



Nickens pursued medicine due to childhood doctor

By Judy Willis
Contributing Writer

Medicine is the focus of part three of this series. Dr. Myrna Ellen Alexander Nickens, associate professor of medicine at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, is featured. She has chosen noted physician and



Mason
civil rights icon, Dr. Gilbert Rutledge Mason as her "hero."

"I was about 7 or 8 when I came down with chicken pox. I was really sick and couldn't walk," Dr. Myrna Alexander Nickens says. "Around that time, my parents (Woodrow and Mary Alexander) took me to Dr. Gilbert Mason who was the only physician in Biloxi. He got me up, encouraged me and soon I was walking again. He was the person who inspired me to pursue medicine."

Mason was anchored by a strong extended family and a committed and loving community who trained him to manhood and nurtured his dream of

becoming a doctor. More than a physician, he was a brilliant strategist, a community leader and civil rights activist who led "the Biloxi Wade-in," a protest that ignited a firestorm of white



Women's History
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Mulholland to share story at Jackson State



Joan Mulholland was arrested at age 19, in 1961 for civil rights work in Jackson.

The Mississippi Link Newswire

Joan Trumpauer Mulholland, winner of a 2015 Freedom Award from the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, will deliver the keynote address during the 10th Annual Creative Arts Festival: Ordinary Heroes ~ The (Un)Examined Life at the Margaret Walker Center at Jackson State University.

Featuring student performances and panel presentations, the Creative Arts Festival will take place April 15-16. The keynote address will be at 3 p.m. April 16, in the JSU Student Center Theater.

By the time she was 19 years old, Mulholland had participated in over three dozen sit-ins and protests, and she had been put on death row in Mississippi's notorious Parchman Penitentiary with other Free-

Mulholland
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Report reveals costs of deficient roadways in state

The Mississippi Link Newswire

Roads and bridges that are deficient, congested or lack desirable safety features cost Mississippi motorists a total of \$2.25 billion statewide annually – nearly \$1,900 per driver in the Jackson urban area – due to higher vehicle operating costs, traffic crashes and congestion-related delays.



Increased investment in transportation improvements at the local, state and federal levels could relieve traffic congestion, improve road, bridge and transit conditions, boost safety, and support long-term economic growth in Mississippi, according to a new report released Wednesday by TRIP, a Washington, D.C. based national transportation organization.

The TRIP report, "Mississippi Transportation by the Numbers: Meeting the State's Need for Safe and

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Campus politics



Jackson City Council's regular meeting on March 22 was held at the historic Woodworth Chapel on the campus of Tougaloo College. Occasionally City Council meetings are held on college campuses as a way of engaging students and giving them the opportunity to see government in action. All council members were present. Pictured are Mayor Tony Yarber (from left), Ashby Foote, Ward 1; Kenneth Stokes, Ward 3; De'Keither Stamps, Ward 4; Melvin Priester Jr., Ward 2 and council president; Charles Tillman, Ward 5; Tyrone Hendrix, Ward 6; and Margaret Barrett-Simon, Ward 7. The next regular city council meeting is set for 6 p.m. April 5, at City Hall. PHOTO BY JAY JOHNSON

Obama: U.S. will go after Islamic State

By Josh Lederman and Kathleen Hennessey
Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina – A day after bombs ripped through Brussels, President Barack Obama declared Wednesday that fighting the Islamic State is his "No. 1 priority" and blasted Republican calls for surveillance of Muslim neighborhoods as counterproductive and contrary to U.S. values.

Obama took on presidential candidate Ted Cruz directly, comparing his proposal for a crackdown on Muslims to the restrictions on religion and free speech in communist Cuba, the nation Cruz's father fled and Obama visited Tuesday.

"I just left a country that engages in that kind of neighborhood surveillance, which by the way the father of Sen. Cruz escaped for America, the land of the free," Obama said. "The notion that we would start down that slippery slope makes absolutely no sense. It's contrary to who we are."

Obama showed no signs of altering his policies in the battle against the Islamic State group, which has claimed credit for the Brussels bombings. He described calls for more aggressive action as ill-conceived and said Republican talk of carpet bombing in Iraq and Syria is "inhumane."

"That would likely be an extra-

ordinary mechanism for ISIL to recruit more people willing to die and explode bombs in an airport or in a metro station. That's not a smart strategy," Obama said.

The president spoke at a news conference in Buenos Aires, where he flew from Havana to meet with Argentina's new president, Mauricio Macri. Obama's historic trip, the first for a sitting president to Cuba in 90 years, was jarred but not interrupted by the bombings that killed at least 34 people and left some 270 injured. The president didn't change his schedule, attending a baseball game Tuesday and continuing on to the second leg of this trip.

Obama argued that shifting his plans would show weakness to the terrorists, and he sought to show he was unfazed by the campaign-season blitz of criticism at home. He vowed to stick to the strategy in Iraq and Syria.

"I've got a lot of things on my plate, but my top priority is to defeat ISIL and to eliminate the scourge of this barbaric terrorism that's been taking place around the world," Obama said. "There's no more important item on my agenda than going after them and defeating them. The issue is, how do we do it in an intelligent way?"

Bombing
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Miss. flag removed from Oregon's Capitol

By Christen McCurdy
The Skanner News

OREGON – When Bree Newsome – an activist and filmmaker associated with the national Black Lives Matter movement – scaled a flag pole at the South Carolina state house last June and removed the Confederate battle flag, she sparked a national conversation.



bol and was embraced by Dylann Roof, who killed nine people during a prayer meeting at a black church last summer.

In Oregon, the conversation zeroed in on the presence of the Mississippi flag – which includes a Con-

federate battle emblem as part of its design – in the "Walk of Flags" display on the capitol grounds in Salem. That display included flags from all 50 states as well as Oregon's nine federally recognized Native American tribes.

Now it's down one. Mississippi's flag was removed at the beginning of last week.

Last October lawmakers decided to give Mississippi the chance to change the design of its own flag. According to a letter dated March 7, and co-signed by Senate President Peter Courtney and House Speaker

Tina Kotek and sent to their Mississippi counterparts – Terry Burton, president pro tempore of the Mississippi Senate and Mississippi House Speaker Philip Gunn – it was only after Mississippi failed to act that Oregon decided to take down that state's flag.

"We respectfully disagree with the confederate symbol in your state flag," the letter reads. "Out of respect for the great state of Mississippi, we chose to give the Mississippi Legislature a chance to act first. With the

Flag
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