



Gibbs wins runoff election for House District 72 seat

By Stephanie R. Jones
Contributing Writer

Attorney Debra Gibbs won the runoff election for Mississippi House District 72 in a tight contest against opponent Synarus Green Sept. 13.

Gibbs surpassed Green by 24 votes with final unofficial results of 921 to 897.



Gibbs
the Hinds County delegation to ensure the issues and concerns

"I thank all voters who came out, and I look forward to working with them and the House leadership and the issues and concerns

in District 72 are addressed," Gibbs said.

"The challenges we have are many and a lot of us know what those are, such as infrastructure issues, health care and job opportunities" Gibbs said. "All those challenges face all of us either directly or indirectly."

Gibbs said she also wants to

empower citizens to be a part of the process of finding solutions to the challenges, while working with the Hinds County delegation and District 72 voters.

"What I found that people want in leadership is someone at the helm to help them be a part of the change and what goes on at the Capitol to make their com-

munities and cities and our state better."

Gibbs will be sworn in once the election is certified. The Election Commission has 10 working days to canvas the ballots, but the process could be completed sooner, said Election Commissioner James Reed. At that point the House decides

when she would be sworn in to represent District 72, which encompasses parts of Hinds and Rankin counties.

In a statement the night of the election, Gibbs thanked Green for reaching out to "join forces in advocating our communities

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Remembering Ollye B. Shirley

Dr. Aaron Shirley and Ollye B. Shirley, Ph.D. PHOTO COURTESY OF FACEBOOK

Champion of education

By Shanderia K. Posey
Editor

Ollye Brown Shirley, Ph.D., described as a Mississippi icon in education and civil rights, died Sept. 10, of natural causes at her home in Jackson.

Family and friends of Shirley, 82, will cherish her memories and impact on Jackson and the state during a memorial service at 11 a.m. Sept. 17, at the Jackson Medical Mall.

Visitation is set for 1-7 p.m. Sept. 16, at Peoples Funeral Home, 886 N. Farish St., in Jackson. Family hour begins at 6 p.m.

Shirley was the widow of Dr.

Aaron Shirley, founder of the Jackson Medical Mall. Dr. Aaron Shirley died Nov. 26, 2014. They had four children.

Individually and as a couple, the Shirleys made a huge impact on the Jackson community. They are widely known for their work during the Civil Rights Movement. And while Dr. Aaron Shirley's passion was eliminating health disparities in the community, Ollye Shirley's passion was education.

A Tougaloo College alumna, Shirley was a former board member of Jackson Public Schools, former chair of the Mississippi State Conference NAACP Education

Committee and was former state and regional coordinator of PBS.

She's been recognized numerous times for her accomplishments and is considered a mentor to many, including Wilma Mosley Clopton, who produced, wrote and directed a documentary about Shirley titled "In Spite of It All: The Ollye Brown Shirley Story."

The documentary details how at a young age Shirley was introduced to the educational disparities African Americans faced. Nevertheless, she was accepted to Tougaloo College at age 15. She later interned for Dr. T. R. M. Howard, who was a leader in civil rights and

a leader for economic empowerment for blacks. Shirley's association with Howard would cost her a job in Jackson.

Later she became a teacher at Lanier High School and served as JPS Board president for 15 years. In her role at PBS in the early 1970s, she worked to allow "Sesame Street" to broadcast in Mississippi.

Initially the children's television program was not permitted to air in the state because it showed black and white children together. By 1971, "Sesame Street" was

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City continues testing water for lead, copper

Mississippi Link Newswire

As part of the city of Jackson's continued efforts to meet the requirements of the Compliance Plan issued by the Mississippi State Department of Health and in compliance with the EPA's Lead and Copper Rule, the city recently conducted another round of water sampling for lead and copper in drinking water and has received the results.

Of 120 samples taken at residences throughout the city, 13 showed elevated levels of lead exceeding the action level of 15 parts per billion. These residents have been notified. The results are home dependent and do not indicate a problem with lead in the water at the city's treatment facility or city's distribution system. Lead typically comes from plumbing and fixtures in the home that may contain lead.

"Indications the lead exceedance is home dependent are further supported by the results of this latest round of testing. Homes along the same streets were tested. Yet, not all the homes returned results showing a lead exceedance," said Interim Public Works Director Jerriot Smash. "As part of the compliance plan, the city is continuing with its corrosion control study and is monitoring pH at its treatment plants in real-time to maintain pH within a range that will yield water less likely to interact with homeowner's plumbing. We believe that based on the results of the latest round of testing, our efforts are beginning to have a positive effect in reducing lead levels."

In June 2015, the city of Jackson performed the required sampling for lead and copper. In January 2016, the city was notified by the Mississippi State Department of Health that elevated levels of lead exceeding the action level of 15 ppb were found in some homes (13 of 58 sampled). The city distributed those results to the residents. The city initiated re-sampling of the 58 sites starting with the 13 that exceeded the action level as well as an additional 42 sites. All but two of the resampled 13 sites that exceeded the lead action level initially had levels that were reduced below the action level and some were no detection. As for the two sites, one was vacant

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Clopton screens documentary on 1947 Lanier High School bus boycott

By Janice K. Neal-Vincent
Contributing Writer

Before a standing room only crowd, Wilma Mosley Clopton, Ph.D., screened her documentary titled "Elport Chess and the Lanier High School Bus Boycott of 1947" at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History is Lunch Series Sept. 7.

During the fall of 1947, Chess, a World War II veteran and student at Lanier, was arrested at the request of the city bus driver for refusing to give up his seat to a white woman. The school's student body in turn retaliated by boycotting the bus.

Chess is now deceased, but some students who boycotted and were featured in Clopton's documentary were his classmates. They included Johnetta Jurden, Eula Morgan, Ella Robinson and Esau Wilson.

They said that the city bus was divided into two sections: colored (referencing African Americans) on one side and whites (referencing Caucasians) on the other.

The Lanier students were designated to sit in the back of the bus. They wanted to know why they were being discriminated against and were not

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Filmmaker Wilma Mosley Clopton converses with retired Jackson State University Political Science Professor Charles Holmes about the Lanier Bus Boycott of 1947. PHOTO BY JANICE K. NEAL-VINCENT

Hattiesburg pastor free until Dec. sentencing

The Associated Press

A Hattiesburg pastor convicted Sept. 12, of federal conspiracy and theft charges will remain free while he awaits sentencing.

The Rev. Kenneth Fairley will be out on an unsecured \$25,000 bond, which means he will pay nothing unless he violates the terms of his release.

His sentencing is set for Dec. 19. He faces up to 25 years in prison.

During a detention hearing Sept. 13, prosecutors said they don't believe Fairley is a danger or a flight risk. The lifelong Hattiesburg resident was convicted in a case involving money skimmed from a federal housing program.

U.S. Rep. Bennie Thompson has questioned whether prosecutors are



Fairley

unfairly targeting African-American officials and their allies in Hattiesburg.

Jurors returned guilty verdicts against Fairley after six hours of deliberation and a trial that stretched over parts of seven days.

Fairley is a longtime political ally of Hattiesburg Mayor Johnny Dupree, who attended parts of the trial and testified Sept. 10, as a character witness.

Fairley is also known nationally for once serving as the agent for University of Oklahoma running back Marcus Dupree, who's from Mississippi. Dupree later sued Fairley. The mayor

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