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Volume 9, Number 12

*"Good News You Can Use"*

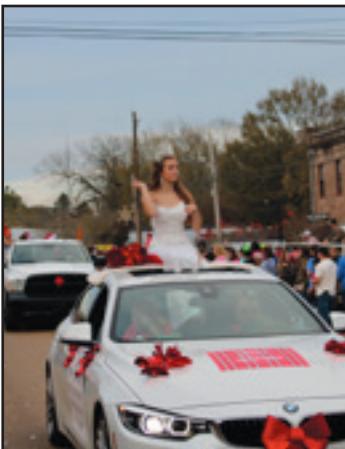
## SPOTLIGHT

### NEW DECELL PASTOR

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December, 2021



## Parade ignites Christmas spirit

Photos by Bill Perkins & Wesson News

Hundreds of town residents lined the streets for the annual Wesson Christmas parade with the Co-Lin and Wesson Attendance Center bands, floats with smiling kids and cars with beauties and beaus that ignited the Christmas spirit



## Shopping Wesson for Christmas

By Bob Arnold

Stop before you get in your car and drive off to buy your Christmas gifts!

Check out Wesson first: Ace Hardware, Family Dollar, Dollar General, Mill Town Mall, Busy B's, Another Time. . . . Another Place, among other local businesses that can not only help you find special items on your shopping list, but you can help as well as they seek to rebuild in an economic climate still under the cloud of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Among 70 vendors housed under the roof of **Mill Town Mall** on the east side of Highway 51 between Factory and Spring Streets, you can find nearly everything -- and more -- for relatives and friends on your

gift list, says proprietor Melissa Meredith. Knives, collectible coins, glassware, jewelry, including handmade items, leather goods, clothing, furniture, pottery and more are available.

Next door to Mill Town Mall is **Fil-Am Produce and Grocery Store** where you can find fresh apples, oranges, grapes and bananas to make your own special gift box for the health-minded on your gift list.

At **Busy B's** on the east side of Highway 51 across from the Mill Town Mall at Factory Street inside Salon 51, Vera Boyles features a wide array of clothing for infants and toddlers -- dresses, play suits, jumpers and gowns -- and juniors -- pageant and prom dresses.

Boyles' **Salon 51** also offers gift



Angie Wade at Mill Town Salon and Spa suggests Christmas sweat shirt for gift.

certificates for her salon services and hair care products, which make good stocking stuffers.

Across Highway 51 on the corner of Spring Street at **Mill Town Salon and Spa**, owner/manager Angie Wade suggests hair care products, gift certificates for manicures, pedicures, massages and hair care services; and special Christmas sweat shirts.

**Wesson Ace Hardware** is across Spring Street from Mill Town Salon and Spa, facing Highway 51. Among a wide array of hardware items, you can find a Flexible Flyer snow sled -- a unique gift to be sure in a Southern town. You can also pick up your Christmas lights there and find various tools and tool sets

cont. on page 5

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## WGC selects Scarecrow Challenge winners



*Special to Wesson*

*Best overall display.*

*Wesson News*

A Wesson Garden Club team which designed a fall display in front of Wesson Public Library has been recognized for the best overall display, receiving the Best Fall Spirit Award in competition among seven other teams of WGC members who tried to outdo one another other in decorating the town for the autumn season and, in the process, inspire residents and business owners to participate in decorating the town.

Team Yellow Mums, including Marilyn Britt, Angela Hester, Linda Tote and Alana Hughes, received the top award in WGC's Scarecrow Challenge, which was prompted by the donation of 24 scarecrows that it sought to put to good use and dress up the town for the fall season by unleashing its members in a friendly rivalry. The team also received the Most Creative Use of Natural Material Award. Wesson Chamber of Commerce members, who judged the competing teams, decided all their decorating efforts deserved awards:

- Team Camellia, including Pam Owens, Joy Westbrooks, Joann Miller and Sherry Davis, the "Plant Deep South with a Rainbow of Color" Award for a display outside Vera Boyles Salon that best reflected the fall theme of Deep South Garden Clubs.
- Team Crepe Myrtle, including Angie Wade, Cathy Warren, Sonya Cowen and Jane Hulon Sims, received the "Garden Clubs Make Things Happen" Award for a display on the street corner of the Mill Town Spa that best reflected the fall theme of Garden Clubs of Mississippi.
- Team Daffodil, including Robin Furr, Nancy Sullivan, Nikki Smith and Jennifer Peets, received the "Thinking Outside the Box Award" for its display at the 51 Diner tractor.
- Team Daylily, including Lisa Smith, Debbie Smith and Rhonda Ishee, received the "Plant America Plants Outdoors" Award for a display on the right of the front driveway at Boswell Regional Center that best reflected the fall theme of National Garden Clubs.
- Team Hydrangea, including Meghan Shephard, Denise Jackson, Pam McLemore and Jan Mullin, received the "Best Use of Props Award" for its display in front of Steel Outdoors.
- Team Sunflower, including Ramona Smith, Jean Ricks, June Owens and Debbie Hoaglin, received the "Best Story Brought to Life Award" for its display in at the front of Fountain Garden.
- Team Violet, including Sherri Carty, Dixie Thornton, Lori Doughtry, Emily McKinley and Brittany Warren, received the "Making Things Happen" Award for its display in the front of Wesson Attendance Center that best reflected the fall theme of Wesson Garden Club.

Driven by the competition among Wesson Garden Club (WGC) members, the town became a venue for picture postcard autumn scenes during October, which Mississippi television commentator Walt Grayson featured on his show last month.

Competing teams received a location for creating their displays in a special drawing and three scarecrows to incorporate into designs; and they were asked to build their displays around one of four themes related to national, regional, state and local garden club programs. Although teams were allowed to spend money in creating their displays, they were encouraged to use items and materials from their homes and gardens.



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# Local music & more for the holidays

By Guest Columnist R. Shaw Furlow

Tis the season. The season for family, big meals, presents and celebrating Hanukkah and Christmas. Children are wide eyed and anticipating the arrival of Ole St Nick. College students are home for two weeks. Streets are lighted and bands are marching in parades and choirs are singing concerts. It's a busy time.

Especially, it's a time for music.

Old music, like what a group of local musicians recorded a few years ago on our little corner of the earth. Thirteen Christmas songs, thirteen artists. It was a very successful album project entitled *A Brookhaven Christmas*. It was a fun project that actually sold out, a rarity. Songs were provided by songwriters who had a connection to Brookhaven. The project was spear-headed by Don Jacobs and Tyler Bridge. There are some great songs on it. Look for it on your streaming services.

Our friend Blake Scafidel also offers music on an old album that he offers as a cure for the Christmas chaos. Look for it, too.

There's new music for the holidays, too.

Local singer/songwriter Montana Wise Beeson is as clever as she is talented and sometimes has a quirky look at things, asking "Why are there no songs for Thanksgiving? Every other holiday has songs." Answering that question, she went to work writing a song for Thanksgiving, and with the help of her producer Tyler Bridge, recorded it. It is great. There's a touch of patsy Cline with a Montana twist. This is not her first recording project, having recorded two previous albums -- *Finding Me* followed by *Finding My Way*. Check out Montana Beeson on all streaming services.

Beeson is a multi-instrumentalist who plays piano in church and occasionally guitar, a mother and wife, which limits her time. Beeson she also finds time to paint, mainly on pieces of wood from her husband's scraps. "I've been painting for two years, mostly representing the seasons," she says.

Rona Barrett Herring, another local, also has new music coming out, too -- a new album, *The Old Church House*, an album of Christian music, all original. Her current album, *Lost John Road*, has sold out with more albums on order. "That was a shock," she says. Herring teaches violin at Downtown Music Academy. "And fiddle," she adds.

Herring plays live more than just about any person I know. Over the last two years, she has developed relationships with rooms in Natchez, Hattiesburg and the newest venue in our area-- River Bend House of Brews in Monticello. "I've been pretty busy," she says. "It's good. I like it. Sometimes my husband goes with me, and that's nice." Look for Rona Barrett Herring on streaming services.



*Wesson News*



*Special to Wesson News*



*Special to Wesson News*

*Montana Wise Beeson.*

JF Oakes' soundtrack from his movie *The Band Forgettable* will drop as soon as the movie releases. It's special, if you like good ole southern rock.

Beyond the musicians, it looks like our friends in Natchez have hit a couple home runs with the Hollywood film industry. Hallmark filmed one of their new Christmas movies there -- *Every Time a Bell Rings*, and another film is in the works there right now. *Every Time a Bell Rings* is streaming now. Don't forget the live Nativity Scene at New Sight Baptist Church.

Until next time, support the arts. Merry Christmas.

**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.

## AREA ARTS



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# 35 get prizes from local businesses



Special to Wesson News

Holiday shoppers, customers and clients (left to right) at Copiah Bank, Trustmark Bank, Skeets Burgers and Precious Moments Day Care Center won prizes in Wesson Chamber of Commerce Shop Local promotion.

## Wesson News

Thirty-five patrons of local retailers, eateries and other businesses got a little help for holiday shopping, entertaining and other needs as winners in the Wesson Chamber of Commerce (WCC) 2021 Shop Local promotion during October.

In the special raffle, shoppers and customers at local businesses between October 1 and November 1 completed entry forms and deposited them in a drawbox from which winners of gift certificates and other prizes were drawn.

WCC started the popular promotion last year to help local merchants, eateries and other local consumer-oriented enterprises rebuild their businesses as they rebounded from COVID-19 pandemic economic restrictions. The Chamber gave each participating business \$100 to cover the gift certificate purchases of the winners and costs of other prizes, and provided specially-decorated raffle boxes for promotional displays. The Chamber also publicized the promotion on its Facebook page and sent out materials that spotlighted participating businesses and encouraged customers to visit and patronize them.

Local businesses presented prizes to lucky winners as follows:

- Copiah Nutrition -- \$100 gift certificate to Ashley Watson.
- Nan Drane Massage Therapy -- 30-minute massages to JoLynn Butler and Martha Matthews.
- Copiah Bank -- gift baskets to Paula Smith and Lee Lockhart.
- Skeetburger Snack Shop -- \$10 gift certificates to Sarya Smith, Crystal Stringer, Laiken Thomas and Tyler Fuller; and \$20 gift certificates to Keeshia Smith, Madonna Perkins and Chyna Swilley.
- Nena Smith School of Dance -- free dance lessons for Annie Rose Cuevas and Aurora Veras.
- Wolf Hollow Golf Course -- \$100 gift card to Andrea Brister.
- Fil-Am Oriental Market & Produce -- \$25 cash to Mary Clopton, Donis Smith, Cindy Barnes and Ray Walker.
- Milltown Mall -- \$25 gift certificates to Bridget Cliburn, Joe Carty, Ashley Walker and Caryl Hacker.
- Salon 51 -- \$25 gift certificates to Lois Hawkins, Judy Plaisance, Susan Hennington and Anna Hartgraves.
- Wesson Ace Hardware -- \$100 gift certificate to Ronnie Huggins.
- Precious Moments Learning Center -- \$100 gift certificate to Gregnquia Byrd.
- Trustmark National Bank -- a Trustmark sports chair to Edward Leggett.
- Mill Tow Salon and Day Spa -- gift certificate to Betty Zehnder.
- Dump's BBQ -- gift certificates to Phil Slay, Robert Derrick, Bob O'Neal and Erin Hester.

"We were thrilled with the success of this promotion for the second straight year in stimulating business and encouraging shopping local," said Chamber president Marilyn Britt. "The Chamber launched the promotion last year when the COVID-19 pandemic forced it to cancel the annual Founders Day celebration, which is a focal point for local businesses to both enjoy a one-day sales boost and cultivate ongoing customers. The idea of the drawbox promotion is to help local businesses in a similar way, stimulate the economy and lift the spirits of townspeople still worried about COVID-19."

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*cont. from page 1*

## **Shopping Wesson for Christmas**

for home fix-up and DIY. For the people on your gift list who enjoy browsing extensive hardware store inventories, you can purchase gift cards in amounts up to \$500.

Next door is **Ashley's 51** on the west side of Highway 51, where proprietor Jarred Ashley has built an animal feed business. In addition to his human food service, ground blinds and turkey calls can be found for hunters on your gift list.

**Shop 'n Wash**, the Ashley family's sister store beside the railroad tracks on the north side of town, solely a human food venue, with grocery items and various takeout selections, offers pizza gift certificates and Marathon gas cards for stocking stuffers.

On the south side of the Mill Town Mall on Spring Street -- **Another Time...Another Place** -- a Wesson retail institution operated by Janet Currie -- offers an array of quality, relatively low-cost gift possibilities. For this Christmas season, Currie recommends plant arrangements, ornaments, jewelry and decorative items to dress up your home.

At **Dollar General**, also on Spring Street, you can find a gift that will please someone in any of its aisles, although candies, scents, soaps and skin lotions are some of the best gift buys.

Around the corner on Church Street at the rear of Another Time...Another Place is **Dump's Barbeque**, a restaurant stop, where Christmas shoppers can not only order food for parties and dinners, but acquire the secret sauce that gives its smoked meats a distinctly different flavor. Owner Ken Dale Sullivan sells it in pint and quart size mason jars. Buy a gift card for the barbeque lovers on your gift list.

Going north on Highway 51, **Family Dollar** is on the west side of the road south of Wesson Baptist Church. There manger Treaz Chonna points out an array of toys for the kids, home items, including glasses and small appliances, Christmas trees, lights and ornaments, and candy.

Further north on Highway 51 going out of town is the expansive **Steel Outdoors** metal fabricating plant, which houses a retail store where you can buy the varied consumer products it sells nationally -- deer feeders, deer blinds, fire pits and cookers and decorative metal items for inside and outside homes.

Across Highway 51 from Steel

Outdoors is another small eatery, which Ana Mason operates for the health-and-nutrition-conscious. At **Copiah Nutrition**, you can get an energy boost for continued Christmas shopping, and buy a gift card for someone who will appreciate its healthy meal replacement shakes, energy teas, pre and post workout drinks and high protein snacks.

That's just for starters -- some of the more visible Christmas shopping stops in town. But if you ask around, you may find a home-based artisan or craftsperson with interesting gifts. You can even find your Christmas tree a few miles out of town, where Gary Keller grows them and will cut down your choice on his ten-acre property on Highway 51 in Beauregard. Whether it's local arts and crafts, collectibles, something different to use, wear or eat and drink, Wesson is often the place to find what is unavailable or not easily found elsewhere.

"Out-of-town visitors often think they have made a surprise discovery when they stumble on stores and restaurants in Wesson that residents often take for granted," Mill Town Mall's Meredith says.

## **BANKRUPTCY**



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Research reports show that for every dollar spent at a local business, 3.5 dollars are recirculated into the local economy, which creates more local jobs. Local businesses are the backbone of a community. When you shop locally, you get to know the people behind the business, and you enjoy a connection you would not otherwise have. Local businesses also buy locally themselves. They hire architects, designers, cabinet shops, sign makers and contractors for construction. They use local accountants, insurance brokers, computer consultants, attorneys, and advertising agencies. Local businesses give communities their flavor. The combined presence of many local businesses makes it different from every other city or town in the world. By supporting those businesses, you help preserve the uniqueness of Wesson. Local businesses define our sense of place, and their survival depends on our patronage.

# Fed \$\$\$, energy, jobless & Senator's office

*Special to Wesson News*

**Hurricane Ida federal aid.** Nineteen Mississippi counties have been designated as Hurricane Ida primary natural disaster area by President Biden, allowing the Farm Service Agency (FSA) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to extend emergency credit to producers affected by the disaster to replace equipment and livestock and reorganize their farming operations for refinancing. The primary counties designated include Lincoln, Lawrence, Copiah, Franklin, Amite, Jefferson Davis, Claiborne, Covington, George, Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Pearl River, Simpson, Wayne and Wilkinson; and contiguous, including Adams, Clarke, Forrest, Greene, Hinds, Jasper, Jones, Lamar, Marion, Percy, Rankin, Smith, Stone and Warren. June 22, 2022, is the deadline for applying for assistance.

**Renewable energy upgrade.** Entergy Mississippi is making its "largest ever commitment to renewable resources" to attract jobs and expand economic development in the area. Entergy plans to replace older systems that use natural gas with solar, wind and other energy systems towards reducing what consumers pay. In 2019, Entergy installed a fixed-tilt solar array to produce 500 kilowatts of electricity in Brookhaven. Over the next five years, Entergy will replace aging natural gas plants with renewable energy systems, including solar, to produce 1,000 megawatts under its Economic Development with Green Energy (EDGE) strategy designed to help communities recruit new industry and give its customers an effective hedge against volatile gas prices.

**\$\$\$ flowing into state.** Under physical infrastructure legislation passed by Congress and signed by the President, Mississippi will see \$3.3 billion for roads and highways, \$225 million for bridge replacement and repairs, a minimum of \$100 million for broadband infrastructure and significant funding for Army Corps of Engineers projects and port and rail improvement, according to its U.S. Senator Roger Wicker.

**Jobless rate plunges.** With 14,280 persons in a labor pool of 14,789, Lincoln County's unemployment rate has dipped to 4.3 per cent, with Copiah County reporting the second lowest jobless count in the area at 5.5 per cent. Franklin and Lawrence are down to 5.7 per cent and 5.8 per cent respectively, with Walthall, Pike and Amite Counties falling to 6 per cent, 6.1 per cent and 6.2 per cent. Jefferson continues at a double digit 15.6 per cent unemployment rate. Overall, the state's unemployment rate is 4.7 per cent, with Rankin County posting the lowest at 3.1 per cent.

**Senator opens Brookhaven office.** Mississippi U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith has opened a Brookhaven office, where people can find help on issues related to Social Security, Medicare, military benefits, visas and passports, federal housing programs, the IRS and taxes, federal grants, economic development, student resources and tours of the nation's capital city. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Tuesday

and Wednesday. For appointments, call 601-748-8084, fax 202-224-7444 or mail Box 537, Brookhaven, Mississippi 39602.

**KDMC chief retiring.** Alvin Hoover, who has served as chief executive officer at King's Daughters Medical Center (KDMC) for nearly 15 years, will retire in September, 2022. Under Hoover's leadership, KDMC has been recognized for its work in environment, patient safety and satisfaction and employee engagement. Hoover came to KDMC after serving as CEO of Abbeville Area Medical Center, and has more than 30 years of service in hospital administration, with a special interest in rural health policy development and advocacy. He is a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives and served as chair of the Mississippi Hospital Association Board of Governors, the American Hospital Association's Small or Rural Hospital Governing Council and Myriad ACO (a Mississippi statewide accountable care organization); and president of Mississippi True -- the state's provider-sponsored health plan.

## NEWS NUGGETS

## WAC Christmas

The 12 Days of School-mas

- Dec 2- Grinch Day: wear green
- Dec 3- Christmas Parade Red Day: wear red
- Dec 6- Sparkly and Bright Wear something sparkly, bright, and/or shiny or fancy (Sunday Wear)
- Dec 7- Christmas Accessory Day
- Dec 8- Christmas Color Challenge
  - 6th Grade- Christmas Tree Green
  - 5th Grade- Icy Blue
  - 4th Grade- Christmas Red
  - 3rd Grade- Reindeer Brown
  - 2nd Grade- Snowy White
  - 1st grade- Christmas Star yellow/gold
  - Kindergarten- Magical Purple
- Dec 9- The stockings were hung by the chimney with care. Wear your favorite holiday socks
- Dec 10- Silent Night: wear your pajamas or comfy clothes
- Dec 13- Christmas Shirt Day
- Dec 14- There must have been some magic in that old silk hat they found. Wear your favorite holiday hat, elf ears, Christmas headband, or reindeer antlers
- Dec 15- Baby it's cold outside: Wear your favorite winter scarf or flannel
- Dec 16- I took a lick of a peppermint stick! Candy Cane Day- wear red and white
- Dec 17- Ugly Sweater/Shirt Day

WAC Elementary would like to invite you to join the optional festivities this Holiday Season! Dress code must be followed for all days.

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# Wreaths funds needed for ceremonies

*Wesson News*

Special December wreath-laying ceremonies to honor veterans buried in Wesson Cemetery need donations to cover costs of more wreaths.

The local wreath-laying event, part of a nationwide program that honors deceased war veterans, is December 18.

"We still need wreaths," says Socks for Heroes' (SFH) Cathy Stroud. The wreaths cost \$15 each, and contributions can be made to Stroud at 1032 Cotton Street, Wesson, Mississippi 39191. Call 601-695-4140 for information.

Wesson-based SFH organizes Christmas season wreath-laying on veterans' graves at Wesson Cemetery, among 2,100 nationwide where ceremonies sponsored by Wreaths Across America honor men and women who sacrificed their lives in the armed forces.

WAA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded to continue and expand the annual wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington

National Cemetery begun by Maine businessman Morrill Worcester in 1992.

"Our mission is to remember the fallen, honor those who serve and to teach our children the value of freedom," Stroud says. "We take time out to recognize the people that made the ultimate sacrifice."

WAA started in 1992 when Worcester Wreath in Maine found itself with a surplus of wreaths nearing the end of the holiday season. Remembering a moving boyhood experience at Arlington National Cemetery, owner Morrill Worcester seized on it as an opportunity to honor the country's veterans. With the aid of Maine Senator Olympia Snowe, he arranged for the wreaths to be placed at Arlington in one of the older sections of the cemetery that had been receiving fewer visitors with each passing year. A number of other individuals and organizations stepped up to help, including a local trucking company that transported the wreaths to Virginia, volunteers from local American Legion and VFW Posts and

members of the Maine State Society of Washington, D.C. who helped make wreaths and organized laying them.

The event continued quietly each year until 2005, when a photo of gravestones at Arlington, adorned with wreaths and covered in snow, circulated around the internet. The event drew national attention and expanded to thousands of other locations where the Arlington ceremonies were emulated. Nearly two million wreaths are placed on headstones at participating cemeteries around the country.

The Arlington wreath-laying is still held annually, on the second or third Saturday of December. WAA's annual pilgrimage from Harrington, Maine, to Arlington National Cemetery has become known as the world's largest veterans' parade, stopping at schools, monuments, veterans' homes and communities all along the way to remind people how important it is to remember, honor and teach about the contributions of those who served their country in war time.



*Wesson News*  
Wesson Mayor Alton Shaw at a Socks for Heroes wreath-laying ceremony.

## WESSION AREA DINING GUIDE

**MAGNOLIA Blues**  
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# Scholarship recipients & donors connect



Special to Wesson News

At Co-Lin Foundation reception, scholarship recipients met the donors who funded their assistance. Left to right: Communications scholarship recipient Annalise Rochelle with Wesson News Editor Bob Arnold, donor. Pitts Presidential Scholar Caleb Myers with Co-Lin President Jane Hulon Sims. Taylor Presidential Scholars, MaKayla Martin, Sims, Joshua McCreary and Kayla Barfield.

## Wesson News

A special reception last month personally connected Co-Lin scholarship recipients and the individual and organizational donors that fund the scholarships.

The event closed the door on the days past when the donors and scholarship recipients connected largely at a distance through newspaper accounts.

The Co-Lin Foundation brought together 158 scholarship recipients and 141 donors at the Thames Center on the Wesson campus to get to know each other one-on-one and celebrate the opportunities provided by the scholarships.

On hand were funders of multiple scholarships like big individual donors Ken and Ruth Patterson and Tom Earl and Ruby Hogg James and representatives from big organizational donors like Trustmark Bank, along with smaller individual donors like Wesson News Editor Bob Arnold and his wife Julia, who fund a specialized scholarship for journalism and communications students.

Taylor Presidential Scholarship recipients Joshua McCreary, Kayla Barfield and Makayla Martin Taylor and Pitts Presidential Scholarship recipient Caleb Myers were present, as well as recipients of small scholarships, who are studying at Co-Lin thanks to

the assistance.

Angela Furr, executive director of the Co-Lin Foundation and Alumni Relations program, introduced each donor and their associated scholarship recipients, who were photographed together and then learned about one another in conversations over cookies and punch.

The Co-Lin Foundation, Inc., is the fundraising arm of the college. It is a nonprofit corporation governed by a 23-member board of directors and serves as a clearinghouse for private sector monies given to Co-Lin. Its goal is to raise private monies to support the mission of the college. Gifts fund community and student

learning opportunities, cultural enrichment for students and their communities, athletic programs, academic programs, improved computer technology as well as student and faculty scholarships.

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# Mississippi music makers promoter

By Bob Arnold

Around Mississippi, Copiah Countian Jim Brewer -- the educator, musician and artist-painter and promoter who established "Mississippi -- Birthplace of America's Music" as a state motto -- is known for his dedication to recognizing Magnolia State musicians and their contributions to the nation's culture.

In the area, people know him as "somebody mixed up with music and art as a painter," he adds.

"And a lot of people just see me as someone who can't hold a job, since I've been a band director, school principal, college professor, educational consultant and founder of the Mississippi Musicians Hall of Fame," Brewer laughs.

Born in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, in 1933, Brewer settled in Hazlehurst in 2001, where he based his career finale work -- promoting Mississippi music makers after founding the Mississippi Musicians Hall of Fame.

Growing up in Hattiesburg, the veteran educator recalls, ironically, that school was a difficult experience. "I couldn't concentrate on any one thing, my mind was all over the waterfront," he explains. "People now realize I had a learning disability -- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)."

Overcoming ADD propelled him into a career path in which music has always been a part. As Brewer explained to schools years later as an educational consultant who counseled them about working with ADD children, curing them is a matter of getting them passionately interested in one thing. For Brewer it was music, specifically the trombone.

By the time Brewer graduated from Hattiesburg High School in 1953, his focus on music and the trombone helped him concentrate on other things, successfully take tests and do college work. He earned a BA in music in 1957 and a PhD in education in 1973 at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, and pursued a career with stops at Columbia High School as a band director from 1960 to 1967, Columbia Middle School as a principal from 1968 to 1972 and Mississippi College at Clinton as a professor from 1973 to 1980.

from Mississippi," he points out. "It is a shame not to recognize them and not have our children hearing their music and stories -- particularly the stories of those who overcame tremendous odds to achieve."

Brewer met with interested individuals and representatives of organizations about launching the Mississippi Musicians Hall of Fame. Led by Brewer, they initially sought the state government's support, persuading Mississippi Commissioner of Agriculture Jim Buck Ross to encompass the Musicians Hall of Fame within the



Special to Wesson News

In 1980, Brewer started his consulting organization -- Associated Consultants in Education -- in which he worked with schools from East Syracuse, New York, to San Francisco to help them teach under-privileged children until he retired in 1998. He also edited *Effective School Report* and was named Mr. Effective Schools in Richmond, Virginia, during his career in consultancy.

It was in 1995 that Brewer's interests turned to enshrining Mississippi musicians, like sports greats are recognized.

"It doesn't matter what category of music, you will find top musicians

since its incorporation in 1998, the Mississippi Musicians Hall of Fame has opened three museums -- the largest in the musical heritage-rich city of Hazlehurst where Brewer started promoting the state's musicians and their role in influencing music throughout the nation. The Hazlehurst museum is inside the historic train depot in the Hazlehurst downtown area, and outside features the Mississippi Mu-

Joshua, who serves in the U.S. Army; and Randle, a Nashville musician; and three great grandchildren -- Ellie, 5, Laney, 2, and Leo James, 1.

#### What are your hobbies?

Over the years, I have done woodworking, built model ships and, of course, read a lot about the history of music -- particularly in Mississippi. But painting has become a passion. I do landscapes in oil, and post them on a web site where visitors can rate them. I display and sell them at the Le Soul restaurant in Hazlehurst.

#### Are you a reader?

I keep up with events in newspapers and on web sites. I like history, particularly music history. But I enjoy writing for other readers more so. I do a lot of writing. Guides to help Mississippi communities develop displays honoring musicians. *Driving Mississippi Copiah County* -- a travel route countryside tour guide. I have written three books: *Power Management* and *Power Selling* published by Prentice-Hall that draw on my experience as a consultant, and *Legendary Musicians Whose Art Has Changed the World*.

#### Do you enjoy movies or theater?

My favorite movie is *Patton*. My favorite actor is Morgan Freeman, mostly for his politics rather than his performing. He is a true Mississippian.

#### And music, which has been central to your life?

Mississippi music has been my career focus, of course. But beyond that, I am mostly into classical music and big band jazz. I like Stan Kenton. For several years, I conducted the Brookhaven Wind Symphony.

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

I would give to some favorite charities -- the Musicians Hall of Fame, of course, and my church -- the Hazlehurst First Baptist Church; and family.

#### How would you change the world?

My museums have tried to bring people together and discourage racial hatred. Those are my causes.

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# New pastor joins Decell UMC



Wesson News

*Wesson News*

A former teacher who heard God's call to ministry late in life is the new pastoral leader at Decell Memorial United Methodist Church in Wesson.

Patti Hardacre, who taught English and literature to junior high school and high school students in Madison County, started serving United Methodist congregations eight years ago as a part-time lay speaker, but felt God was calling her to do more and moved into full-time ministry six years ago as a local licensed minister, first at Winona, then Louisville and now Wesson.

Hardacre's Decell ministry started on July 1, and she says "it's the best thing that has happened to me since marrying my husband."

Methodist pastorates are notoriously short, particularly in small congregations like Decell, where young ministers gain experience and go elsewhere, but the folk at the Wesson church have made known their desire for someone to serve them long-term, and Hardacre thinks she may be there well into the future.

Although Hardacre likes to preach and has a dynamic style, moving around as she speaks rather than gluing herself to the pulpit, she sees herself as a pastor first and foremost. "I love people, meeting them where they are at, showing kindness -- which goes a long way," she explains.

Hardacre also says she is mission-oriented and is looking for ways to involve and serve the community as she strives to grow Decell, which has about 27 worshippers on Sunday mornings.

At Decell, she is spearheading an outreach program on Tuesdays oriented to Wesson's older population. "It keeps people occupied, those who often are alone

and seeking something to do," she explains. "There are crafts, games and opportunities for fellowship. It is outreach and not heavily religious." Hardacre also plans to involve members of her congregation and the wider community in making kits sent worldwide to help people in need -- flood buckets and personal hygiene kits for disaster survivors who need to clean up homes and care for themselves, and school kits for children who don't have required supplies.

To assist people on their spiritual journeys, Hardacre teaches bible studies on Wednesdays (5:30 p.m.) and Thursdays (9 a.m.). She is also encouraging a prayer bottle program in which Decell members pray for persons whose names they draw from special bottles at their homes each day. Regular Sunday worship services at Decell are at 10:45 a.m. following a 9:45 a.m. adult Sunday School.

Hardacre is a native of Goodman, Mississippi, where she graduated from Central Holmes Academy and Holmes Community College. She earned a degree in criminal justice at Delta State and holds MA degrees in community counseling and education from Mississippi State (1985) and Belhaven University (1995). Before becoming a teacher, she worked for the Mississippi Department of Human Services in staff development.

Hardacre and her husband Paul, a maintenance technician at Nissan, have one daughter, and they continue to maintain their residence on a farm at Goodman, where they raise beef cattle, meat-producing sheep and goats and turkeys, chickens and quail. She is at Decell and the church's parsonage on Sunday thru Thursday. Contact her at the church: 601-643-2749.

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# Golfer to write about area sports

By Bob Arnold

A local known as "the world's most avid golfer" because he played the most rounds of golf in a single year is joining *Wesson News* as an ongoing contributing guest columnist to cover sports.

"I personally love all sports, even the more obscure ones like cricket and polo, but I will be focusing heavily on sports in our state, particularly the South-West Mississippi area," says Yancy Methvien. "I will probably focus on golf, and I will report on our local parks and recreational opportunities, our local athletes, and a few of our more exciting sporting events/contests."

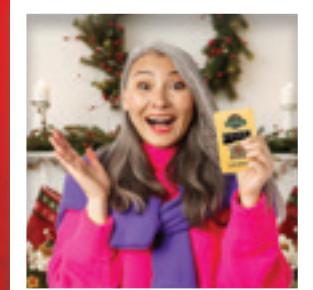
Methvien notes that the *Wesson News* coverage area contains hidden gems as far as recreational facilities and parks are concerned.

"We are located on a goldmine of golf and at a price-point that many can hardly believe," he points out. "I look forward to the opportunity to feature and introduce these facilities. Hopefully, if you are already familiar with places that I cover, I'll still manage to tell you something about them that you may not already know, and in a way that gives you a laugh or that you find entertaining."

The new sports columnist will also work to feature some of the area's more accomplished athletes from various sports -- people he knows have put in countless hours of training, made sacrifices where others have not, and have had to push themselves relentlessly to accomplish what they each have. "These athletes have worked very hard to represent their

*cont. on page 12*

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cont. from page 11

# Golfer to write about area sports

families, their schools, and our community," he says. "As such, I feel it would be wonderful to tell some of their stories."

Because he wants readers to enjoy sports beyond just watching them or reading about them, he also plans to pass on tips on overcoming the aches and pains of getting older. "Many of us could

stand to get more exercise in our lives and I have learned a few methods to limit those hindrances enough that you can be more active," he says.

Methvien invites sports fans to submit feature ideas on athletes, venues/facilities, events, sporting topics and ask questions they want answered. "I'll work to



Wesson News

cover all the bases you want covered," he says.

Methvien, a Brookhaven resident, is also a veteran who struggled with PTSD and depression following his military service and a divorce. He took on his golf challenge as a therapy, to honor fellow veterans and demonstrate the healing benefits of golf to them.

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# Watch your holiday health habits

By Guest Columnist Stephanie Duguid

At this time of year, it can be difficult to stay healthy with all the temptations.

From the holiday parties to family gatherings, we all tend to eat, drink, and become less active during this time of year. Do you want to enjoy the holidays and the food and still stay healthy? The tips below can help guide you through your next holiday event:



**1. Focus on Friends and Family.** Remember, the holidays are a time to slow down and catch up with your loved ones. Focus on friends and family, not food.

**2. It's a Party, but Don't Overdo It.** Eat slowly, and really enjoy the foods that you may only have once a year. Make sure your portions are reasonable, and resist going back for second helpings.

**3. Bring What You Like.** Try not to worry about what will be served. Offer to bring your favorite dish to share. If you count carbohydrates, check your recipe's nutrition facts, so you know how many carbohydrates are in one serving and the size of a serving.

**4. Drink in Moderation.** If you drink alcohol, remember to eat something beforehand to prevent low blood glucose levels later. Whether it's a glass of red wine or a beer, holiday drinks can add a significant amount of calories to your holiday intake. Keep it to no more than 1 drink for women and 2 drinks for men.

**5. Stay Active.** One reason that we have problems managing diabetes and weight during the holidays is our lack of physical activity. Sure, the holidays are busy, but plan time into each day for exercise and don't break your routine. Take a walk after a meal with family and friends.

**6. Plan Ahead.** Holidays can be a time of great anxiety for people with diabetes and other health conditions, because the season is so focused on food. Don't let questions about what to eat, how much to eat, and meal timing dampen your holiday. Plan in advance, so you can fend off stress and fully enjoy the day and keep your healthy goals on track.

**7. Think About the Timing of Your Meal.** Many families eat large meals at odd times on holidays. For example, holiday dinner may be served in the middle of the afternoon. Plan in advance for how you will handle making changes if your meal does not line up with your regular meal schedule.

**8. Try Healthier Versions of Your Favorite Holiday Foods.** Will the casserole taste just as good with fat-free or light sour cream instead of regular? Can you steam green beans instead of sautéing in butter? Use a little less sugar

in your fruit pie. The natural sweet of the fruit doesn't require a lot of added sugar.

**9. Nibble.** Have foods to nibble on while you are cooking or waiting to eat. Make sure the foods you choose won't sabotage blood glucose levels before the meal. Bring a platter of raw or blanched veggies with your favorite low-calorie dip, or have a few small pieces of low-fat cheese.

**10. Be Selective.** Many traditional holiday foods are high in carbohydrates: mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, stuffing, dinner rolls, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie, and other desserts. Don't feel like you have to sample everything on the table. Have a reasonable portion of your favorites, and pass on the rest. For example, if stuffing is your favorite, pass on rolls. Choose either sweet potatoes or mashed potatoes.

**11. Eat Smaller Portions.** Because high carbohydrate foods are plentiful at most holiday feasts, watch your portion sizes. Have a small plate of the food you like best, and then move away from the temptations.

**12. Eat Your Vegetables.** Vegetables are important for everyone! Unfortunately, the vegetable selection on holiday menus is usually limited. We all want to dress up the table with tempting treats. Why not add some colorful vegetable dishes?



**13. Get Your Rest!** Going out more and staying out later often means cutting back on sleep. Sleep loss can make it harder to manage your blood sugar and mindless eating. Sleep is essential to stay focused, keep your immune system healthy, and to keep you alert for the activities.

**14. Remember to Hydrate.** It can be easy to forget to drink water during this busy time. It is important to drink half your body weight in ounces each day to stay hydrated. And remember, if you feel hungry, it is more likely that you are simply dehydrated. Reach for a glass of water before heading to the refrigerator.

**15. Wash Your Hands.** Over the past year and a half, there has been extra emphasis on washing your hands. During the holiday season, it is especially important to be sure to wash your hands often. Be prepared in any situation, and have hand sanitizer or antibacterial wipes with you if soap and water are not available.

And remember, if you indulge a little too much, get right back to healthy eating with your next meal. Here is to a healthy holiday this season!

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

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# New & veteran coaches lead hoopsters

## Wesson News

During 2021-22 Co-Lin basketball season, the men's team starts a new era under David Sanders, who begins his first season leading the Wolves as coach, while Gwyn Young will return to the Lady Wolves for his 46th year.

Ironically, the new coach will face the season loaded with sophomores, five of whom are returning from last year, while the veteran coach worries about overcoming a lack of experience.

"I think the main thing for fans to know is that we are going to play an up-tempo style of basketball and bring an exciting brand of hoops to our fans at Co-Lin," says Sanders. "One thing that I believe is that no matter the result, we always want people leaving the game wanting to come back and see more, and I think we have a good group of guys that can do that."

In total, Sanders' team boasts 10 sophomores on a 14-player roster. "We have a good group of guys that are athletic and long players," he says. "We are going to go out

there and play a fast-paced game and be an entertaining team to watch."

Coach Sanders has high expectations for his team, but is also focused on how his players develop throughout the season to reach their goals. "Our main expectation is to go out and win every game we play, but aside from that we want our guys to play the game the right way," he says. "Early on, we want to establish how we will play throughout the season and start building towards the end of the season and focusing on potential postseason play."

Coach Sanders points to several key players: "Everything we do starts and ends with Lorenzo Fort III (Jackson), our leading guy and the guy we look to get us going each night offensively as a point guard. He transferred to us from UT-Martin and is a guy that can really put points on the board and one that I think could be a candidate for player of the year in our league. The five guys we have returning are led by AJ Warnsley (Byram), who I think will make a big jump this year as a big athletic

forward, and we are going to ask him to do a lot for us this season. Jordan Marshall (Raymond) is a guard that we are going to count on to step up and make plays for us as well as Jermario Hersey (Brookhaven). Cameron Butler (Vicksburg) and Zach Upkins (Bogue Chitto) are veteran guys that have been around the league, and we will look to them for veteran leadership for our team."

Coach Sanders is confident, but cautious: "This conference is tough across the whole state, and our fans know how tough just the South Division has been. The conference is competitive, and we have seen that in the fact that the state champion did not win the region championship last season. We have to make sure that we are ready to compete and bring our best game on the court every night and at the end of the season we want to be in a place to compete for the state and region championships."

Coach Young's worries about the experience of the Lady Wolves revolve around last year's abbreviated 14-game season due

to COVID-19. "Our freshmen who are now sophomores did not get the experience we would have liked for them to get," says Young. "Last year, we also did not shoot the ball very good."

Despite the reduced experience, Young's expectations for the team are high. The team of 13 players features seven returning sophomores and six incoming freshmen. "We have a really good group of freshmen, while our sophomores have used what they learned from last year and are applying it to this year to help us get better," Young says.

Young points to five returning sophomores: "We have Jamya Blue from Brandon, who saw some playing time last year for us in every game last season, Aniya Sanders (Vicksburg), who was our leading scorer and rebounder last season, and Jakyla Young (Kosciusko), who was our best shooter last season. We also have Madelynn Webster (Pocahontas) and Jakyla Esco (Ridgeland) playing on the inside for us, and we hope they can get better this season after receiving a lot of

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Special to Wesson News

Lady Wolves inexperience is a concern.

playing time last season."

Among incoming freshmen, Young says guard Zykeria Anderson (Edwards) will be able to play both guard spots this season, along with Leilani Lewis (Scotlandville, Louisiana) and Yakia Burns (Vicksburg), while Christina James (Columbia) and

Kiersten Ball (Louisville) on the inside can both play outside and shoot the ball from distance.

"We have a good combination of players," affirms Young. "We want to make sure our players are learning how to play at a tougher and faster pace than what they are used to and make sure they



Special to Wesson News

Men's team is being led by new coach.

understand their responsibilities on the offensive and defensive sides of the court."

The Lady Wolves are playing a conference schedule that features a contest against every team in the state -- a new challenge for both the players and the coaches. "That is something that will be very

different for us in terms of travel, because some of them will be long road games," says Young. "I think playing everyone in the state might be a good thing though, because this season we will not have to play just South Division games, and we get a chance to see all the teams at least one time."

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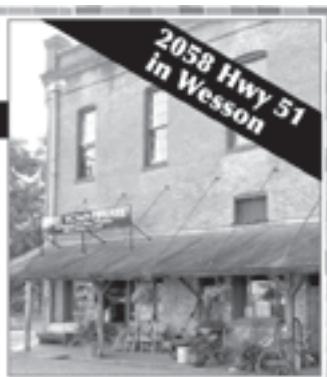
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## Class attendance options for students

### Wesson News

Co-Lin's Business and Marketing Management students will choose how they attend classes in January 2022 in a new instructional format called "HyFlex" for "hybrid" and "flexible."

Business and Marketing Management students will be able choose to participate in class each week in one of three ways: face-to-face in person on the Co-Lin Natchez campus, face-to-face via video conference (Zoom), or fully online through the Canvas application. All students will achieve the same learning objectives no matter which format they choose.

"This is an exciting opportunity for the Business and Marketing Management program," said Dean of Career, Technical, and Workforce Education Brent Duguid. "For the first time, students will be given flexible options to attend classes in the way that fits their schedule best each week. We understand that circumstances are constantly changing, and we believe this is the right move as we work to meet students where they are."

The transition to a HyFlex format means students from outside the Natchez area can now be a part of the program from wherever they are located, as they can attend fully online or attend face-to-face class sessions via Zoom.

For more information about enrolling in the Business and Marketing Management program, contact Program Coordinator/Instructor Melinda Laird at melinda.laird@colin.edu or call 601.442.9111.



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# Veterans often under-appreciated

*Wesson News*

Fewer than 10 percent of Americans can claim the title "veteran," but our debt to these heroes can never be re-paid, and our gratitude and respect must last forever, American Legion District 7 Commander Jimmy Smith told the Wesson Lions Club last month.

Smith talked about the under-appreciation of veterans, their contributions, and why they need advocates like the American Legion to help the club properly celebrate veterans at their meeting, which appropriately fell on Veterans Day.

The Sontag pastor noted that Americans celebrate their military on three holidays: Armed Forces Day honors those who are currently service. Memorial Day honors those who sacrificed their lives in serving. Veterans Day focuses on those who served in the past and survived as heroes.

"Veterans have given us freedom, security and the greatest nation on earth," Smith said. "For many veterans, our nation was important enough to endure long separations from their families, miss the births of their children, freeze in sub-zero temperatures, bake in wild jungles, lose limbs, and, far too often, lose their lives. While not all veterans see war, all who served in the military have expressed a willingness to fight if called to."

"Most Americans profess to truly love our veterans. While their feelings are usually sincere, it is important to remember that veterans are defending us 365 days a year. The heroism that has been demonstrated time and again by veterans from the American Revolution to the Global War on Terrorism is sometimes unnoticed by those of us who enjoy the security that their sacrifice has provided."

It took the horrific cost and bloodshed of World War II to remind many Americans just how great a debt is owed to our veterans, Smith

pointed out, noting that thousands of World War I veterans in 1932 camped out in Washington, D.C., to petition their government for bonuses that they felt were owed. "Their campsite was forcibly overrun by the U.S. Army, and at least two veterans were killed by the police," he said. "They just wanted a shot at the American dream that they fought so hard to defend."

"You cannot fight a war without veterans, and, while the utopian idea of a society without war is appealing, let us not forget that wars have liberated slaves, stopped genocide and toppled terrorists. It has been often said that without our veterans, Americans would be speaking Russian, German or, perhaps, Japanese. And while ISIS, al Qaeda and other terrorists may lack the conventional weapons of Nazi Germany or Imperial Japan, they are every bit as evil in their intentions."

Warriors need advocates, and that is why The American Legion exists, Smith concluded. "The American Legion shows its support for America's heroes through its Family Support Network, Legacy Scholarship Fund, Operation Comfort Warriors, Temporary Financial Assistance and the National Emergency Fund, just to name a few of our programs," he explained.

Homelessness affects veterans disproportionately, he pointed out. "Too often, today's tattered citizen of the street was yesterday's toast-of-the-town in a crisp uniform with rows of shining medals," Smith said.

Companies should understand that it's smart business to hire veterans, and when members of the Guard and Reserves deploy, it is America's business to ensure that their civilian careers do not suffer, he added.

"We can do better. We must do better," Smith said.

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