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# Wesson News

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### Eating to Meet Your Needs

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Volume 11, Number 9

“Good News You Can Use”

September, 2023

# Garbage service fees going up

Special to Wesson News

Starting October 1, Wesson property owners will be paying more for garbage service.

The rate will jump from \$15 to \$20 per month, because general inflationary pressures have escalated overall costs, according to Town Clerk Angela Hester.

The increase will show on monthly water bills sent to Town property owners.

In addition to the garbage rate hike, water rates will also increase two percent – a standard increase Town tax payers see every year, Hester said.

“By law, the Town must increase garbage rates when expenses ex-

ceed operating revenues for sanitation services,” Hester explained. “We cannot cover increased costs from other funds. Nor can we run deficits in providing garbage services.”

In addition to approving garbage and water rate increases, recent Town Aldermen actions included:

- Maintaining the 35.53 millage rate tax levy during the 2023-24 budget year.
- Purchase of property owned by Dr. Lee Nichols adjacent the municipal park for \$7,500 from a portion of Blue Cross



Special to Wesson News

Blue Shield Healthy Hometown grant monies upon survey of the land.

- Opening two public works department positions to hire workers.
- Sending a letter notifying owners of a 1028 Factory Street property of its “dilapidated” status under Mississippi Code 21-19-11.
- Tabled decision on a municipal park entrance sign at Beech and Church Streets pending quotes.

# Institute for Learning in Retirement begins fall semester

Special to Wesson News

Institute for Learning in Retirement members can learn how to paint, cook, dance and save lives, among other things, through five workshops on the Co-Lin program’s calendar during the fall semester September, October, November and December.

This semester, ILR also has four monthly luncheons and four special travel opportunities on its agenda.

A membership organization for persons aged 50 and older who are retired or semi-retired, ILR seeks to provide learning opportunities that are both fun and serious for senior adults, who define and pursue their own informal educational goals at their own pace according to their own choices and talents. Members, who come from wide ranging backgrounds and bring varied experiences to the organiza-

tion, design its program. Co-Lin, as the ILR sponsor, provides staff and management for the organization, which is fully funded by member dues.

The fall semester’s first luncheon on September 6 featured a presentation on nutrition by Leah Embry, who formerly managed the Wolf Den, the Co-Lin’s snack bar-hangout. Embry reviewed simple daily nutritional basics and discussed aspects of managing diabetes, heart disease, arthritis and other lifestyle diseases affected by diet.

Also kicking off the fall events on September 13, ILR members and their friends travelled to Brandon, Mississippi, to see exotic animals and enjoy a lunch at McClain Safari, and tour the Eudora Welty House & Garden in Jackson.

During September, ILR has also scheduled two workshops:



- On September 20, Kaila Denton, an instructor at the Nena Smith School of Dance in Wesson, will start a **six-week ballroom dancing course**. The workshop and subsequent classes on Wednesdays at the Co-Lin Thames Center will cost \$10. Participants can join

as individuals without partners. 11 a.m. to 12 noon.

• On September 27, Co-Lin graphics technician Corey Hart will conduct a **demonstration of drones**, which he flies for aerial videography. Hart shoots and designs video graphics for Co-Lin, and has worked with Walt Grayson on the Mississippi Roads television program. 1:30 p.m. Thames Center.

Other workshops, luncheons and travel experiences in the weeks ahead:

- **October 5. Luncheon.** Co-Lin culinary students will pro-

cont. on page 4

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## WHY GO ANYWHERE ELSE?

# Rural man turns town volunteer

By Bob Arnold

Until 2002, Ken Carraway was a rural Mississippian. Then he came to town, and became a volunteer.

“Volunteering is the key to town living,” he says. “In rural areas, where your nearest neighbors are several miles down the road from where you live, you live a relatively independent life focused on a few needs; but, in a town, you must work with others to meet many more needs.”

It’s a life Carraway has learned to love since leaving Dentville in rural Copiah County about 10 miles from Hazlehurst, Crystal Springs and Utica to join other members of his family in 2002 who had resettled previously in the Wesson area. For Carraway, coming to town has meant sharing responsibility to help meet the needs of his home by working with his neighbors to guide local Boy Scouts, teach shooting sports to 4H Club members and most prominently serve in Wesson Volunteer Fire Department, which he has led as its chief since 2010.

Growing up in Dentville, Carraway worked, played and traveled to elementary and high school at Hazlehurst. He helped his family raise 60 head of cattle and tend what he recalls as “a big garden.” He built and mended fences, learned to weld and fix things, mowed grass, operated tractors and other farm equipment and worked on cars, including his prize 1963 four-door Biscayne, which he bought with money he earned driving a school bus in the ninth grade, checking cattle at the Mississippi Livestock Barn and cutting lumber at a family-owned saw mill.

Carraway graduated from Hazlehurst High School in 1981, where he played right guard in the tenth and eleventh grades for a struggling football team that had not yet achieved the successes it has enjoyed in recent years. Over the next 15 years, he commuted regularly from Copiah County to the Louisiana coast to work for Noble Drilling in the offshore oil fields on derricks and motors and in the mud room as a roughneck, derrick hand and supply/storage yard manager.

After “meeting the right lady,” he says he quit commuting to the offshore oil fields, studied Industrial Mechanics and Maintenance Technology at Co-Lin from 1995 to 1997 and joined Georgia Gulf, now Axiall Corporation, at Gallman, where he has risen through the ranks to become Maintenance Supervisor over more than 26 years.

Carraway married his wife Tammy in 1994 – the same year he started his service at Wesson Volunteer Fire Department. They have three children – Samuel, 22, with the fire department at Purvis, Mississippi, Anna, 22, a nurse at the University of Florida and Joseph, 25, a diesel mechanic. Carraway has another son, Kenneth, 43, from a previous marriage, who works at Sanderson Farms in Copiah County.

In addition to a new family and work life, he became Wesson’s foremost volunteer.

In Dentville, when he was a youth, a kitchen fire – although fortunately extinguished safely before much damage and any injuries – left its mark on Carraway, and he got his first taste of volunteer experience at a small fire department organized in the rural community in 1992. Two years later, he moved to the larger volunteer department in Wesson and earned his certification as a fire fighter in 1997. His volunteer life has continued to bloom.

In 2009, he became Assistant Scout master at Wesson Troop 125 of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA), then moving into the role of its Scoutmaster and helping with the Wesson Cub Scout program. As Scoutmaster of the troop, over five years, he transformed it from an adult-led to scout led organization with a focus on training and nurturing development of an Eagle Scout core membership.

“I was a merit badge counselor, and taught scouts working

towards various merit badges at spring and winter Adventure Camps that build their life-long outdoor skills and provide leadership experience,” Carraway says. After leaving Troop 125, he has continued his volunteer involvement with BSA as a Shooting Sports Instructor.

Beginning in August 2013, Carraway also joined Copiah County 4H Clubs as Field and Stream Shooting Sports Instructor tasked with teaching youth leadership skills and interaction with adults and other youth. He has coached 4H rifle, pistol and muzzleloader teams since 2018, bringing Copiah County competitors to national tournaments four times.

If folk associated with Scouting and 4H appreciate Carraway for what he has brought to their organizations as a volunteer, the wider community has been served by his more than 29 years helping to provide disaster and humanitarian relief through Wesson Volunteer Fire Department, which he has directed as its Chief for 13 years.

“The job of a Volunteer Fire Chief brings many challenges,” he says. “While we train the most to help others in their time of need, we also train to teach prevention. We are given the opportunity to meet many people of all walks of life, many turning into great friendships. We also like to interact with the community while teaching fire prevention, home safety and many other topics.”

Summarizing his satisfaction as a volunteer fire fighter that could apply as well to his other volunteer endeavors, Carraway recalls a recruiting ad once posted by a volunteer fire department. It highlighted what the volunteer would get from the experience:

“Fun, no pay and a cool hat.”

For that and working with his neighbors to make Wesson a better place to live, Ken Carraway has devoted the better part of the last 21 years.



Ken and Tammy Carraway.

Wesson News

## MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

adults, approaching the age of weddings, I became a collector of quality cast iron ware, with the intention of giving it away as gifts. The collection, however, has grown beyond the supplies required for gifts. It now includes some 70 to 80 pieces hanging on the wall and on display at home. I know the history of each item, the caster and its unique specialty. A cast iron good for baking cornbread, for example, may not serve you well if you are trying to fry an egg.

### Are you a reader?

I read a lot about fire departments, fire fighting and fire safety; and get the latest how-to videos on fire equipment.

### Do you follow movies or theater?

My wife says the best way to get me up and moving is to show a sentimental or romance video. On the other hand, I will quickly settle into an old adventure movie – *Armageddon*, *Twister*, *Men in Black*, *Independence Day*.

### What would you do with the winnings if you won the lottery?

I would quit work, so I could become a full-time volunteer, doing anything to help the community.

### How would you change the world?

The world, more than ever, needs volunteers today. Voluntary organizations are struggling.



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# Kids learn about fire fighting

Special to Wesson News

Some 30 children and youth between 7 and 13 years old participated in the Wesson Volunteer Fire Department (WVFD) Fire Academy for Kids (FAK) last month.

FAK is a fun, educational and action program that gives children life safety skills in fire emergencies, first aid and injury prevention and introduces them to fire fighters and emergency medical technicians, equipment they use and the jobs they perform.

At the WVFD Spring Street fire station on August 26 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., the youngsters participated in classroom learning activities and trained hands-on in fire safety, first aid and basic fire fighting – rescuing a victim while wearing a face mask, using fire hoses and dressing in turnout gear. They also took away home-study sheets to involve their whole families in their training, and parents are now assisting their children with home assignments and, together, family members are practicing fire drills and using home escape routes with the help of FAK participants.

While the focus was on fires, participants also looked at safety issues around seatbelts, cycling, driving motor vehicles and four-wheelers, skate boarding, drug abuse, street smarts and avoiding stranger danger, window bars, smoke alarms, cooking and internet use.



Special to Wesson News

Participants, divided into three teams, covered eight fire fighting and emergency response subject matter areas in hands-on classes on a rotating basis led by WVFD members, including Ken and Sam Carraway, Sean Ray and Chris Wade, among others:

- **Donning and duffing** turnout gear. Helmets, boots, full gear. Clean up, hang up.
- **Air pack and mask** two minute drill. Turnout gear, including self-contained breathing apparatus. Putting on and taking off full gear. Clean up, hang up.
- **Hose, nozzle and hydrants.** Sup-



Special to Wesson News

plies, jacket hose, nozzles, valves and hand tools. Hydrants -- E-1 and parking. Barricading engine, Running off the hydrant.

- **Rescue drag.** Carrying dummies under arms and dragging them backwards while standing. Dragging while crawling. Putting high rise pack on shoulder to carry.
- **Search and rescue.** Right hand and left hand search method. Maintaining wall contact. Sweeping hands to feel and find a baby.
- **CPR/First Aid.** Supplies. First Aid Kit. Sling and splint material. Bandages. How to stop bleeding and ap-

ply a band aid or bandage. How to splint an arm and swath.

- **Smoke house simulation.**

- **911.**

Participant teams were named in honor of historic fire fighting and emergency units throughout the nation: Engine 17, a Boston, Massachusetts, fire department nicknamed the “Fighting 17” that runs about 3,000 calls each year. Ladder 21, a New York City 9/11 responder that lost seven members in the lobby of the south tower when the north tower collapsed on them. Rescue 33, a volunteer rescue and tower company in Kentland, Maryland, which responded to 7,200 emergency incidents last year.

FAK uses the “EDGE” method in training: **Explain** how to do the task and why it’s done that way. **Demonstrate** how it is done and answer questions. **Guide** to successful completion. **Enable**, build confidence and encourage the activity. In addition to the contribution of the WVFD members to teaching, officers from Wesson Police Department helped participants look beyond fires to other safety issues.

FAK awarded certificates to program completers in a special graduation ceremony at the fire station attended by family and friends.

## Good & bad cholesterol made easy

By Guest Columnist Stephanie Duguid

In a world filled with a wealth of conflicting evidence and various opinions from health professionals (or not professionals), it can be difficult to determine which diet will be best for your goals.



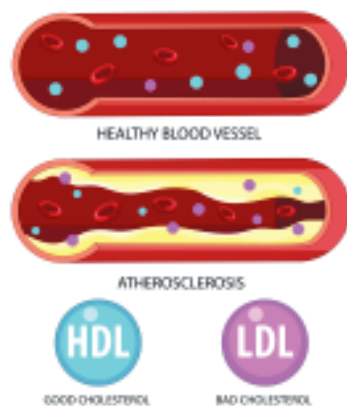
National Cholesterol Education Month focuses on helpful information that can make your choices a bit easier on one area of diet.

Although there is conflicting science on specific foods and how they may or may not have an impact on your health, we can agree high cholesterol levels are correlated to atherosclerosis and heart disease. Cholesterol itself is not a bad thing.

However, too much cholesterol in the body has strong correlations to chronic diseases.

The body creates two types of cholesterol - these are HDLs and LDLs:

### TYPES OF CHOLESTEROL



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- **High-density lipoproteins (HDLs)** are created naturally by the body to heal arterial walls. Commonly called “good cholesterol,” these guys take cholesterol away from the heart and arteries.

- **Low-density lipoproteins (LDLs)**, on the other hand (commonly referred to as “bad cholesterol”) carries its contents to the arteries. For this reason, many people consider LDLs bad, although they are just doing their jobs. Problems arise when our diet contains an excessive amount of foods which promote LDL production, or contain high amounts of cholesterol in general.

If the body does not have enough HDLs to recycle cholesterol and remove the plaque from the arterial walls, gunk builds up in the arteries that can raise blood pressure and lead to other chronic diseases.

The bottom line: Eat foods that are rich in HDL and low in LDL.

In most cases, this means eating a diet that is rich in plant foods, like beans, nuts, seeds, leafy greens, and fruit. Try your best to limit fatty meats like pork, beef, and chicken. Whole plant foods will generally contain a much lower source of cholesterol and will contain many more vitamins and minerals to help balance other systems in the body.

So, cholesterol is not the problem. Rather, it is unbalanced cholesterol in your body that can cause challenges. Eating plenty of whole foods helps the “good” cholesterol to handle the “bad.” Consult with your healthcare professional about your diet.

Here’s to improved cholesterol numbers!

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



## Institute for Learning in Retirement begins fall semester

vide lunch for ILR members at the Anderson Building. \$10. 10:30 a.m.

- **October 5.** Art workshop. Co-Lin Art Instructor Carisa Mitchell will lead a two-hour **paint-along class**. The \$45 cost covers materials fees. 25 students maximum. Just show up and have fun. 3:30 p.m. Smith Building. Room 112.
- **October 19.** Day trip. At **Star, Mississippi** – Faith Hill's home, ILR travelers will visit **Heartwood Birdhouses**, where speakers will make a presentation, and they will tour the shipping room and shop for lovely, creative birdhouses made by the company. Lunch at Berry's Seafood in Florence. \$70 (lunch not included).
- **October 24.** **CPR/First Aid workshop.** Co-Lin Workforce Education trainer Randy Castilaw will conduct class. Participants will receive a certification card. Fee is \$65. 9 a.m. Thames Center.
- **November 2.** Luncheon. Jordan Johnson, a local craftsman, will discuss **wood crafting and furniture design**, sharing stories about his work and the creative process. Lunch prepared and served by Co-Lin Culinary Arts students. The Anderson Building. \$10. 10:30 a.m.
- **November 7.** Cooking demonstration workshop. Co-Lin food service manager and Chef Chris McSewyn will discuss preparation. \$20 fee. Thames Center. 11 a.m.
- **November 29.** Two-night trip. At **Natchitoches, Louisiana**, travelers will kick off the Christmas season at the **Festival of Lights**, where they will enjoy a gala Christmas production at Northwestern State University, ride on the Cain River Queen Riverboat and tour the Fort St. Jean Baptiste State Historic Site. \$425-\$540.
- **December 11.** **Christmas luncheon.** Special holiday meal prepared by Co-Lin Chef Chris McSewyn with Christmas music. Wear red and green Christmas sweaters. \$12. Thames Center. 10:30 a.m.
- **December 12.** Day trip. At **Natchez, Mississippi**, travelers will take a **Jeweled Christmas tour** of the Towers, lunch on their own and shop downtown. \$95.

Throughout the semester, every Tuesday from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., Cheryl Myers will continue to coach a **chair yoga class** for ILR members.

For information, contact ILR Coordinator Erin Johnson: [erin.johnson@colin.edu](mailto:erin.johnson@colin.edu) or 601-643-8702. Visit the ILR Facebook page at [Facebook@ILRCoLin](https://www.facebook.com/ILRCoLin).

## Mill Town Mall

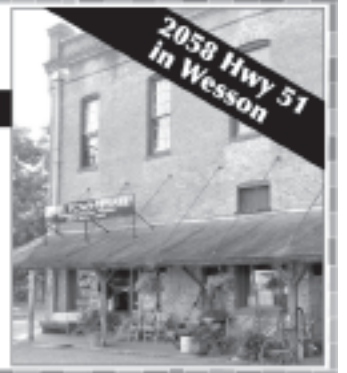
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# Eat to meet your needs

Special to Wesson News

Eating right is a matter of applying simple dietary rules to your personal dietary needs, says a local meals and cooking consultant, who bases her advice on more than a quarter century of formal and informal nutritional studies.

Throw away the regimens and diets that try to be everything for everybody, understand the unique nutritional needs of yourself and your family, and plan and prepare meals guided by a few nutritional principles, counsels Leah Embre, who recently left Co-Lin after opening its Wolf Den snack bar hangout, which offers healthy food alternatives to students, college staff and faculty and members of the wider Wesson community.

“Plow your way through the massive confusing and conflicting nutritional advice available like a cow that chews hay and spits out sticks, remember that no one size fits all and you can change and improve your diet and health a little bit at a time,” Embre told an Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) member luncheon.

To understand your unique nutritional needs, she advised:

- **Knowing your numbers** -- the results of blood tests showing levels of sugar and body chemistry. “Get a print out of laboratory blood work so you can see

what dietary changes you need to make, and how your adjustments are making a difference,” says Embre.

- **Journal what you eat** and how it affects your health and well-being.
- **Find a doctor** who doesn't mind answering your health questions.
- **Watch your bowel movements.** “Constipation and diarrhea reflect your dietary habits,” she says.

Within this context, gut health is the foundation of overall health and lifestyle, Embre explained. Through the digestive system, the body gets the nutrients it needs. The goal is to reduce or eliminate inflammation -- throughout your body.

“Increasingly, nutritionists say the gut is our first brain,” she added. “It sends seven times more messages to control the body than the brain. It makes serotonin and dopamine -- the hormones used in the brain to create feelings of happiness.”

So watch what you send to your gut, Embre told her ILR audience:

- **Decrease the sugar** -- “dietary enemy number one.” On a daily basis, she said, a female

should consume 24 grams of sugar and a male, 37 grams. In fact, most people overconsume sugar, getting their nutritional requirement in two meals.

- **Decrease processed foods** -- “dietary enemy number two.” Fresh whole foods -- fruits, vegetables, meats -- retain critical vitamins and minerals, while processed packaged foods add chemicals, often toxic, preservatives. “Eat food close to the way God made it,” Embre said.
- **Decrease dyes** -- chromosome-damaging and cancer-causing food coloring chemicals listed on food labels.
- **Increase protein consumption** up to half your body weight in grams.
- **Increase fiber.** Nuts and grains. Eat the peels on fruits and vegetable.
- **Increase healthy fats.** Avocado, coconut, fish and olive oils, butter, grass-fed beef without cortisol and whole fish, olives and avocados are good sources.
- **Drink lots of water** -- as much as one gallon daily. “Your body is 80 percent water, so it is very beneficial,” she said. “If you're

thirsty, you are dehydrated. Don't drink it all at once. Sip it throughout the day.”

“The big challenge is planning and preparing your meals,” she pointed out. On food preparation, Embre suggested:

- Get out the food, wash and dry it and prepare it -- all at the same time.
- Don't fry foods, to curb another source of inflammation in the body.
- Prepare and save snack foods that offer a ready alternative to sugar-laced candies. For example, boil or scramble eggs in advance and refrigerate.
- Serve at least one fresh fruit or vegetable with every meal.
- Oven-bake meals on a sheet pan. Cook different meats -- chicken, beef, pork -- at the center of the pan with varied vegetables on the side. Use different seasonings and sauces with each meal.

There is nothing hard about making healthful meals, if you take time to plan, follow simple nutritional rules and don't over-complicate preparation, Embre summarized: “Keep it simple, Sunshine!”

## WESSON AREA DINING GUIDE



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# New Lake Lincoln flea market

Special to Wesson News

A flea market oriented to Lake Lincoln State Park visitors and the surrounding community started offering a new shopping experience on the Saturday before Labor Day and will continue on the first and third Saturdays of every month.

Uncle Rays -- an eatery, convenience store, bait shop and RV and boat rentals venue -- is organizing the bi-monthly market on its property at 2574 Sunset Road, just outside Wesson across from the entrance to Lake Lincoln State Park, and continues to seek vendors for it.

"We want about a dozen vendors that will offer a variety of choices to shoppers -- fleas, crafts, clothing, jewelry, books, audio-video products, furniture, fresh produce and home-grown and cooked canned foods and condiments and other finds unique to the market," says Uncle Rays proprietor Charles Fortson, Jr. Uncle Rays will offer hot food and snacks, so no spaces are available for similar sales.

Vendor spaces are 12-foot-by-20-foot and available for \$20 each.

The Uncle Rays Sales Day hours are 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Call or text Charles Fortson at 601-643-0175 for information or apply for a vendor space.



Special to Wesson News



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## New fire classifications affect insurance

Special to Wesson News

Town property owners may enjoy reductions in their insurance premiums with a change in the City of Wesson's fire protection classification.

The Mississippi State Rating Bureau (MSRB) reports Wesson, previously Eighth Class, is now Seventh Class effective August 22.

In a letter to Town officials, Tony Parker, MSRB Assistant Manager, said the public protection classification applies to "eligible properties having a needed fire protection flow of 3,500 gallons per minute or less located within the legal boundaries of the City, within five road miles of the responding fire department serving the City and within 1,000 feet of a standard public fire hydrant."

"A split classification" will apply to properties not within 1000 feet of a standard public hydrant, and the classification does not apply to those properties served by the fire department outside the City, he said.

Any insurance contracts covering dwellings in the City, including comprehensive dwelling and homeowners policies, "may be endorsed from August 22 on a pro rata basis to take advantage of current fire premiums indicated in the Mississippi Dwelling Manual," Parker said. MSRB will need "to survey or resurvey or publish or republish loss costs for specifically rated mercantile and special class risks affected by the change in classification," he added.



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# Basket maker left his treasures

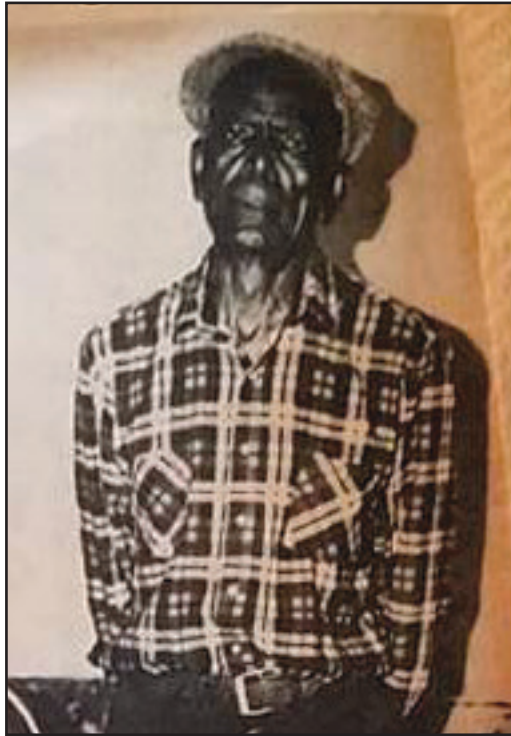
Special to Wesson News

Throughout Copiah County, people still have the beautiful crafts of Sanders Weathersby, a talented third generation African American basket maker born in 1914, who learned his art from his grandfather, Joe Weathersby, when he was eight years old.

Keasie, Weathersby's father, also made baskets, which he sold at Skinny Taylor's store next to Grayson's Feed & Seed, now the location of Big D's restaurant. His son worked off and on for J.N. Mohon Trucking until the early 1970s, and devoted full time to making baskets until retiring.

Working several hours a day, Weathersby worked on a special order basis, and maintained a steady business advertised by word-of-mouth. All of his items were made from white oak – a light-colored wood which ages over time to a warm honey color -- cut from a tree and then into strips, which he meticulously wove into 20 varieties of baskets in multiple shapes, some with tops, that sold from \$5 to \$30, and chair backs and seats.

Susan Thomas Ware, who owns some of Weathersby's baskets, implored him to show her how to make them when she saw him working at



this art one day.

"Naw, I don't reckon so," he responded. So, his art does not live on with others who could have learned from him, but his baskets are all the more special.

Weathersby married Ora Smith and had six children – Robert Lee Weathersby, Dorothy Lee White, Ora Lee Weathersby, Sanders, Jr., Johnny K and Mattie. He died in 1997, and a handmade marker is on his grave in Saint Paul Cemetery.

Those who own one of Weathersby's baskets say they are as sturdy as the day they purchased them, and they are proud owners of one of his treasures.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Throughout the 2023 Copiah County Bicentennial year, Wesson News will feature sketches of past and present visual artists, musicians, authors and photographers who are natives of the county. They will be excerpted from Tricia Nelson's reporting in A Shared History: Copiah County, Mississippi*

*1823-2023 edited and compiled by Paul C. Cartwright and available through Cartwright for \$25 plus \$5 for shipping at 3 Waverly Circle, Hattiesburg, MS 39402. Nelson is a Crystal Springs writer who contributes to the Copiah County Monitor.*





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# Gridders are eyeing national ranking

Special to Wesson News

At the Wesson Lions Club a few weeks ago, Co-Lin Head Football Coach Glenn Davis looked back at last season, saying that had some close games gone the Wolves' way, a 5-4 season could have been 8-1 and his team nationally ranked, and suggested maybe that could happen this year.

Whether or not Davis was expecting it, his team has put itself in the National Junior Colleges Athletic Association spotlight early on by knocking off nationally ranked East Mississippi in the season opener – the only team to beat it decisively last year.

As the 23-20 score reflected, a field goal made the difference. Co-Lin's Brandon Gilliam had three of them, supplementing two touchdowns by the Wolves – one in the first quarter and the second in the fourth quarter. The Lions led 14-10 at half time and 20-13 with 12:09 remaining in the game. The Wolves, however, sealed their upset with a 78-yard touchdown drive with 9:22 left in the game and a tie-breaking field goal with 2:01 remaining.

Following Co-Lin's 37-7 victory over Mississippi Delta on September 14, the Wolves' ride into national rankings includes three teams it defeated last year -- Southwest (September 28) at home, Coahoma (October 7) away and East Central (October 26) at home -- and three team that beat them -- Jones (September 21) away, Gulf Coast (October 12) away and Pearl River (October 19) at home."

In addition to Davis, three new coaches – Jacob Fleming, Michael Thompson and Tommy Kelly – are guiding the 2023 Wolves.

Fleming is working with the offensive linemen. He played his high school career at North Pike in Summit from 2009-13, where he was a three-year starter and was a member of the 2010 4A State Championship team. After graduating from North Pike, Fleming came to Co-Lin, where he was a starter for two seasons from 2013-14 at left tackle. During his two seasons at Co-Lin, Fleming was named First Team MACJC All-State in 2014, in addition to being named a team captain that season when the Wolves also won the South Division.

Fleming then played at the University of Southern Mississippi for the 2015-16 seasons, where he was under head coach Todd Monken. In his two seasons, Fleming was on the Conference USA Academic Honor Roll (2015), a two-year letter winner on the offensive line, starter at left tackle during the 2016 season, Conference USA West Division Champion in 2015, R+L Carriers New Orleans Bowl Champion in 2016. He started his coaching career in 2017 at Denham Springs High School in Denham, Louisiana, where he was the run game coordinator from 2017-2019. During his tenure there, the football team made playoffs four times, while Fleming also had multiple players move on to the college ranks and had 12 offensive linemen earn All-District honors.

Thompson is working with receivers. He comes to Co-Lin after serving as the wide receivers coach at Southern Arkansas University from February 2022-2023. The New Orleans native played high school football at Frisco Centennial High School and four years of collegiate football, beginning with one year at Trinity Valley Community Col-

lege and then three years at Louisiana College at wide receiver and tight end from 2010-2012. Upon completion of his collegiate playing career, he played professional indoor football with the East Texas Timber Rattlers in 2015 and the East Texas Punch in 2016.

Thompson graduated from Louisiana College with a Bachelor's Degree in kinesiology in 2014, then earned his master's degree in special education from Grand Canyon University in 2019. He began his coaching career in 2014 at Peabody Magnet High School in Alexandria, Louisiana, where he coached receivers, moved to Northside High School in Lafayette, Louisiana, in 2016 and then to Edna Karr High School in New Orleans from 2017-2022, serving as receivers coach for both schools. He had a multitude of players sign offers to play at various levels of collegiate football throughout his high school coaching career.

Kelly is working with the defensive line. He played high school football at Provine from 1995-1999. Kelly spent two years at East Mississippi Community College from 1999-2001 and then played for two years at Mississippi State University from 2001-2003.

After graduating from Mississippi State, he had a 12-year career in the NFL spending time with three organizations, including the Oakland Raiders, the New England Patriots and the Arizona Cardinals. After finishing his playing career, Kelly returned to his alma mater of Provine High School as a coach in 2016. He holds an

Associate's Degree from East Mississippi Community College and a bachelor's degree from Mississippi State University.



Brandon Gilliam's three field goals for Co-Lin against East Mississippi made the difference for the Wolves in 23-20 game.

# Sylvarena Baptist 125 years old

Special to Wesson News

On Saturday morning, September 17, 1898, a small group of people met in the country school house (property west of current church parsonage) for the purpose of organizing a Baptist church to be a mission and fellowship for the Lord Jesus Christ. The twenty-two charter members named the church Sylvarena, which means "in the woods."

One-hundred twenty-five years later, members of Sylvarena Baptist church celebrated the occasion and the growth of the church at their annual Homecoming Sunday worship service on September 10 at its current location at 1119 Old Sylvarena Road. The celebration featured Dr. Cody Warren, former Sylvarena Youth Minister, as speaker. A covered dish lunch followed the worship service.

Its charter members and the wealth of people who have also united with the church over the years have paced its growth.

Services were held Saturday and Sunday once a month in the schoolhouse until the first building was built between 1898 and 1904. The first church building was dedicated Thanksgiving Day, November 24, 1904. The church cemetery was begun in the first years of the church. According to church records, the



Special to Wesson News

first person buried in the cemetery was Benny Crawford, the son of Q.G. and Ophelia Crawford, in 1903. Fourteen charter members are buried in the cemetery.

Since those early days, changes have been constant:

- Further construction took place in 1910, when the building committee began work on the west side of the building. The building was dedicated in February, 1911. In 1947 or 1948, a baptistry and four Sunday School rooms were added to the back of the church.
- In 1951, the church bought new pews and pulpit furniture. In 1959, the church built the annex, which is still used for a Sunday School room and ladies bible study area.
- In 1969, the white church was brick-veneered. The floors were carpeted, and the walls were painted blue. The pews were also padded at this time.
- On August 6, 1972, the church voted to build a new pastorium, which is currently in use today.
- Groundbreaking was held September 25, 1994 for a new sanctuary, with construction starting October 1.
- The Dedication service for the new sanctuary was held June 4, 1995.
- Groundbreaking for a Family Life Center was held September, 2003.



# Grilled quail - a global delicacy



By Guest Columnist Charles Fortson, Jr.

As Mississippi hunters turn their attention to quails and doves at this time of year, it's fitting for diners who appreciate fine food to look at how to properly prepare these delicacies.

I favor quails. Both Old World and New World quail include edible species. The common quail used to be much favored in French cooking, but quail for the table are now more likely to be domesticated Japanese quail. The common quail is also part of Polish cuisine, Maltese cuisine, Italian cuisine, Mexican cuisine, and Indian cuisine. Quail are commonly eaten complete with the bones, since these are easily chewed and the small size of the bird makes it inconvenient to remove them.

You probably won't find quail meat at your local grocery store, but it isn't hard to find. You don't have to raise quails and skin them yourself. You can find country stores like Uncle Ray's that raise, skin and package them. You can order quail meat online or visit a gourmet food store.

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



## Ingredients:

Skinned bird  
(you'll want at least one for each person you serve)  
Slap Your Mama cajun seasoning.  
Mrs. Dash herbal seasoning.

## Directions:

1. Cut down the back of the bird with shears.
2. Fold over and break the ribs, so it will lay flat on any surface.
3. Cover the front and back with the mix of Slap Your Mama cajun and Mrs. Dash herbal seasonings or your favorite seasoning.
4. Pan cook, fry or grill. I prefer grilling to hold the flavor.
5. With the breast down, grill for five minutes at medium to high temperature for good sear marks.
6. Flip bird on its back and repeat five-minutes of medium to high temperature grilling.
7. Flip back with breast down, cover and grill for 10 minutes at low-medium temperature.
8. With back down, grill another 10 minutes at low-medium temperature, covered.

Remove from grill and serve with potato salad and baked beans or your favorite potato and vegetable combination. Order your quail ready for preparation from Uncle Ray's at 601-643-0174.

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## Open house focuses on WVFD



Wesson News

Wesson Volunteer Fire Department (WVFD) Chief Ken Carraway (right) with Wesson Police Department's Robbie Douglas at WVFD open house.

Special to Wesson News

Wesson Volunteer Fire Department (WVFD) told its story to the community last month at a special open house.

"We are dedicated to protecting the citizens of our community in their time of need," WVFD Chief Ken Carraway told almost 30 persons who turned out for the two-hour event on Saturday, August 12, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Wesson Fire Station on Spring Street.

Attendees learned about benefits received through WVFD and how, in turn, they could deliver benefits to the organization. They also lunched on hamburgers, hot dogs and other munchies donated by local eateries.

Carraway discussed training and funding that keeps WVFD running:

- **WVFD members, he said, must take classes in volunteer fire fighting, the Federal Emergency Management Agency Incident Command System, apparatus and equipment, safe response and return to and from emergencies. They must also take 74 hours of training each year covering similar topics, and can choose extra classes to become medical first responders and learn about hazmat, vehicle operation, traffic incident management, search and rescue, wildland firefighting and radiological emergency response, among other subjects.**
- **WVFD, he explained, receives rebate money for most of its equipment, but vehicle maintenance, apparatus repair and several extra training courses (i.e., wildland fire fighting, search and rescue, CPR/AED, hazmat, vehicle extrication) are not covered by rebate money.**

Carraway also pointed to insurance savings by town citizens as a major benefit of WVFD practices and reporting. Along with guidance from Mississippi Fire Rating Bureau, they can lower the Town of Wesson fire rating from 8 to 7. Within five miles of the Town, ratings can decline to 8 from 10, with a 10 percent to 20 percent discount on insurance premiums of homeowners.

How can members of the community assist WVFD, even if they aren't volunteer fire fighters? Carraway cited:

- Assistance with Department goals.
- Completing pond use agreement forms.
- Meeting with people and organizations to complete fire rating assessments.
- Providing information as needed to the rating bureau, pond certification personnel.
- Assisting with grant writing for equipment and apparatus.
- Data entry to state data bases related to reports, training, maintenance and inspections.

For information, call 601-265-1694 or email wessonfd@gmail.com. Members of the WVFD meet every Monday at 7 p.m. at the Spring Street fire station.



# Duguid hosting new audio program

Special to Wesson News

A Wesson-based consultant and former Co-Lin executive is hosting a new weekly audio show geared to supporting women educational leaders.

*Empowering Women in Educational Leadership* hosted by Dr. Stephanie Duguid is available on Wednesdays at 8 a.m. through VoiceAmerica Empowerment Channel (VAEC), which describes the audio programs as “a dynamic radio show celebrating women across all venues of education.”

“Join us as we elevate diverse perspectives and success stories of trailblazing educators, emphasizing leadership is not all about a title,” Duguid urges. “Discover strategies to overcome challenges, and hear amazing stories of strength. Tune in weekly to be inspired, enlightened, and empowered to make a difference. Together, let’s pave the way for a transformative educational landscape by empowering women in educational leadership.”

The show is heard throughout the nation on the VAEC and Duguid web sites (Do Good Leadership), Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Tunein, Stitcher, iHeartRadio, Spotify, Amazon Music and Pandora; can be

accessed via iTunes Feed, Google Feed and RSS Feed (a subscriber service), Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and Bookmark This Show.

VAEC is one of five branded Voice America Talk Radio Network topic channels for the leading producer, distributor, and on-line broadcaster of original live and on-demand talk radio programming that reaches a rapidly expanding domestic and international audience of millions of listeners every month in more than 140 countries worldwide.

Duguid runs Do Good Leadership, where she is the leadership and success coach for female educators, a motivational speaker, and a consultant, proclaiming her motto, “Be good, do good, feel good.”

Holding a Doctor of Education in educational leadership from Argosy University, Dr. Duguid helps women in the education become empowered and confident in achieving their next leadership goals.

Based in Wesson, she provides services in three key program areas: **Metamorphosis Mastermind**, which is for female educators who want to shift from being stuck, stagnant, and lost in their careers to self-confident, dynamic, and moti-

vated leaders. **Motivational speaking programs** available for institutions, organizations, and groups as a keynote, large group presentation, full-day workshop, half-day workshop, or part of Metamorphosis Mastermind. **Mini-courses** in goal setting, time management, and other topics that Dr. Duguid makes available as lifetime, self-paced on-line courses to walk clients through the processes as often as they need. These are practical and applicable offerings that help people make great strides in life.

Dr. Duguid started her consulting business after serving as dean of academic instruction and chief academic officer at Co-Lin, where she also was the health, physical education, and recreation division chair and instructor as well as an assistant dean of career and technical education. Before Co-Lin, she was a lead teacher of high school students in the Dysart School District in Surprise, Arizona, and a high school teacher and athletic trainer in the Buckeye Union School District in Goodyear, Arizona.

In addition to earning her doctorate, Dr. Duguid has a Master of Arts in curriculum and instruction from Ottawa University and a

Master of Science in sports health care from the Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine. She also is a certified athletic trainer and has a Bachelor of Science in human performance and athletic training with a minor in biology from The University of Southern Mississippi. Dr. Duguid stays on top of relevant professional developments and is civically active through memberships and leadership positions with the National Athletic Trainers’ Association, the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development, Delta Kappa Gamma, and Mississippi University for Women. She is a respected author of books and writes articles for the *Wesson News*.

Born in Houston, Texas, Dr. Duguid is married to Brent and has three children, Brendon, Dalton, and Jocelynn, for whom she strives to be a good role model. In her leisure time, she looks forward to traveling more and enjoys watching movies with her sons, bowling with her family and walking the dog.

Visit the website for “Empowering Women in Educational Leadership” at <https://www.voiceamerica.com/show/4172/empowering-women-in-educational-leadership>

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## Two artists to visit MSA



Wesson News

Dr. Meredith Melvin Johnson



Wesson News

Antonio Pio Fini

Special to Wesson News

A renowned voice instructor and a dancer will visit the Mississippi School of the Arts in the coming months to work with students at the Brookhaven-based special residential arts-focused high school for 11th and 12th graders throughout Mississippi.

Dr. Meredith Melvin Johnson, an instructor of voice and vocal pedagogy at The University of Southern Mississippi, will be joining the MSA vocal studio for a two-day intensive masterclass on November 2 and 3. Each student will work with Dr. Johnson on various repertoire pieces to learn about proper vocal technique across multiple genres. Dr. Johnson will also give a musical theater/pop belting masterclass to prepare students for their fall cabaret.

Johnson, a Mississippi native, trains future music educators in diction, pedagogy, and literature, as well as coaches collegiate level singers in multiple genres. She specializes in both classical and belt techniques and is an active adjudicator and vocal clinician, offering workshops for choral groups, show choirs, musical theatre students, and church ensembles.

In addition to her position as assistant professor of voice at The University of Southern Mississippi, Dr. Johnson's private studio caters to a wide variety of musical styles, while her online courses, "Virtual Vocal Academy" and "Audition Bootcamp" offer training to students around the globe.

Coming to MSA as Guest Artist in Residency January 30-February 1 will

be Antonio Pio Fini, First Dancer for the Michael Mao Dance in New York, Special Judge for Milly Carlucci in the television show *Dancing on the Road* and *Dancing with the Stars* on television channel Rai 1. He is Ambassador of Dance as a means of diplomacy for the ACD Agency For Cultural Diplomacy of Vienna (Diplomatic Cultural Agency). He danced for the Martha Graham Dance Company, the Staten Island Ballet, the Mare Nostrum Element and Erick Hawkins Dance of New York. He choreographed for The New York Opera at Lincoln Center, for the National Ballet of Kosovo, Tirana Dance Festival. Since 2015, he has been recognized by the United States as a permanent citizen for artistic merits.

Fini Dance is supported by the Marcobaleno Association and the Dancing Angel Foundation. Among the productions and artistic directions of Antonio Fini are The Italian International Dance Award in New York, Speciale Fini Dance New York in DanzaInFiera (Florence), The Tirana dance Festival (Albania), Bulgarian International Dance Festival (Sofia, Bulgaria) and *Audition on Amazon Prime*, a television show. *The New York Times*, *Huffington Post*, *Broadway World*, *Time Out New York*, *Dance Magazine*, *Dance Theater Magazine*, *Balletto 2000*, *Tutto Danza*, *La Repubblica*, *IN Forma*, *Star Bene Mondadori*, *Il Quotidiano*, *Gazzetta del Sud*, *O Globo* (Brazil), among other media, have covered his productions.

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# Garden Club Honor Yard



Wesson News


In August, Wesson Garden Club (WGC) recognized the landscaping efforts of Sammy and MaryAnn Moore with its Yard of the Month award. The award recognizes maintenance principles and elements of landscape design, seeks to encourage ongoing beautification and cleanliness of the Wesson area and cultivate a citizenry which 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.



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# Businesses, heat, testing, fish & award

Special to Wesson News

**Businesses opening doors.** In the midst of the summer heat, a Texas-based company has started to produce and distribute dry ice for commercial and industrial use from a new Brookhaven facility. Emory Dry Ice has invested \$10.6 million in the Brookhaven Industrial Park operation, where it is employing 20 workers. During the summer months, ribbon-cuttings also officially commemorated Gentiva Hospice's expansion to Southwest Mississippi and new operations of Cleansing Stream Exterior Cleaning Solutions, a mobile cleaning business for commercial and residential customers. Gentiva will serve Copiah, Walthal, Lincoln, Lawrence, Jefferson, Amite, Pike, Wilkinson and Adams Counties from its new office at 706 U.S. 51 North in Brookhaven. The new cleaning service will travel throughout the area from a Brookhaven base. Also coming to the area: Asset Management at 215 South Jackson Street in Brookhaven, a new fitness studio specializing in the Lagree technique emphasizing core, strength and endurance; Hattiesburg-based Southern Bone and Joint Specialists on Highway 51; and two national retailers – Five Below and T.J. Maxx – are also planning to open stores on Brookway Boulevard. Meanwhile, two long-time Brookhaven businesses are settling into new homes: T.H. Perkins Furniture consolidated to just one location at 520 Brookway Boulevard, and K&B Seafood will continue to offer a wide selection fish and other foods from fresh waters and the ocean at 526 U.S. 51, where it will also now operate a small restaurant.

**Summer heat.** Sweltering temperatures have been causing misery from the Gulf of Mexico to the Great Lakes, including Mississippi. People were told to chug extra water while mowing lawns or exercising outdoors, and to check on neighbors to ensure air conditioning is available. Scientists have long warned that climate change, driven by the burning of fossil fuels, by deforestation and by certain agricultural practices, will lead to more and prolonged bouts of extreme weather, including hotter temperatures. The entire globe simmered to record heat both in June and July. And if that's not enough, smoke from wildfires, floods and droughts caused problems globally. The temperature reached a record high of 104 F (40 C) in Jackson, Mississippi, as people walked between indoor and outdoor events at the Mississippi Book Festival. Volunteers distributed chilled water, and people used handheld fans while chatting with authors and shopping for books at large tents outside the state Capitol building. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports just 600 to 700 heat deaths annually in the United States. But experts say the mishmash of ways that more than 3,000 counties calculate heat deaths means the public doesn't really know how many people die in the U.S. each year.

**Student achievement jumps.** Mississippi Department of Education's Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) shows student achievement in math, English Language Arts (ELA), science and U.S. History reaching record highs, resuming 2016 to 2019 pre-pandemic momentum when the percentage of students scoring "proficient" and "advanced" increase 1.8 percent

to 5.6 percent annually. In 2022-23 MAAP testing, the percentage of state students scoring proficient or advanced was 52.6 percent in math, 46.7 percent in ELA, 59.4 percent in science and 71.4 percent in U.S. History. After student achievement dropped in 2021 in line with national statistics during the pandemic, it has increased 5.3 percent in math, 4.5 percent in ELA, 3.5 percent in science and 2.1 percent in history since 2022. All students now have computer devices and services, including on-demand tutoring.

**Test results nixed.** The Mississippi Department of Education has invalidated some students' results on state-mandated tests after an investigation found irregularities with how testing was conducted at 12 schools in five districts. The department said results on most of the 934 tests were invalidated because of an extremely high level of similar responses and instances of answers being changed from wrong to right at seven schools in Jackson; two schools in Hollandale; and one school each in Canton, Greenville and Wilkinson Counties. The invalidated tests make up less than two-tenths of one percent of the 578,515 tests administered in the spring, the department said. So far, district leaders in Canton and Jackson have found that 57 educators, administrators and staff violated test security rules, and they took disciplinary action against them and reported them to the state Department of Education Office of Educator Misconduct for possible further action. Mississippi requires students to take a state-mandated reading test before moving from third grade to fourth grade. Schools that promoted third graders whose English Language Arts scores were invalidated will be required to provide additional support for them to assure their reading proficiently. Students with invalidated high school test results will have to retake exams.

**River ready for old inhabitant.** A species of tiny fish that once flourished in the Pearl River is being reintroduced to the waterway, which runs hundreds of miles from central Mississippi into southeastern Louisiana, after disappearing 50 years ago. Wildlife experts say a number of factors likely contributed to the disappearance of the pearl darter from the river system, including oil and gas development, agricultural runoff, urban pollution, and dam construction. Even though pollution and other threats to habitat remain today within the Pearl River, more than 400 miles long, officials say the 1972 federal Clean Water Act has helped make it clean enough for the pearl darter to thrive there again. The pearl darter is a bottom-dwelling fish that measures about 2.5 inches long. It is named for the iridescent coloring around its gills, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which listed it as a threatened species in 2017.

**Home care industry award.** The Mississippi Association for Home Care (MAHC) has awarded District 92 State Representative Becky Currie its Rogers/Westbrook Award, which recognizes significant contributions to the home health industry in the state. The award honors the memory of Mississippi home health pioneers Dudley Westbrook and Fred Rogers. MAHC is a non-profit membership organization that fosters and maintains high standards of home health care.

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