



May peace, joy, hope and happiness be yours during this holiday season.

~The Mississippi Link publisher and staff

JSU GIVES BACK

Staffers donate to local children



Jackson State University President Carolyn Meyers (right) and several JSU staffers donated more than 50 bikes to the Salvation Army Friday. PHOTOS BY SHANDERIA K. POSEY

By Shanderia K. Posey
Editor

Last Friday, several Jackson State University staffers agreed that in lieu of individual gifts from President Carolyn Meyers, more than 50 bikes would be donated in each of their names to a local child in need.

Meyers considered the impromptu gesture while on her way to the mall.

"Nobody needs another pair of earrings or a cufflink ... and I heard about the shortage of giving, and I said this is what we can do to make a difference and light up little faces all over Jackson. Doesn't get much



Carolyn Meyers and Captain Ken Chapman, area commander of the Salvation Army, laugh while standing in front of the donated bikes.

better than that," Meyers said.

The shortage she was referring to was with the Salvation Army, which through donations and funds

gives presents to children and senior citizens at Christmas yearly. JSU's bike donations were right on time.

"Today we got a call from one of the courts, and there are 58 foster children who have nothing for Christmas until the captain came to Jackson State University," said Captain Ken Chapman, area commander of the Salvation Army, who came to Meyers' home on campus to accept the bikes on Friday. JSU staffers were also there to greet Chapman. Everyone cheered learning that their donation came at the most opportune time for area children. Chapman complimented Meyers

JSU

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Westhaven holds annual Christmas fellowship

By Janice K. Neal-Vincent, Ph.D.
Contributing Writer

Pushing the theme "We've Come This Far by Faith," the staff of Westhaven Memorial Funeral Home, Inc. ended the year with reverence to God and goodwill during their annual Christmas fellowship.

The event was held at 6 p.m. Dec. 12 at Black's Chapel M. B. Church in Jackson. Those who arrived at 5:30 p.m. and later found a loaded parking lot, a loaded lawn, and a loaded sanctuary. Pews were occupied to maximum capacity from the balcony to the choir loft to the floor.

Community leader Frank Bluntson was the evening's master of ceremony. Psalm 100 was read and prayer was given by the Rev. James Shoulders, pastor of Rising Sun M.B. Church. Joy, love, and thanksgiving were pegged as essential elements of praise within the scripture and prayer.

Westhaven

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First time attendant Dorothy Moore of Progressive M. B. Church was stunned to be awarded a microwave. PHOTO BY JANICE K. NEAL-VINCENT

Yarber announces revitalization project for West Jackson

The Mississippi Link Newswire

Jackson Mayor Tony Yarber announced on Monday the "Gateway Housing Initiative," a new multi-phase initiative to restore neighborhoods in West Jackson.

The mayor was joined by representatives from the Mississippi Housing Partnership, the Green Healthy Homes Initiative, State Rep. Alyce Clarke and City Councilman Charles Tillman to announce details of Phase I of the project.

Phase I represents an initial investment of approximately \$1.1 million toward the estimated \$4.1 million revitalization project, which includes properties to be conveyed by the state to the city and made ready for development.

In collaboration with the Mississippi Housing Partnership and other partners, the city will



Yarber

utilize federal HOME grant funds to comprehensively rehabilitate qualified homes, the beginning of what is expected to be the transformation of West Jackson.

The target area in Phase I includes Claiborne Street, Ellis Avenue, Holland Street, Houston Street, Jayne Street, Macy Street, and Moss Street. The pilot project will focus on infrastructure, housing and economic development - benefits promised by the administration.

"We're excited to launch this pilot project as it will allow us to

Jackson

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Former NFL players give away bikes

By Stephanie R. Jones
Contributing Writer

Cars were lined up before 8 Saturday morning at Smith-Wills Stadium for the second annual Celebrity Bike Giveaway organized by some of Mississippi's former professional football players.

For the next four hours a steady stream of vehicles filed into the stadium. Their occupants, kids and adults, drove off with smiles on their faces and shiny new bicycles in tow.

Members of the National Football League Retired Players Association - Mississippi, with the help of volunteers, handed out nearly 500 20-inch girls and boys bicycles to anyone who signed up to receive them and some who came out after hearing about the giveaway on WMPR 90.1's live radio broadcast.

Vernon Perry, president of the players association, said this was the second year for the giveaway. The event was started in 2014 when the group handed out about 200 bikes. "We wanted to do even more this year," said Perry, a Jackson State University alumnus. "We just wanted to do something special for Christmas for needy and deserving kids." Other former players on hand to pass out



NFL retirees Ollie Smith (left) and Mike Jones try out the bikes along with two volunteers from the Army Reserve 365th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion at the Celebrity Bike Giveaway. PHOTOS BY STEPHANIE JONES

and load bikes included Willie Richardson, Ollie Smith, Leon Seals, Glenn Collins, Jeffrey Moore, Mike Jones, Frank Sutton and Jerome Jennings among others. The players said they were pleased with the turnout for the event.

The group raised funds throughout the year to pay for the bicycles, Perry said. "We

are grateful to all those who helped in this effort," he said.

Workers at Walmart's Clinton store spent the past few months assembling the bikes, said Billy Tingle, transportation department

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