment due October 28 (cancellation insurance can be purchased at [www.travelinsured.com](http://www.travelinsured.com)).

### December 6

Jeweled Christmas at Natchez. A day trip that includes a tour at the Frogmore (Louisiana) Plantation and Gin, lunch at a Natchez restaurant, and “The Jeweled Christmas Tour at the Towers” in Natchez, where travelers can marvel at the display of beautiful jewels and enjoy festive Christmas music with refreshments. \$140 per person. Registration deadline: November 15.

ILR is a membership organization in which the participants define their own informal educational goals and pursue them at their own pace based on their own choices and talents. Members, who come from wide ranging backgrounds and bring varied experiences to the organization, design its program. Co-Lin staffs, administers and provides facilities for the organization, which is fully funded by member dues.

For information, contact [erin.johnson@colin.edu](mailto:erin.johnson@colin.edu).

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## Police officers come & go

Wesson News

Wesson police personnel continue to come and go.

Ashley McDuffey is the latest officer to resign, and Aaron Love is coming on board as an uncertified full-time officer committed to serve the department for two years after completing the Mississippi Law Enforcement Officers Training Academy (MLEOTA).

At MLEOTA, Love will learn basic law enforcement in classes that cover:

- Basic police skills and knowledge and their application.
- Self-discipline and how to follow society's rules.
- Ethical standards, particularly the law enforcement code of ethics.
- Relating to peers, superiors and the public.

MLEOTA provides training and facilities to state, county and municipal law enforcement agencies across Mississippi.



## Bringing people to the library

By Bob Arnold

Local Friends of Library (FOL) continues to search for new ways to bring people to Wesson Public Library resources.

Starting September 1, it launched a food-for-books promotion to incentivize library use and reading.



Special to Wesson News

On November 15, it will present gift certificates valued at \$25 each for menu items at Dumps Barbeque and the 51 Diner to two prolific readers who checked out books at Wesson Public Library during September, October and the first two weeks in November.

At the beginning of September, the library will begin tracking book check-outs by patrons, tally the traffic and select winners of the restaurant gift

certificates.

"It's a one time promotion which may continue depending on the public reaction," says FOL's Marilyn Britt. "Building traffic to the library and use of its resources is a top priority for us."

In line with that mission, FOL also has a plan to turn local art connoisseurs into loyal library patrons. FOL member Dr. Steven Liverman is working with local artists to begin displaying their works on a regularly scheduled basis at the library.

"Again, the idea is to build traffic to the library, providing an opportunity to discover the wide array of resources available there to meet their needs," says Britt. "Whether it's winning a popular book in monthly drawings, a restaurant meal in our food-for-books promotion or viewing the creation of our art community, we're working to bring people to Wesson Public Library."



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# Healthy Aging for over-50s

By Guest Columnist Stephanie Duguid

Healthy Aging Month is an annual observance designed to focus national attention on the positive aspects of growing older. This month provides inspiration and practical ideas for adults, ages 50-plus, to improve their physical, mental, social, and financial well-being while adapting to change and developing new skills and interests.

The number of people over 50 is growing every year. The attention used to be on the Baby Boomers, and now the focus will soon shift to the Millennials. The Generation X-ers are pushing their way in and have many of the same interests as the previous generation by staying active and vibrant as long as possible. Currently, Gen-Z is the largest population group to date by nearly 4 million.

**Generational Groups** (population estimations):

Greatest Generation (born 1916-1928) 1.75 million

Silent Generation (born 1929-1946) 23.63 million

Baby Boomers (born 1947-1965) 68.70 million

Gen-X (born 1966-1981) 65.13 million

Millennials (born 1982-1999) 82.22 million

Gen-Z (born 2000-2020) 86.40 million

Use September as a motivation to reflect on where you have been, and determine your ultimate goals and begin working toward them today! Use this stage in your life to rediscover yourself. *Healthy Aging Magazine* (www.healthyaging.net) has some tips for you to follow:

**1. Do not act your age** or at least what you think your current age should act like. What was your best year so far? 28? 40? Now? Picture yourself at that age and be it.

**2. Be positive in your conversations and your actions every day.** When you catch yourself complaining, check yourself right there and change the conversation to something positive.

**3. Ditch the downer friends.** Have negative friends who complain all of the time and constantly talk about how awful everything is? Drop them. As cruel as that may sound, distance yourself from people who do not have a positive outlook on life.

**4. Walk like a vibrant, healthy person.** Come on. You can probably do it. Analyze your gait.

**5. Stand up straight!** You can knock off the appearance of a few extra years with this trick your mother kept trying to tell you. Look at yourself in the mirror. Are you holding your stomach in, have your shoulders back, chin up?

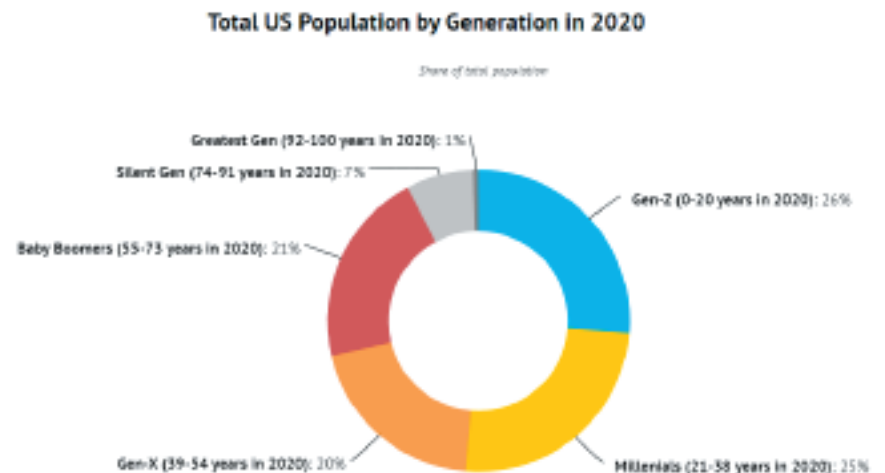
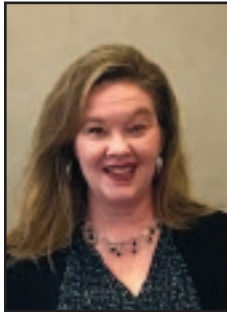
**6. How's your smile?** Research shows people who smile more often are happier. Your teeth are just as important to your good health as the rest of your body. Not only is it the first thing people notice, but good oral health is a gateway to your overall well-being.

**7. Lonely? Stop brooding and complaining about having no friends or family.** Do something about it now. Right this minute. Pick up the phone, landline, or cell and make a call to do one or more of the following: Volunteer your time, take a class, invite someone to meet for lunch, brunch, dinner, or coffee.

**8. Start walking** not only for your health but to see the neighbors. Have a dog? You'll be amazed how the dog can be a conversation starter. (Tip: If you don't have time for a dog, go to your local animal shelter and volunteer. You will be thrilled by the puppy love!)

**9. Get a physical.** Make this month the time to set up your annual physical and other health screenings. Go to the appointments and then, hopefully, you can stop worrying about ailments for a while.

**10. Find your inner artist.** Who says taking music lessons is for young school children? You may have an artist lurking inside you just waiting to be tapped. Have you always wanted to play the piano, violin, or tuba? Have you



ever wondered if you could paint a portrait or scenic in oil? What about working in wood?

Here are 6 additional healthy lifestyle ideas for Healthy Aging Month provided by *Mansion Senior Living*:

**1. Take cat naps.** A study revealed people who take naps are 37% less likely to die from heart disease.

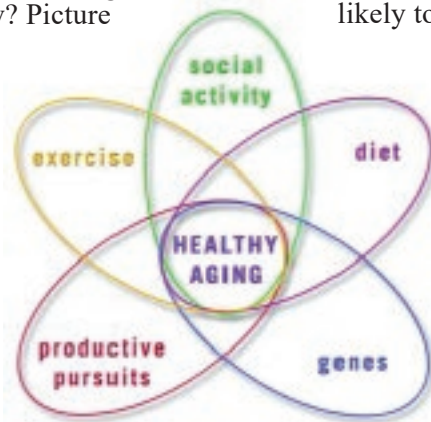
**2. Mix and mingle with the right crowd.** Surround yourself with positive people who help lift you up and encourage you to follow your dreams.

**3. Stay active.** Exercise regularly. It is recommended to get at least 2.5 hours of exercise a week.

**4. Set realistic goals.** Make a plan to clearly define where you are going and how you will get there. Research has shown that those who have a clear sense of purpose and drive have a less chance of getting Alzheimer's disease.

**5. Budget and spend your money wisely.** Try to cut down on your expenses. Not being able to afford the things you want to do in life can add stress to your life!

**6. Eat foods that give you natural energy.** It is one thing to eat one or two healthy foods a day, but if you add the right foods, at the right times together, it will give you more energy. Stay away from processed sugar foods. Eat foods that are as natural as possible.



**LIVING  
+HEALTHY+**

For those that live close to Wesson, I encourage you to look into to Copiah-Lincoln Community College's Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) Program, which is an extension of the college's commitment to learning. The ILR Program on the Wesson Campus is a nonprofit, member-driven organization dedicated to meeting the learning, social, and recreational needs of our maturing population.

As the Co-Lin website shares, "membership in the ILR is open to individuals who are age 50 and older and who are retired or semiretired. Members pay a fee and are encouraged to actively participate in the activities offered. They may attend any of the noncredit classes and workshops, tours and trips, social events, luncheons, and much more during each spring and fall semester."

This year, indulge in a new adventure to support healthy aging. Getting involved is the best way to make new friends, explore new places, exchange ideas, develop new interests, and just have fun. You can call or visit Erin Johnson, ILR Events Coordinator located at The Billy B. Thames Conference Center on the Co-Lin Wesson Campus (601-643-8700/erin.johnson@colin.edu)

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



# Six coaches join Co-Lin teams

Wesson News

The cheer squad and football, baseball and golf teams at Co-Lin have added new coaches to their staffs.

Cory Boyd has joined the cheer squad as an assistant coach. Former lady Wolves basketball standout Alexis Holt has returned to the team's coaching staff as an assistant coach. Matt Gordon is joining the football coaching staff as defensive coordinator and Darius Buck will work with the team's cornerbacks as a new assistant. Chase Stewart has joined the baseball Wolves as a pitching coach and Dejoné Lee will coach the college's golfers.



**Boyd** is a graduate of Co-Lin, playing football for the Wolves in 1999-2000 before becoming a cheerleader in 2000-2001. He attended the University of Southern Mississippi, where he was a cheerleader from 2001-2004 and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Coaching and Sports Administration. He has over a decade of experience as a cheer coach, including most recently at Gym of Dreams in Brookhaven where he is the athletic director and head coach. Boyd has 150 regional and national elite competitive cheer titles to his credit as a coach as well as 12 high school state titles and a Top-15 finish at The World's

Championship Competition.

**Holt**, a native of Epps, Louisiana, played for the Lady Wolves from 2016-2018 as a two-year starter who averaged 12.9 points per game, 4.4 rebounds per game, and 3.2 assists per game. At Grambling State University, she received a Bachelor's Degree in Biology and is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Sports Administration. At Grambling, Holt was named a First Team All-SWAC performer and made the SWAC All-Tournament team while playing in all 30 games. She averaged 36.6 minutes per game and led the team in points per game at 17 while also averaging 5.3 rebounds per game, 3.5 assists per game, and 2.0 steals per game. Holt also shot nearly 41 percent from the floor and 74.2 percent from the foul line and was named to the BOXTOROW All-American Team. She was also named to the Louisiana Sports Writers Association

(LSWA) All-Louisiana Second Team after her final season at Grambling.

**Gordon** comes to Co-Lin from Tyler (Texas) Junior College where he has been defensive coordinator and defensive backs coach since January 2017 after 12 years at Henderson State University with similar responsibilities. Gordon has coached 20 all-conference selections throughout his career, including three-time All-American Devon Hughes, who led the nation in passes defended for three straight seasons. He also spent the 2004 season coaching at Blinn Junior College in Brenham, Texas, as the defensive secondary coach and prior to that spent two seasons at Cisco (Texas) Junior College as linebackers coach, defensive line coach, and strength and conditioning coach.



The Charlottesville, Virginia, native

graduated from Concord University and Tarleton State where he earned a Bachelor's Degree in sports management/physical education and a Master's Degree in physical education. He played football at Concord, was an All-Conference linebacker, recorded 16 career sacks, and received an invitation to play in the college All-Star game. He also attended Fork Union Military Academy and graduated from Western Albermarle High School where he was a first team All-Conference football and lacrosse player. Gordon and his wife Josie are the parents of three children -- Micah, 8; Jadelyn, 5; and Bo, 18 months.



**Buck** comes to Co-Lin after spending a two-year stint at Clark Atlanta University as the defensive coordinator. He spent two years as an assistant coach at Albany State University where he coached cornerbacks and the punt return team from 2017-2019. Under his leadership, the punt return team finished third in the country in blocks in 2018, and the defense was ranked Top 15 against the pass in 2017. Buck also has experience at the University of South Alabama as a graduate assistant from 2015-2017 where he assisted with defensive backs as well as special teams.

Buck started his career coaching at Jones County Junior College where he spent two years (2013-2015) coaching nickel backs and assisting with special teams. He was also part of the Mississippi Association of Community and Junior Colleges (MACJC) staff of the year in 2013 while at Jones. He is a native of Vicksburg, Mississippi, and played at Murray State University. Buck graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Health and Exercise Science in 2012, and earned his Master's Degree in Health Education from the University of South Alabama in 2017.



**Lee** comes to Co-Lin after finishing her playing career at Blue Mountain College this past May. She is a native of South Africa and graduated from Curro Bankenveld in Witbank, South Africa, in 2016. Lee then attended Blue Mountain from 2017-2022 earning a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology. She has experience as a golf instructor at Edwin Compton Golf Academy in Witbank and worked at the Bankenveld Golf Club. Lee is married to former Wolf Pack golfer Will Lee.

**Stewart** comes to Co-Lin after spending the last year as an assistant coach at Petal High School where he worked primarily with pitchers, outfielders, and strength and conditioning among other duties.

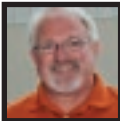


He spent two years at Clinton High School as the pitching coach and worked exclusively in developing a throwing program along with rehab protocols for the players. He was also assistant baseball coach and cross country head coach at Wayne County High School. A native of Laurel, Mississippi, and a 2010 graduate of West Jones where he played baseball, Stewart went to Jones County Junior College where he was a member of the 2011 National Runner-up baseball Bobcats. He finished his academic career at the University of Southern Mississippi, graduating with a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology in 2015.



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- 2017 Hyundai Sonata **SOLD!** Sedan, 36 MPG, PW, PL, Cruise, Tilt.
- 2015 Chevy Silverado LT, Crew Cab, 4x4, Leather Buckets, Low mileage, Super nice!
- 2014 Ford Explorer XLT, 3rd Row Seat, Rear A/C, Power Seat, Family Size!
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# Library winners



Special to Wesson News

Betty Hartley and Grace Clark were August Wesson Public Library books giveaway winners. Case proudly displays her prize in the adults category – John Grisham’s Sparring Partners. Clark, who is home-schooled, received the children/youth category prize – Home by Britta Teckentrap. Friends of the Library (FOL) funds the prize books awarded in drawings every month. At the August drawing (left to right) were FOL members Jim Coons, Jacque Coons (treasurer), Marilyn Britt (president), Violet Corrales (secretary), Kim Whittington, Mildred Twiner, Dr. Steven Liverman, Barbara Locke and Sonya Cowen. Book winners must come to the library to register for the drawings. In the process, they will learn about how the library can meet their needs. FOL is a support organization that conducts fundraisers for the library and assists in its programming through advice and counsel, volunteers, and donations.



Special to Wesson News



Special to Wesson News

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# KDMC chief, marijuana, water & gators

*Special to Wesson News*

**New KDMC Chief.** Scott Christensen has joined Brookhaven-based King's Daughters Medical Center as Chief Executive Officer after serving Delta Health System at Greenville, Mississippi, in a similar position since 2014, leading the growth of the region's only Level 3 trauma center into a four-hospital system with multiple outpatient sites. After completing his undergraduate education at the University of Illinois and interning at an area hospital, he continued his education at Xavier University, where he pursued postgraduate education in Health Administration. He later completed an MBA at Delta State University. He is currently Chairman of the Mississippi Hospital Association, has been honored by his peers as a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives and has earned statewide recognition as a Community Legend and Top CEO. His industry and community involvement encompasses the Vizient Gulf States Board of Directors, American Hospital Association Regional Policy Board, Mississippi Trauma Care System, Chamber & Economic Alliance Board, United Way, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and Rotary Club. Christensen and his wife Melia have three young children – Marianna, Martin, and Makenna.

**Voters back marijuana.** Lincoln County has opted back into the Mississippi Medical Cannabis Act by 184 votes in a special election in which only 2,593 of 21,140 eligible voters cast ballots. The vote reverses the decision of the County's Board of Supervisors, which opted out of the Act, preventing the cultivation, processing, sale and/or distribution of medical cannabis within the county except the municipality of Brookhaven, where the city's Alderman did not take any action and thus opted into the Act. Although the margin in favor of the Act was narrow in numbers, it was 53.5 percent of the vote. After the supervisors opted out, a group called "Stop the Opt" initiated the special election with a petition campaign that gathered 1,500 voter signatures. The state has already granted three licenses for operations of three medical cannabis dispensaries in Brookhaven.

**Jackson water.** While local, state and federal officials have been scrambling to restore the city of Jackson's failed water system in the short-term, Mississippi state lawmakers and legislative leaders have been talking about long-term solutions for the capital city's collapsing system. Although the immediate need is to restore an adequate flow to all parts of the city and end the need to boil water for drinking, a long-term fix will require legislation both at the state level and perhaps on the federal level. Among the possibilities: Putting the city water system in a temporary conservatorship run by the state Public Service Commission, with the goal of passing the system back to city leaders after service has been restored; creating some new state entity or commission to take full, permanent control of the city's water system; privatizing Jackson's water system, leasing it to a private company that would manage it moving forward.

**Storms snagged.** The ocean waters are warm, and La Nina is cooling the central Pacific, changing weather patterns that

could spur storms, but the Atlantic has gone from July 3 to the end of August with no named storm for the first time since 1941. Computer forecast models have predicted three maybe four storms forming, including one becoming a major hurricane with winds of more than 110 mph, but a lot of dry air sitting over the Atlantic is causing water to evaporate, cool and go down rather than into the upper atmosphere and creating cross winds to stop storm formation. A patch of sinking air over the

Atlantic, a poorly located high pressure system connected to the European heat wave and dust are also factors turning off storms. Hurricane season peaked around September 10, but stretches through November 30 – a lot of time for one bad storm to make it too early to celebrate.

**Gator record.** Mississippi hunters have set a new state record with the killing of a 10-foot long female alligator estimated to be 75 to 100 years old. A pair of hunters established the new record on the Pearl River near the Ross Barnett Reservoir northeast of Jackson, the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks announced. The gator measured 10 feet, 2 inches from head to tail. A female alligator taken in Florida last year measured 10 feet, 6.75 inches, capturing the world record. The alligator hunting season in public waters ran from August 26 through Labor Day.

## NEWS NUGGETS

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Wesson officials hone work skills

Wesson News

Wesson Assistant Police Chief Tim Stevens has returned to WPD from learning to manage National Crime Information Center (NCIC) data, while Town Clerk Angela Hester packs up for the fall Master Municipal Clerk Academy (MMCA).

Stevens comes back to the Wesson Police Department (WPD) following classes at Jackson August 15-19 that certify he understands the laws and regulations surrounding use of NCIC data and how to operate the system without compromising confidentiality.

As the “lifeline of law enforcement” -- a computerized index of crime information, including criminal histories, personal data of fugitives and sensitive information about missing or murdered people, NCIC requires all NCIC operators to undergo the NCIC training to be certified. Stevens certification classes covered:

- NCIC Overview
- NCIC Policy and Procedures
- NCIC Files
- Interstate Identification Index (III) Overview
- How to Operate Dedicated NCIC Terminals
- Legal Restrictions on Accessing and Sharing Information

At MMCA in Meridian September 28-30, Hester will attend an array of sessions covering technical aspects of her job and the legal and community development knowledge she needs to function effectively in her work.

On the agenda at the meeting are sessions on job skills coaching, state withholding taxes and reporting, privilege licenses, purchase law, the American Rescue Plan Act, modernization funds and bids; developing communities through art and entertainment, employment law, including police and fire payroll issues; and employment security topics related to the unemployment tax, appeals and employer training.

Hester will also participate in business meetings as a member of MMCA hospitality, promotion and mentoring committees.



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# WGC begins its new year

Special to Wesson News

Jennifer Peets and Lisa Smith were featured speakers at Wesson Garden Club’s first meeting of the 2022-2023 year last month at the American Legion Post 79.

Peets introduced the membership of the club to the group’s new mascot known as “Polly the Pollinator,” who has already made an appearance at the Wesson Attendance Center butterfly garden and is coming soon to the Town’s Fountain Garden. Smith, who chairs the club’s Flower Show Committee, talked about plans for the WGC spring Flower Show.

President Dixie Thornton welcomed 24 members to the meeting: Marilyn Britt, Sherri Carty, Sonya Cowen, Sherry Davis, Robin Furr, Rebecca Harrison, Ramona Hartzog, Cherry Head, Debbie Hoaglin, Denise Jackson, Pam McLemore, Ashley Munn, June Owens, Pam Owens, Jennifer Peets, Joy Phillips, Marilyn Phillips,



Special to Wesson News

Wesson Garden Club Executive Committee members are (left to right) Debbie Hoaglin, Denise Jackson, Jean Ricks, Debbie Smith, Dixie Thornton, June Owens and Pam Owens.

Jean Ricks, Meghan Shepherd, Debbie Smith, Lisa Smith, Dixie Thornton, Brittney Warren, and Joy Wesbrooks.

Jean Ricks led the members in reciting the club’s Collect. June Owens blessed the food prepared by the Executive Committee--Dixie Thornton, Denise Jackson,

Pam Owens, June Owens, Debbie Smith, Debbie Hoaglin, and Jean Ricks.

After enjoying the refreshments and a time of fellowship, members discussed business matters, reviewed the club’s new 2022-23 Yearbook and talked about projects for the new year,

including the upcoming annual mums sale soon to be announced.

The Wesson Garden Club is a member of The Garden Clubs of Mississippi, Inc., National Garden Clubs, Inc., Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc. and Natchez Trace District-Garden Clubs of Mississippi, Inc.

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# Floods threaten state crops

Special to Wesson News

A rainy August has caused flash flooding in portions of central Mississippi and the lower Mississippi Delta that jeopardizes early-planted cotton and soybeans that were nearly ready for harvest before the weather deteriorated.

Torrential downpours dropped 8-13 inches of rain in much of Leake, Neshoba, Scott, Kemper, Hinds and Newton counties, as well as parts of surrounding counties, prompting road closures and evacuations. The Pearl River Valley Water Supply District increased the discharge from Barnett Reservoir to 45,000 cubic feet per second on August 25 in anticipation of incoming water, and the Pearl River crested at 36 feet before August 30, threatening low-lying areas in Jackson and Rankin counties.

“No one is picking cotton yet, but we are close,” says Mississippi State University (MSU) Extension Service



Special to Wesson News

The crops expected to be most compromised by flash flooding in central Mississippi will be early-planted cotton and soybeans that were nearly ready for harvest before the weather deteriorated.

cotton specialist Brian Pieralisi. “We will have defoliation applications going out when this weather system clears. We can expect hard-locked bolls, some boll rot and sprouting seeds. Seeds will sprout in open bolls when the lint stays damp for several days in a row.”

MSU Extension soybean specialist Trent Irby said most soybeans in the affected areas were still growing before the flooding. “The impacts on

soybean will depend on the stage of development of the crop,” Irby says. “This is one of those ‘it depends’ type of scenarios. Those acres that are ready or close to ready for harvest could absolutely be compromised with potential for seed sprouting in the pod and reduction in quality, and some later planted soybean acres that are less developed may come out of this round of weather with little to no impact to the quality of the seed.”

Field damage will be a future problem resulting from the storm system. “Once we do get sun and start getting into the field, the crop itself will be dry, but the ground won’t be,” says MSU Yazoo County Extension agent Phillip Vandever.

While there were still numerous full corn fields in his area, Vandever said the crop was at an advanced enough stage to withstand major damage. “One good thing about the corn is, unless we get to where stalks start falling and lodging, the kernels are pretty hardy,” he says. “I haven’t seen any stalks falling so far.”

Reports on poultry houses affected by the rains are still being gathered, but the Peco poultry processing facility in Sebastopol was closed due to flooding on August 24.

*EDITOR’S NOTE: Excerpted from a Mississippi State University Extension Service report.*

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NEW ARRIVALS

2014, Chevy LTZ Badlands Custom Z71



Low Mileage, 4x4, Leather, Loaded

- 2014 Honda Accord EXL, V6, Leather, sunroof, Highway-miles, Bargain, Super Nice!
- 2010 Ford F150 XLT Super Cab, V8, PW, PL, Power Mirrors, Chrome side steps, come look!
- 2014 Ford Fusion SE, Leather, 36 MPG, Alloy Wheels, Bluetooth.
- 2007 Toyota Highlander, one owner, low miles, Cleanest one around, Don't miss this cream puff!
- 2014 Chevy Silverado Crew Cab, Z71 4x4, Lifted, Custom Wheels, Tuscany Pkg, Leather Buckets, Sharp!
- 2017 Hyundai Sonata **SOLD!** Sedan, 36 MPG, PW, PL, Cruise, Tilt.
- 2015 Chevy Silverado LT, Crew Cab, 4x4, Leather Buckets, Low mileage, Super nice!
- 2014 Ford Explorer XLT, 3rd Row Seat, Rear A/C, Power Seat, Family Size!
- 2012 Lexus RX 350, AWD, Leather, Sunroof, NAVI, Rear Camera, Clean, Like New!
- 2013 Honda V6 **SOLD!** Sedan, Leather, Sunroof, Low Mileage, Super Nice!
- 2017 Malibu LT Sedan, 36 MPG, Pwr seat, windows, locks, mirrors, Rearview camera, Sharp!
- 2012 Buick Regal **SOLD!**, Leather, Sunroof, Only 71,000 Miles!
- 2009 Chevy Avalanche, White LTZ, Sunroof, Leather, DVD, Sharp!
- 2014 RARE Find, E-Class 550, Mercedes Convertible, Low mileage, Super Nice!
- 2010 Chrysler Town and Country Touring with Low Mileage and Leather!
- 2014 Mercedes E350 Sedan, Black with Beige Leather, sunroof, Navi!
- 20114 Ford Focus SE **SOLD!** Only 90k miles, 40 MPG, Clean!
- 2012 Dodge Ram 1500 **SOLD!** Cab 4x4, 5.7 HEMI, Burgundy Beauty!
- 2013 GMC 3500 HD SLE Crew Cab 4x4, Only 104k Miles, PW, PL, Tilt, Cruise, Don't miss this one!
- 2010 Honda Accord EX- V6, Sunroof, Super low mileage, Nice!
- 2009 Chevy Avalance LTZ, Low miles, Sunroof, Leather, Sharp!
- 2007 Toyota Highlander, Low miles, Super well cared for, Like New!
- 2010 Dodge Ram 2500 Big Horn Mega Cab, Rare find, Nice!

2014, Ford Explorer XLT



Third Row Seat, Rear A/C and Heat, Super Nice!



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New Literary Arts instructor at MSA



Special to Wesson News

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Nadia Alexis has joined Mississippi School of the Arts as Literary Arts Instructor for 2022-2023 school year.

Alexis comes from Oxford, Mississippi, where she is completing her PhD in English with a Creative Writing concentration at the University of Mississippi. A poet, photographer, educator and organizer, she was born in the Harlem section of New York City to Haitian immigrants. She holds a BA in Political Science from Union College, where she also studied French and focused on Africana Studies. At the University of Mississippi, she also earned her MFA in Creative Writing and taught Black literature and first-year writing courses.

During the summers, Alexis serves on the creative writing faculty of the McMullan Young Writers Workshop at Millsaps College, where she teaches poetry and also teaches poetry in the summer youth camps at the University of Mississippi's Pre-College Program. She served as a 2018-2019 curator of the *Trobar Ric Poetry Reading Series* based in Oxford, Mississippi.

*Kweli Journal*, *Indiana Review*, *Mixtape*, *Mud Season Review*, *Shenandoah* and *Texas Review* have published or will be publishing Alexis' poetry. *On She Goes* and *BLACK STEW* have published her prose and personal essay writing, and *TORCH Literary Journal's* 2016 Spring/Summer issue, *Fields Magazine*, *Forgotten Lands*, *Mixtape* and *Mfon* have featured her photography.

Primarily a self-taught photographer, Alexis started that aspect of her arts career in 2014. Her "What Endures" series has been viewed at exhibitions in Havana, Cuba, Detroit and Harlem as well as the University of Mississippi. Recently, she had her first solo exhibition at the Gammill Gallery in Oxford, Mississippi, which featured all of her "What Endures" works and others from a new series-in-progress -- "My Mother Says I Can Build a New Home from Clouds and I Believe Her."

Alexis has received award nominations for the Pushcart Prize, Best of the Net Anthology, and the 2020 Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Award in photography. She has received poetry fellowships from the Callaloo Creative Writing Workshop and The Watering Hole, and has been mentored by Carrie Mae Weems in an independent scholars fellowship program. In 2019, she received an honorable mention prize in poetry of the Hurston/Wright Foundation's Award for College Writers and in 2020 was named a semifinalist for the 2020 92Y Discovery Poetry Contest.

Alexis is currently working on her first full-length hybrid manuscript of poems and photographs, building bodies of photographic works and developing a young adult novel-in-verse.



# BARL events to raise funds for animals



*Special to Wesson News*

The Brookhaven Animal Rescue League is finalizing details for two fundraisers this month.

BARL's third annual Barks & Bids Online Auction is set for Sunday, September 18 – Sunday, September 25. The virtual event will feature over 100 auction items with bids starting as low as \$10. The auction link will soon be available at [barl.net](http://barl.net) and on BARL's Facebook page.

The Canines, Cats and Corks fundraiser is scheduled for Thursday, September 22 at the Brookhaven Building. The wine tasting event will feature a large variety of wines, live music, door prizes, and appetizers. In addition, a petite silent auction of select items will enhance the evening.

Tickets for Canines, Cats and Corks may be purchased at [barl.net/events](http://barl.net/events) or by calling 601-757-1057 or emailing [info@barl.net](mailto:info@barl.net).

The Canines, Cats & Corks event is sponsored by Brookway Wine and Spirits with proceeds benefiting the BARL animals.

BARL volunteers are currently contacting businesses and individuals about sponsorship of events and donations of auction items. Anyone interested in being part of an event should call BARL or at 601-757-4367 or BARL volunteer Julie Montalvo at 601-757-1057.

The charitable organization holds fundraisers to support their mission of helping homeless animals in our area. They do not receive government funding, so are dependent on donations and fundraising.

BARL's mission is to humanely care for shelter animals while contributing to community activities that reduce pet overpopulation, encourage responsible pet ownership, protect public health and safety, and promote the human-animal bond.

BARL is a volunteer-based, nonprofit 501 c3 charitable animal welfare organization serving Copiah, Franklin and Lincoln counties. BARL provides food, shelter and veterinary services for homeless animals until they are adopted.

All BARL animals are vaccinated and spayed/neutered. Dogs are



also micro-chipped.

Individuals with questions about adopting, contributing, or volunteering should call BARL at 601-757-4367 or email [info@barl.net](mailto:info@barl.net). Donations are tax deductible and may be mailed to BARL, P.O. Box 3477, Brookhaven, MS 39603.

BARL features many of its adoptable animals online at [www.barl.net](http://www.barl.net) or on their Facebook page.