

Mike Espy holds drive-in rally at New Hope

By Jackie Hampton
Publisher

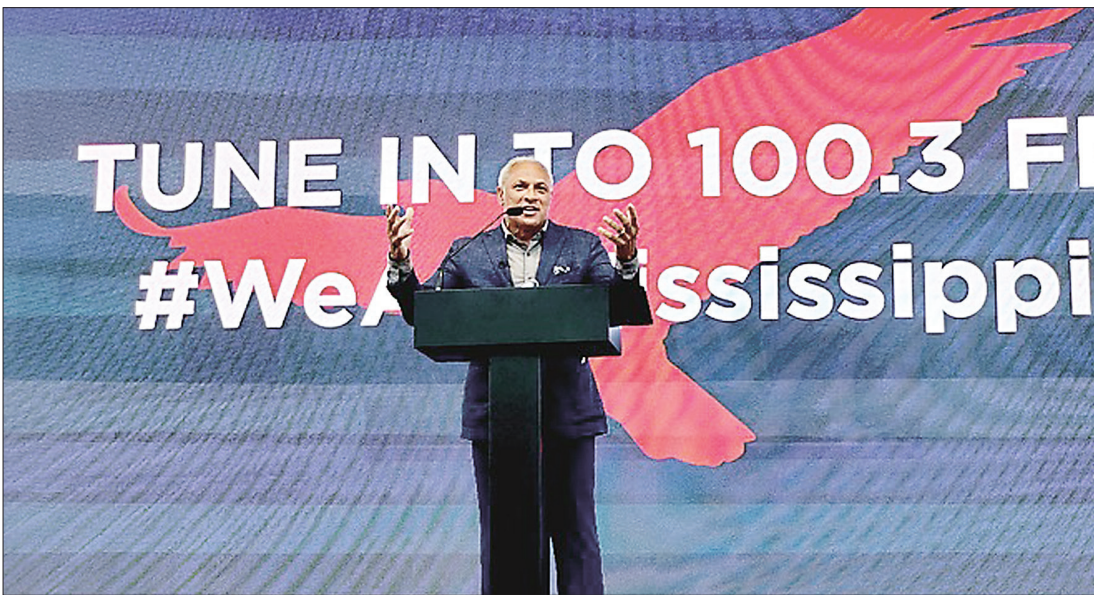
As cars rolled into the New Hope Baptist Church parking lot on Beasley Road in Jackson September 3, for the Elect Mike Espy (D) to the US Senate Mississippi rally, staff and volunteers greeted attendees as the 601 Band of Jackson blasted live hits such as “Let’s Stay Together” through the mics. Just in case rally goers wanted to keep their windows rolled up, they could tune into Radio Station 100.3 F.M. and listen to the band and later the speakers while enjoying the cool comfort of air conditioning.

The rally, with a combination of virtual and live appearances, was kicked off by emcee Othor Cain.

Judge Tyree Irvin, the new chair of the Mississippi Democratic Party, made a live appearance. He said whatever it takes to get around the restrictions caused by COVID-19, the Democratic Party will use every means necessary to get people to participate in the political process. Irvin said it is time for a change and he is confident that Mississippi voters are about to make a change, not only with Mike Espy being elected to the US Senate but also with many democratic candidates being elected in 2020.

Appearing on stage live was Court of Appeals Judge Latrice Westbrook, who is a candidate for the Mississippi Supreme Court. She said her mother, who became a poll worker in Memphis, had birthed ten children and had two grandchildren before she could cast her first vote. Westbrook said, “Every Mississippian should exercise their right to vote.” She referenced the unrest that is occurring throughout the country by stating that decisions regarding the George Floyd case, Ahmand Arbery case and the Jacob Blake case are made by elected officials.

Before, during and after each speaker, drivers of parked cars loudly honked their horns and when Mississippi legendary blues singer Bobby Rush took



U S Senate candidate Mike Espy (D) speaking at his Mississippi rally to become our next senator.



MS House of Representative Alyce Clark (D) in a front row park at the rally.

the stage horns seemed to get even louder. Rush encouraged everyone to get out to vote. “I’ve been singing the blues almost all my life, but I have been black all my life,” said the 86-year old legend. “I’m begging you to vote Nov. 3rd, he said. “Black Lives Matter” but voting matters more.”

As Espy came on stage with a resounding “Hello Mississippi,” horns blasted non-stop. He said, welcome to the Mississippi rally where we will show the nation

what the new Mississippi looks like. Espy said that while the incumbent, Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith, has held Mississippi back, he is the candidate for bringing Mississippi forward. As he extended thanks to New Hope MB Church Pastor Jerry Young, and the New Hope family for their support, he referenced Matthew 25:35, “For I was hungry and you gave Me food, I was thirsty and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in.” Espy said this scripture

directs him. For example, when he thinks of feeding the hungry he thinks of food banks and expanding Medicaid through public policy; and when referring to giving someone thirsty a drink, he thinks about bringing clean water to rural Mississippi; and inviting a stranger in, he stresses attacking injustice in all forms. Espy said, “This is why I am running for the US Senate, not just to say something but to do some-

Espy
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Dedicated staff keep on top of school cleaning

By Isabelle Altman
Associated Press

When Susie Summerville first started as head of Columbus Municipal School District’s custodial services, she found a picture of herself in the hallway of what was then Lee Middle School.

Summerville had graduated from Lee when it was a high school, and the senior year portraits of her and her fellow classmates were still on display 25 years later.

“I was like, ‘Oh my God, it’s still here,’” she recalled. “And then I went and saw some trophies ... from my class. They had a big trophy case and stuff, so I was like, ‘My God, that brings back memories.’”

That was 15 years ago. Since then Lee has been sold, and the district’s middle schoolers now attend Columbus Middle School on the other side of town. Summerville works in that building, as well as Columbus High School where her office is, each of the six elementary schools and every other CMSD building, managing 30 custodial and maintenance employees and working to keep the schools clean and safe for students and teachers.

That was always a big part of her job, but she has to monitor them constantly, making sure the district has enough paper towels, as pandemic puts all those items in higher demand.

Starting in May, the custodial staff, who had been sent home with fewer hours after the pandemic shut schools down statewide in March, came back to the schools for annual summer cleaning.

“We have to take every piece of furniture, everything out of every classroom, wax strip the floors, clean it, and then put it back in after the floors are dry,” Summerville said. “We do that every sum-

mer. The first day school is out, that’s when we start.”

“On top of that, (there) was COVID,” she added. “They kept us abreast of (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) guidelines, what we had to do. I met with all the custodians and told them, ‘OK, y’all, it’s a different ballgame.’”

Now the staff wear masks, increase their walk-throughs of classrooms and bathrooms and spend their time constantly wiping down door handles, light switches, desks and other “hot spots” in the buildings that tend to have multiple people touch them throughout the day, she said.

While COVID-19 makes this year unique, Summerville added this is not the only time the custodial staff has tackled a big job. She remembers how on the morning of Feb. 23, 2019, a group of custodial staff completed a major cleaning project on the Hunt campus, which housed the district’s alternative school.

“We had cleaned the whole strip, washed the floor,” she said. “It was so pretty. Everybody was so proud, over there working half a day on Saturday.”

That night, an EF-3 tornado touched down in Columbus, destroying the Hunt campus.

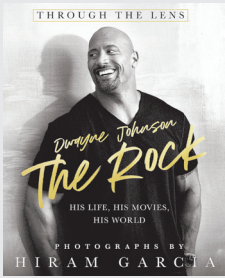
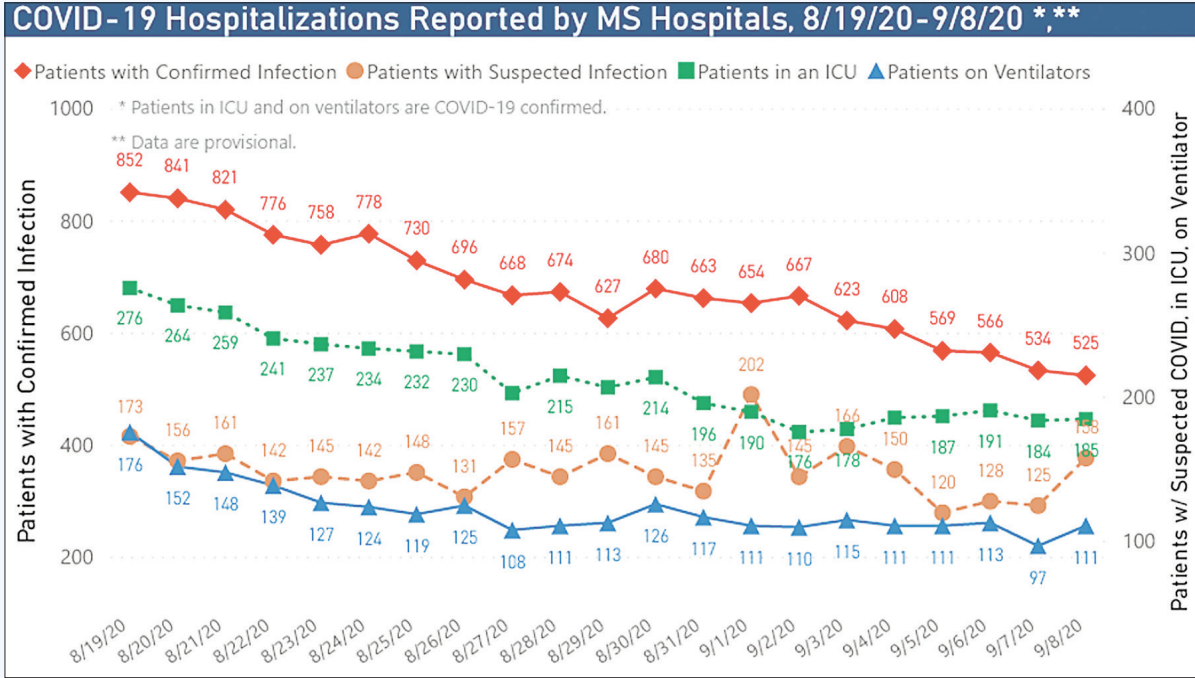
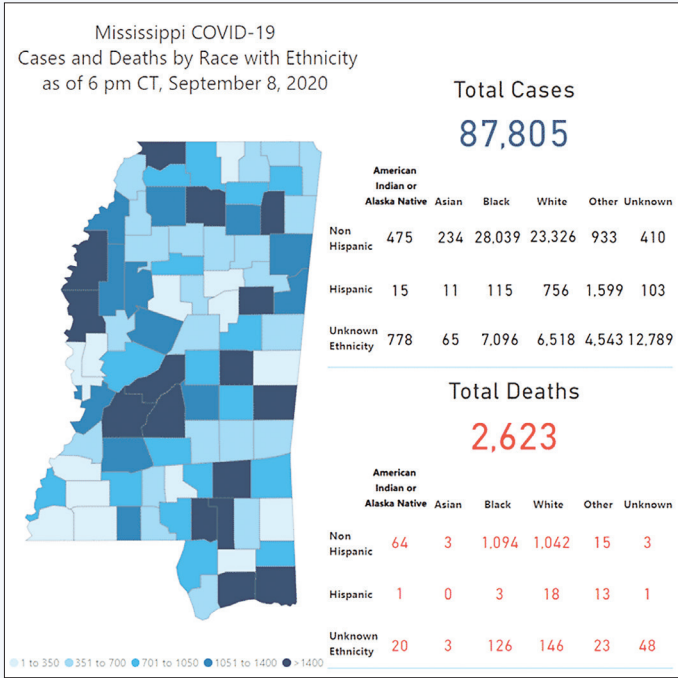
“I got a call, and I go over there,” she remembered. “It was ruined. The work we had done. It was ruined.”

Summerville said she was just glad that the tornado hit after all her staff had gone home. As it was, they were back at work the next day, along with a crowd of volunteers, moving what equipment they could salvage out of the building and preparing rooms at CHS for the Hunt Success Academy students to attend Monday.

That’s all in addition to the

Cleaning
Continued on page 3

MISSISSIPPI COVID-19 UPDATE



17 CSLC HIPPY stars shine during a virtual first; national executive participates

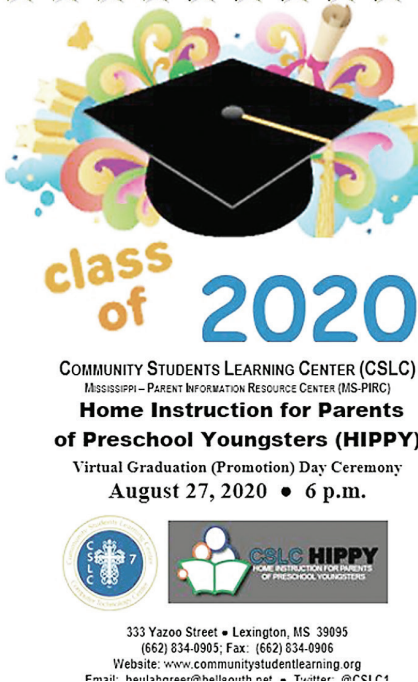
Ceremony dedicated in memory of Coordinator Lula M. Friar

Special to The Mississippi Link

Although the weather was inclement Thursday evening, Aug. 27, at 6, there were 17 bright stars shining in cyberspace.

Adorning royal blue and gold regalia, 17 happy faces filled computer screens as the 2020 graduating scholars of the Community Students Learning Center's (CSLC) Mississippi-Parent Information Center (MS-PIRC) Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) program's first "virtual" promotion event.

The speaker was longtime educator and former assistant superintendent and deputy superintendent of the Holmes County School District, Kathi Wilson, CEO of Wilson Academy in Meridian, Miss. Using the context from students' class poem, "Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See?" by Bill Martin, Wilson told the virtual audience that she sees future "agents of change, even U.S. presidents" in the children. She also praised the outstanding work of the late devoted HIPPY Coordinator Lula Mae Friar. "She loved this program so that one time on a trip to Washington, D.C., she talked about this HIPPY on the plane going, in the hotel while



Croom-Raley



Wilson

success in school by serving as their child's first teacher" (HIP-PYUSA.org).

Parents and home educators were thrilled at the success of the CSLC MS-PIRC first virtual graduation.

Parent Cherome Wilson congratulated all the HIPPY graduates, directors, home educators and staff for a job well done. Wilson said she appreciated the inspiring lessons HIPPY provided for her daughter. She pointed out that the age-appropriate comprehensive educational materials have really motivated her to want to read more.

"It was phenomenal!" expressed Home Educator Lucretia Holmes. "It appears that doing everything virtual is the new normal for everyone, and to be able to promote a good quality educational program such as HIPPY is amazing."

Audrey Anderson, who has helped for several years said, "Ms. Lula's babies did an awe-

some job. The staff and parents worked hard to make this happen in a timely manner. Good job."

"For me, working with HIP-PY is amazing, being able to help families, especially the children," said the newest Home Educator Janice Kelly. "[The program] gives them the opportunity to have the tools early for a successful education throughout their lives."

Ceremony Program Guide Joni Smart, an educator, said her daughter was always ready to participate in her HIPPY lessons. Smart stressed the importance of being her child's first teacher. "I thank HIPPY



Lula M. Friar

for providing the fundamental tools for us to do so," said Smart. Again, congratulations to our HIPPY Class 2020 graduates."

CSLC MS-PIRC HIPPY has served the families and children of Holmes County, Miss. Since 2010. The program is currently recruiting new families and early learners for participation in this year's HIPPY sessions.

For more information call 662 834-0905.




Bringing

Wellness

back

Espy

Continued from page 1

thing.” Espy said he is tired of Mississippi always being last – last in healthcare, last in education, last in job opportunities.

Espy shared many stories of growing up in a racially divided Mississippi. As a child, he had an asthma attack that almost took his life at the segregated hospital that did not have the equipment needed to help him but because of an arm of charity from nurses at that hospital, he survived.

He told the story of a Chickasaw County woman named Shy Shoemaker, who died in 2019 after having to travel across county lines because the emergency room near her had closed.

Among those who spoke in pre-recorded videos

were Jackson, MS Mayor Chokwe Lumumba, State Rep. Shanda Yates, Rev. CJ Rhodes and Rev. Lowrey. The rally ended with a video support message from Stacey Abrams, former Georgia gubernatorial candidate.

Mississippi House of Representative Alyce Clark had a front row parking space at the rally. She said,

“I was delighted to have been invited and elated to have a front row park. I thought the rally was very good, turnout was excellent and the people were so enthusiastic.”

She said people are so happy that Mike is willing to run for the U.S. Senate because we all know how good he is for Mississippi.



601 Band

PHOTOS BY KEVIN BRADLEY AND JACKIE HAMPTON



Bobby Rush



Ineva Pittman



Jacquie Amos



Joy Gandy



Judge Latrice Westbrook



Othor Cain

Cleaning

Continued from page 1

day-to-day cleaning and maintenance of nine schools, and a central office building for administration staff and other district property and equipment.

“I have people ask, ‘What do y’all do?’” she said. “But they don’t know the depth of it, what you really, really do, to keep things flowing smoothly. I’m just glad I’ve got some dedicated people.”

Prior to working for CMSD, Summerville worked in real estate and ran her own business. A lifelong Columbus resident, with parents, an adult son and two grandchildren still in the area, she’s also been involved in the community, volunteering with the local NAACP and the Mayor’s Unity Picnic every year. She helped organize the first ever senior citizen Thanksgiving luncheon, during which a group of volunteers delivered Thanksgiving meals to homebound citizens, more than 25 years ago.

She chose to work for the district so she would have more benefits after retirement, she said.

She said she really likes being able to see students every day.

“They see you out somewhere they’ll go, ‘You coming to my school?’” Summerville recalled laughing. ‘A lot of times you develop a rapport with some of the

kids.”

Now though, the students stay in their classrooms throughout the day to minimize traffic throughout the buildings and hopefully keep COVID-19 from spreading.

Instead of chatting with students, Summerville spends her days trying to stay on top of supplies. That was always a big part of her job, but now she has to constantly monitor supplies, making sure the district has enough paper towels, hand sanitizer, cleaning supplies and toilet paper as the pandemic puts all those supplies in higher demand. She’s also had to order new supplies, such as a Clorox machine custodians run through rooms twice a week, sanitizing the buildings and getting rid of airborne germs.

Summerville says she couldn’t do it without her staff, who have been supportive since the pandemic began.

“They have a high morale,” she said. “It’s not like everybody, when I say, ‘We need to do this, we need to do this,’ says, ‘Aw.’ They (say), ‘OK, OK, we got it. Extra cleaning in the restrooms.’ So they were very on board with everything that I asked them to do. That was a good thing. Everybody’s doing their part. I’m so proud of them.”

AARP
Mississippi

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Seniors look to the future during final phase residence hall move-in



Seniors moving in

Special to the Mississippi Link

The weekend of September 5 was the last for Alcorn State University’s phased residence hall move-in, and students were excited to reunite with their friends for the new year. This weekend is special for seniors because it’s their last time moving onto campus as undergraduates.

Despite social distancing guidelines, the seniors still anticipate a year full of good memories. Miss Alcorn State University 2020-2021 Taea Jackson encourages the student body to protect each other so that they can have a great final year on campus.

“The circumstances aren’t ideal, but I still look forward to having a great senior year at Alcorn,” said Jackson. “Getting through these times requires being adaptable, considerate and cooperative. I encourage everyone to protect themselves and be considerate of others as well. Our actions affect not only other students, but also our

families and instructors. How this semester goes depends on us.”

The students missed the family atmosphere that Alcorn offers. Devontae Janatsch, a senior sports management major, was excited to see his friends after months of limited interaction.

“I’m glad to see my peers,” said Janatsch. “With all of the things that are going on in the world, it makes me happy to be here with my friends so we can safely interact with each other for our last year. We’ve been at home for a long time without much engagement, so I’m looking forward to safely being amongst my peers.”

Alcorn has implemented safe activities for students to engage in while on campus.

J. R. Upton, a senior biology/pre-physical therapy major, is excited about what the university has in store for student entertainment. He’s confident that his senior will be eventful and safe.

“I look forward to the fun and safe activities so that we can enjoy ourselves,” said Upton. “I believe that we can have a good time without putting each other at risk. I’m going to enjoy my senior years while staying safe at Alcorn. I also look forward to making more friends and leaving my mark on this fine university.”

The university serves as a second home for its students. Hali Jones, a senior mass communication major, expressed how happy she felt to be amongst family again.

“I’m looking forward to this upcoming school year despite what we’re facing in the world,” said Jones. “The opportunity to be reunited with friends and being on campus, which is a home away from home, is something I can’t wait for. I plan to have a great year and still enjoy myself while social distancing and wearing my mask. It’s my senior year, and I want to make my last year at Alcorn one to remember.”

McHenry encourages minorities, women to pursue STEM careers

By Brian Broom
The Associated Press

Today’s science students are tomorrow’s problem solvers, and a Jackson educator has dedicated his 45-year career to mentoring and recruiting women and minorities into the fields of science, technology, engineering and math.

Along the way, he has secured more than \$60 million in grants to promote STEM careers.

Because of his work, the *Clarion Ledger* is recognizing William McHenry, executive director of Jackson State University’s Mississippi e-Center, as its 10th “Community Hero.”

McHenry also was one of 12 individuals nationally to be recently awarded a 2020 Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring for his pioneering work on broadening participation of individuals from underrepresented groups in sciences.

“Jackson State University appreciates the continuous impact Dr. McHenry has made in the field of STEM education through mentorship,” Thomas K. Hudson, J.D., acting president of JSU, said in a news release about McHenry’s national recognition. “Throughout his career, he has worked tirelessly to expand opportunities for students in Mississippi and beyond.”

McHenry grew up during the early stages of school desegregation in Camden, Arkansas.

Public schools in his district, he said, began integrating under the “Freedom of Choice” plan. Rather than force students to integrate, they were allowed to choose which school they wanted to attend. In 1966, at the urging of his father, McHenry chose to go to what had been an



McHenry

all-white high school.

McHenry was in a socially awkward situation, but he made good grades in chemistry. So, he began tutoring other students, a move that helped him develop friendships.

“When I was in high school I was pretty good in chemistry,” McHenry said. “Being the only black male in the senior class was challenging.

His experience set him on the path to teaching.

“That’s when I knew at some point in my career, at some level, I would be a teacher,” McHenry said.

McHenry went to the University of Southern Arkansas and later attended Mississippi State University where he earned a doctorate in organic chemistry and served as an assistant professor of chemistry.

After 12 years at MSU, McHenry served as program officer for the Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation where he traveled the nation helping universities implement mentoring programs for science, technology, engineering and mathematics, or STEM.

He continued his career at the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning and the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education where he served as senior vice chancellor. In 2005 he returned to Mississippi and continued his career of teaching, mentoring and recruiting

students into STEM careers at JSU and the Mississippi e-Center.

“I love Mississippi and I love working in Mississippi,” McHenry said. “It’s an ideal place to work.

“I like Mississippi because of Mississippians ... Mississippians want their kids to succeed.”

McHenry is currently helping students succeed through the National Science Foundation STEM STARS; The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Scholars Teacher Academy Resident System Institute.

“It is designed to produce 120 more science and mathematics teachers,” McHenry said. “If we produce 120 teachers they will impact 360,000 students during their careers.”

McHenry considers helping students be successful in pursuing STEM careers to be important work.

“The STEM careers are the best way to shape the future,” McHenry said. “It’s the scientists and engineers that solve the problems of the future by working with students and encouraging them to go into careers that will solve COVID-19, go to Mars and develop self-driving cars.

“We don’t know all the challenges that will come up tomorrow, but if we train them today we will have folks that can address those challenges.”

McHenry’s mentoring and guidance has affected students in other fields as well. Keith Parker, Ph.D., a professor of sociology and criminal justice at Florida A&M University, met McHenry during the 1980s at Mississippi State University.

“He was in charge of recruiting eligible grad students into

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MAID SERVICES AVAILABLE

AARP awards two Mississippi organizations with community grants as part of record-breaking nationwide program

Special to the Mississippi Link

On Aug. 20, AARP announced two Mississippi organizations will receive 2020 Community Challenge grants — part of the largest number of grantees to date with more than \$2.4 million awarded among 184 organizations nationwide. Grantees will implement “quick-action” projects to create more livable communities across all 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Here in Mississippi projects funded include:

Mississippi Faith-Based Coalition
Mississippi Faith-Based Coalition in Jackson will use a \$20,000 grant to turn overgrown vacant neighborhood lots into community gardens; provide benches and public art; and spruce up homes by providing residents with paint and pressure washing services to restore the beauty of their older homes. “This AARP Community Challenge Grant will help us create a common space where people of all generations can feel welcome and safe,” said Benenie Hudson, executive director of the Mississippi Faith-Based Coalition. “It will make the community look much better for residents of all ages and help connect older residents and younger people.”

Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church
Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church in Greenville will use a \$6,000 grant to place fencing and hoop houses in a community garden that will supply fresh produce to low and moderate-income families. The supplies will allow produce to be grown year-round. “The AARP Community Challenge Grant will help us develop a community garden to support Greenville residents who are seeking healthy food for their families, especially during the pandemic,” said Rev. Albert Hines, pastor of Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church. “The garden will be an ongoing food source for the community.”

All projects are expected to be completed by December 18, 2020, and are designed to achieve one or more of the following outcomes:

- Create vibrant public places by improving open spaces and parks and activating main streets.
- Deliver a range of transportation and mobility options by increasing connectivity, walkability, bikeability, wayfinding, and access a wider range of transportation choices.
- Encourage the availability of a range of housing by increasing accessible and affordable housing solutions.
- Increase civic engagement and demonstrate the tangible value of “Smart Cities” by bringing together local leaders and residents from all backgrounds to address challenges.
- Support coronavirus response and recovery efforts by ensuring older adults’ access to information, essential services, and civic life.

“We are incredibly proud to partner with Mississippi’s grantees as they work to make immediate improvements in their communities, encourage promising ideas and jumpstart long-term change,” said AARP Mississippi State Director Kimberly L. Campbell, Esq. “Our goal at AARP Mississippi is to support the efforts of our communities to be great places for people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities and the coronavirus pandemic has only underscored the importance of this work.”

The Community Challenge grant program is part of AARP’s nationwide Livable Communities initiative, which helps communities become great places to live for residents of all ages.

View the full list of grantees and their project descriptions at www.aarp.org/communitychallenge and view an interactive map of all of the Community Challenge projects and AARP Mississippi’s livable communities work at www.aarp.org/livable.

No seventh trial for Mississippi man freed from prison in 2019

By Emily Wagster Pettus and Jeff Amy
NNPA Newswire Contributor

A Mississippi man freed last year after 22 years in prison will not be tried a seventh time in a quadruple murder case, a judge ruled Friday after prosecutors told him they no longer had any credible witnesses.

Curtis Flowers was convicted multiple times in a bloody slaying and robbery at a small-town furniture store in 1996. The U.S. Supreme Court threw out the most recent conviction in June 2019, citing racial bias in jury selection.

“Today, I am finally free from the injustice that left me locked in a box for nearly twenty three years,” Flowers said in a statement released by his lawyer. “I’ve been asked if I ever thought this day would come. I have been blessed with a family that never gave up on me and with them by my side, I knew it would.”

Montgomery County Circuit Judge Joseph Loper signed the order Friday after the state attorney general’s office, which had taken over the case, admitted the evidence was too weak to proceed with another trial.

“As the evidence stands today, there is no key prosecution witness ... who is alive and available and has not had multiple, conflicting statements in the record,” Assistant Attorney General Mary Helen Wall wrote in a filing presented to Loper on Friday.

Four people were shot to death July 16, 1996, in the Tardy Furniture store in Winona. They were owner Bertha Tardy, 59, and three employees: 45-year-old Carmen Rigby, 42-year-old Robert Golden and 16-year-old Derrick “Bobo” Stewart. Relatives of some of the victims have maintained their belief that Flowers is the killer.

Flowers was convicted four times in the slayings: twice for individual slayings and twice for all four killings. Two other trials involving all four deaths ended in mistrials.

Each of Flowers’ convictions was



Flowers speaks with reporters Dec. 16, 2019 as he exits the Winston-Choctaw Regional Correctional Facility in Louisville, Miss.

overturned. In June 2019, the U.S. Supreme Court tossed out the conviction and death sentence from Flowers’ sixth trial, which took place in 2010. Justices said prosecutors showed an unconstitutional pattern of excluding African American jurors in the trials of Flowers, who is black.

The Supreme Court ruling came after American Public Media’s “In the Dark” investigated the case. Crucially, the podcast recorded jailhouse informant Odell Hallmon in 2017 and 2018 recanting his testimony that Flowers had confessed to him. Hallmon’s story of the confession had been key evidence in later trials, but he told the podcast on a contraband cellphone from behind bars that his story was “a bunch of fantasies, a bunch of lying.”

“The only witness who offered direct evidence of guilt recanted his prior testimony, admitting he was lying when he said Mr. Flowers made a jailhouse confession to the murders,” Wall wrote Friday.

The podcast also presented an analysis finding a long history of racial bias in jury selection by Montgomery County District Attorney Doug Evans, and found evidence suggesting another man may have committed the crimes. Evans stepped aside from the case after State Attorney General Lynn Fitch took office

in January.

“This prosecution was flawed from the beginning and was tainted throughout by racial discrimination,” said defense lawyer Rob McDuff of the Mississippi Center for Justice. “It should never have occurred and lasted far too long, but we are glad it is finally over.”

After the Supreme Court ruling, Flowers was moved off death row at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman and taken to a regional jail in the central Mississippi town of Louisville. He remained in custody because the original murder indictment was still active.

At the request of Flowers’ attorneys, Loper set bond at \$250,000, with Flowers released in December after 10% of that amount was posted. The judge ruled Friday that all but \$10 of the \$25,000 should be returned to Matthew Popoli, who donated the money to support Flowers. Popoli had remained anonymous until Friday.

Winona sits near the crossroads of Interstate 55, the major north-south artery in Mississippi, and U.S. Highway 82, which runs east to west. It’s about a half-hour’s drive from the flatlands of the Mississippi Delta. Among its 4,300 residents, about 48% are black and 44% are white. Census Bureau figures show that about 30% live in poverty.

During pandemic, black families put trust in black doctors

By Associated Press/Report for America
Associated Press

Dr. Janice Bacon was exactly the person Kay McField hoped to talk to when she found herself spending most of her days in bed, feeling too depressed to get up as the coronavirus pandemic threatened those around her.

As she watched those closest to her test positive for the virus — a goddaughter and her uncle, whom she cares for, among them — McField said she was terrified that she or her daughter, who both suffer from autoimmune diseases, would fall ill. When she wasn’t in bed, the 51-year-old single mother was cleaning her house compulsively.

“It was just this constant panic,” she said, her arms pressed to her chest. “I wanted to talk to someone I knew was going to listen, who I could trust.”

A black primary care physician practicing in Mississippi for nearly four decades, Bacon works at an all-African-American-run trio of community health centers in Hinds County, where the population is overwhelmingly black — and where the most coronavirus cases have been reported in the state.

Most of the families that Ba-



Dr. Bacon

con and the more than 50 other doctors, nurses and social workers serve are African American, low-income and living with health conditions like heart disease, diabetes and asthma that are more common among black Americans. Even before the coronavirus, many were dealing with depression and anxiety, Bacon said.

During the pandemic, those problems have been exacerbated. Many clinic patients are essential workers expected to work in-person even as coronavirus cases have skyrocketed in Mississippi. While testing is free for community health center patients, delays are a major issue, Bacon said, with some families waiting up to two weeks for results.

Bacon said she has seen people scrape together \$187 to pay for a rapid test at other clinics that don’t accept Medicaid, in

hopes of returning to work faster and not losing their jobs.

“There’s this feeling of, ‘I just can’t handle it all,’” Bacon said. “We are seeing serious mental health consequences.”

Meanwhile, families are struggling to find child care and put food on the table. Two of the largest school districts in the area decided to start virtually, creating more barriers for families that don’t have internet access, or if they do, don’t know how to use devices for online learning or can’t afford them.

Research suggests black patients have better outcomes when treated by black doctors and nurses. Yet, only 5% of doctors nationwide are black, and only 2% are black women, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges.

The Central Mississippi Health Services clinic where Bacon works is on the campus of Tougaloo College, a historically black institution that was a gathering place for civil rights activists in the 1960s. As part of the national network of community health centers, it receives federal funding to serve communities designated as medically underserved areas, with fees adjusted based on ability to pay.

Over generations, Bacon has built trust in a community generally skeptical of the health care system and made her black patients feel they have a safe place to go for medical care.

“It’s meaningful to be taken care of by someone who looks like you, who understands you,” McField said. “Other doctors go into the exam room, and they don’t ask your name. And me, when I go there and be treated that way, I’m not going back no more.”

Raised 90 miles from Jackson in Natchez, Mississippi, Bacon suffered from severe asthma. Her pediatrician would treat her at his house when she would have attacks, even in the middle of the night. That inspired her to become a community doctor.

In her office, Bacon has a portrait of Michelle and Barack Obama on the wall, and photos of her patients on a bulletin board. McField’s daughter Ella’s high school graduation photo is among them. Ella, who is starting college this fall, says she has wanted to be a doctor or a nurse since she was little because of Bacon.

Bacon has cared for McField’s family for generations. She was the doctor for McField’s mother

and her 10 siblings, and now she looks after their children. McField said her brother drove three hours from Memphis so his children could be seen by Bacon.

When she has gone elsewhere for medical care, McField said, she has been talked down to, misdiagnosed or dismissed by doctors. Bacon said there is still a lot of implicit bias in the health care system, and she has seen how it hurts her patients.

When McField opened up to Bacon about her depression during the pandemic, the doctor introduced her to a social worker who helped her find coping strategies — writing in a journal, taking a break from watching the news and praying. She said she’s doing a lot better.

Clinic staff members say they see their role as more than treating their patients’ physical health. They work with food banks, churches and other social services to make sure people have access to food and clean drinking water while in isolation, as well as transportation when they can venture out again.

“They can get your high blood pressure medication refilled, and then come down the hallway and talk about why it was

up 20 points this week,” said social worker Chinnika Crisler. “Maybe it’s because the unemployment stimulus just ended, and ‘I really don’t know how to pay my rent next month, so now I’m not sleeping.’”

The pandemic has made running some of the center’s normal programming challenging. Nutrition sessions for preteens and their parents at risk for obesity were halted in person. Respite care for parents of children with significant health conditions — something Bacon knows is desperately needed right now — has been on pause until providers find a safe way to visit patients’ homes.

But there is still much to do. On one recent day, Crisler was helping a single mother of three apply for benefits through the Family and Medical Leave Act because she wasn’t able to balance working and taking care of her three kids at home by herself.

Clinician and social worker Lisa Williams said that although the pandemic has made a lot of the problems that patients deal with worse, they aren’t anything new.

“People have been struggling for a long, long time,” she said.

Firefighters overtaken by flames in California mountains

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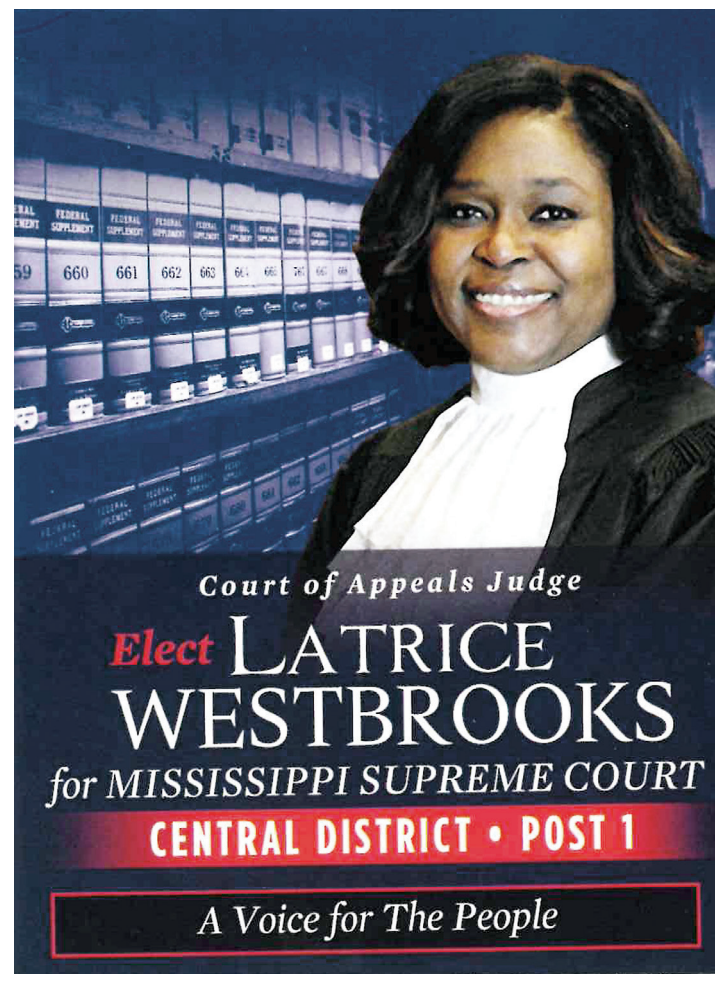
The Jackson Heart Study (JHS) is supported by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) and the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD).

By Marcio Jose Sanchez and Brian Melley
Associated Press

More than a dozen California firefighters trying to protect a fire station from flames were overrun by the blaze Tuesday, and several were hurt. Elsewhere, military helicopters rescued more than 150 people stranded in the burning wilderness. Fourteen firefighters deployed emergency shelters as flames overtook them and destroyed the Nacimiento Station in the Los Padres National Forest on the state's central coast, the U.S. Forest Service said. They suffered from burns and smoke inhalation, and three were flown to a hospital in Fresno, where one was in critical condition. The injuries came as wind-driven flames of more than two dozen major fires chewed through bone-dry California after a scorching Labor Day weekend that saw a dramatic airlift of more than 200. Rescue choppers pulled another 164 people from the Sierra National Forest through the morning and were working to rescue 17 others, said Gov. Gavin Newsom, who described pilots wearing night-vision goggles to find a place to land. "It's where training meets the moment, but it always takes the courage, the conviction and the grit of real people doing real work," said Newsom, who called the fires historic. California has already set a record with nearly 2.3 million acres (930,776 hectares) burned this year, and the worst part of the wild-fire season is just beginning. The previous acreage record was set just two years ago and included the deadliest wildfire in state history, which was started by power lines and swept through the community of Paradise and killed 85 people. That 2018 blaze forced the state's largest utility, Pacific Gas & Electric, to seek bankruptcy protection and guard against new disasters by cutting off power pre-emptively

when fire conditions are exceptionally dangerous. With high and dry winds expected until Wednesday, the utility cut power to 172,000 customers over the weekend and more outages were expected in Northern California. More than 14,000 firefighters are battling fires around the state. Two of the three largest blazes in state history are burning in the San Francisco Bay Area. California was not alone: Hurricane-force winds and high temperatures kicked up wildfires across parts of the Pacific Northwest over the holiday weekend, burning hundreds of thousands of acres and mostly destroying the small town of Malden in eastern Washington. In Southern California, fires burned in Los Angeles, San Bernardino and San Diego counties, and the forecast called for the arrival of the region's notorious Santa Ana winds. The U.S. Forest Service on Monday decided to close all eight national forests in the region and to shutter campgrounds statewide. "Existing fires are displaying extreme fire behavior. New fire starts are likely. Weather conditions are worsening, and we simply do not have enough resources to fully fight and contain every fire," said Randy Moore, a forester for the Forest Service's Pacific Southwest region that covers California. Lynne Tolmachoff, spokeswoman for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, known as Cal Fire, said it's "unnerving" to have reached a record for acreage burned so soon. September and October usually are the worst months for fires because vegetation has dried out and high winds are more common. While the two mammoth San Francisco Bay Area fires were largely contained after burning for three weeks, firefighters struggled to corral several other major blazes ahead of the expected winds. Evacuation orders were expanded to more mountain

communities Monday as the so-called Creek Fire burned through the Sierra National Forest in Central California. It was one of many recent major fires that displayed terrifyingly swift movement. The fire advanced 15 miles (24 kilometers) in a single day during the weekend. Since starting Friday from an unknown cause, it has burned 212 square miles (549 square kilometers). Forty-five homes and 20 other structures were confirmed destroyed so far. Debra Rios wasn't home Monday when the order came to evacuate her hometown of Auberry, just northeast of Fresno. Sheriff's deputies went to her ranch property to pick up her 92-year-old mother, Shirley MacLean. They reunited at an evacuation center. "I hope like heck the fire doesn't reach my little ranch," Rios said. "It's not looking good right now. It's an awfully big fire." Mountain roads saw a steady stream of cars and trucks leaving the community of about 2,300 on Monday afternoon. Firefighters working in steep terrain saved the tiny town of Shaver Lake from flames that roared down hill-sides toward a marina. About 30 houses were destroyed in the remote hamlet of Big Creek, resident Toby Wait said. "About half the private homes in town burned down," he said. "Words cannot even begin to describe the devastation of this community." A school, church, library, historic general store and a major hydroelectric plant were spared in the community of about 200 residents, Wait told the *Fresno Bee*. Sheriff's deputies went door to door to make sure residents complied with evacuation orders. Officials hoped to keep the fire from pushing west toward Yosemite National Park. On Saturday, National Guard rescuers in two military helicopters airlifted 214 people to safety after flames trapped them in a wooded camping area near Mammoth Pool Reservoir. Twelve people were hospitalized, two of them with seriously injuries. One of the Southern California fires closed mountain roads in Angeles National Forest and forced the evacuation of the historic Mount Wilson Observatory. Late Monday night, the Los Angeles County Fire Department told residents of Duarte, Bradbury and Monrovia near the forest to get ready for a possible evacuation. Cal Fire said the so-called El Dorado Fire in San Bernardino County started Saturday morning when a smoke-generating pyrotechnic device was used by a couple to reveal their baby's gender.



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PART 1

Spiritual Inactivity

By Pastor Simeon R. Green III
Special to The Mississippi Link



To be at ease in Zion when there is urgent work to be done for the Lord is wrong, and it is a great danger that faces each of us who claims to be a Christian. The ease referred to here is an unscriptural, fleshly ease. The true Christian's life is not one of ease. Laboring in the Kingdom of God is a necessary part of this life.

The church has a mission to fulfill, and no one can drift into Heaven. We cannot enter God's Heaven by being at ease. We read in Amos 6:1, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion."

The state of ease is defined as "spiritual inactivity or hav-

ing a lack of interest." To the world, a normal New Testament Christian experience often appears to be an abnormal way of life. The Day of Pentecost meant pain, yet most people will do anything to enjoy pleasure. The Day of Pentecost meant burdens, yet most people love ease. Many people have gone past the point of being at ease, and they are pillars in the church.

The devil has seemingly vaccinated many Christians with the needle of apathy. To bring out the force of these words found in our Scripture text, Amos 6:1, I want to compare them to the words found in Isaiah 66:8 which says, "As soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." If we place these two statements side by side, we will notice the force of the contrast between

them. The Prophet Amos wrote, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion;" and the Prophet Isaiah penned, "As soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." Notice that both statements are addressed to Zion.

In the scripture, Zion is symbolic of the Church of the Living God. Therefore, this solemn message is directed to God's people, and it speaks to two possible conditions: being at ease or traveling, a condition of sadness or gladness, failure or fullness, cold or hot, displeasure or pleasure, lethargy or energy, slackness or wholeheartedness. The burden of Amos' message is; however, not of certain people being in Zion, but of being at ease in Zion. The church takes the same position in the family of God

that the natural mother takes in the natural family.

We should realize that it is a great privilege to dwell in Zion. It is a great privilege to be a part of the Church of the Living God. What a wonderful thing it is to be a part of God's family. As the song says, "I'm so glad I'm a part of the family of God."

If it were not for the grace of God, we would still be living in sin or in Babylon, but I thank God that He saved us by His grace and brought us into His family.

Next week, Part II, "Spiritual Inactivity"

Rev. Simeon R. Green III is pastor of Joy nes Road Church of God, 31 Joy nes Road, Hampton VA 23669. He is a member of the National Association of Evangelism Church of God, Anderson, Ind.

PRESERVED

Divine Protection God's Word Lighting the Way

By Shewanda Riley
Columnist



A number of years ago, I moved to a neighborhood closer to my job which I was excited about. One thing that I did not like about my new townhome was how dark it was in my back yard leading to where I parked my car. Even with the back-porch light on, I noticed my backyard was very dark and so one of the first things I did was have a motion detector light installed. Not being a mechanically inclined person, I asked a good friend if he would install it for me as a favor. When he came to set up the light, I noticed it didn't take long for him to put the light fixture up. Within a few minutes, he had the fixture connected and the light was working.

What took him the most time was to set the range for the light. As part of the process, he had me walk from the rear of my back yard toward the back door of my townhome a number of times to make sure that the light came on at the exact moment I entered the back yard. After a few minutes of me walking back and forth and tweaking the range, he told me that it was ready, gathered his tools and left.

It's funny but I remember being so excited the first time I opened the gate to my backyard and the light came on. It's not that I doubted that it would work, but it was beyond my understanding how the light would shine as soon as it detected me. I felt much safer knowing that all I had to do was make a motion


like wave my hand and the light would come on all by itself.

Fast forward a few years and that same light protected me in a different way. And it was ironic that I was talking to the same friend who'd installed the light, when a neighbor came over and told me that she and my next-door neighbor had their cars broken into the night before. Because the area was relatively crime-free and quiet (and a few neighbors even left their cars unlocked), they were shocked at what happened.

Another neighbor shared that one witness noticed that my backyard light was on around 2:30 a.m. but didn't think anything about it. He then guessed that my light coming on probably scared away whoever was breaking into the cars. They even dropped the flashlight they'd been using as they apparently ran away. The best part for me was nothing was touched on my car.

Later, I thought about how the motion detector light had two purposes: it provided both exposure and protection at the same time. It reminded me of how God's word can do the same thing. Psalms 119:105 says that God's word is a "lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path." God's word provides protection when we need it but also gives light on those sometimes dark paths that our lives may take us.

Shewanda Riley is a Fort Worth, Texas based author of "Love Hangover: Moving from Pain to Purpose After a Relationship Ends" and "Writing to the Beat of God's Heart: A Book of Prayers for Writers." Email preservedbypurpose@gmail.com or follow her on Twitter @shewanda.




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The fierce urgency of now is to vote in November

By James B. Ewers Jr.
*President Emeritus
Teen Mentoring Committee of Ohio*



“One nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.” That was our country’s pledge. Now more than ever we have the fierce urgency to live it by voting in the coming weeks.

We have had times in life where choices that we made determined the outcome. All of us can name enough occasions where our direct actions had an impact.

America has come to another watershed moment in its history. The month of November looms large. Yes, we will celebrate Thanksgiving with family and friends. And of course, Black Friday sales will be running non-stop in stores and online.

While important and time-honored, nothing will be more important than us voting in November. This moment must not find us lacking or making excuses.

Derrick Johnson, president of the NAACP said, “We have racism emanating from the White House.” We know this to be true but, will that compel and propel Americans to vote. For example, Johnson wants black voter turnout to increase 5% over 2016.

It is a well-documented fact African Americans had a low voter turnout in the last election. Did we not vote for Hillary Clinton because we thought she did not need our votes? I believe that was the case for some of us.

Everyone must vote. For example, 61% of the naturalized citizens live in just five states. Those states are California, New York, Florida, Texas and New Jersey.

It is the thinking of many pundits that Florida is a battleground state. If you are an immigrant having come to America, you have a birds-eye view of what is happening here. It is my opinion that you may have a loved one or friend who has been caught up in immigration mania.

This is all the doing of Mr. T, president of the United States of America.

Another group that will have a defining role in this year’s election will be independent voters. Jeffrey Jones, Gallup Poll’s senior editor says, “There are the people who don’t change their votes, no matter what, but the country is not as polarized as people think. Independents make up the largest group of Americans, and these people are people who can be more easily swayed. They are open to persuasion.”

This block of voters will carry weight. A closer review of independent voters shows that thirty-five percent of Americans under the age of 30 say they are independent according to the Spring 2020 Harvard Youth Study.

Ellen Moorhouse, deputy director of a political action group said, “Personally, I have never really felt either major party represented my interest.”

The prognosticators and fortune tellers have a prediction on who will win the 2020 presidential election. They have convinced some of us already about who will win.

I know this and that is we must vote in November.

Another four years of what we already have is unacceptable. Our standing in the world community is a mess. The nation’s economy is a hot mess. Race relations in America are at their lowest point.

We are being laughed at by the world, we cannot find a job and we are afraid to leave our homes.

America, turn off the snooze button and sound the alarm. The upheaval that we find ourselves in these days is because of the current administration.

I believe that there are enough Americans who voted in the dark the last time and now will vote for the Biden-Harris ticket.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr said, “I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. This is the way our world is made.”

So, can we depend upon each other to vote on November 3? Yes We Can!

Black Americans and COVID-19 clinical trials

By Benjamin F. Chavis Jr.
President and CEO of the NNPA



The unrelenting spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) throughout the United States of America in 2020 continues to pose an unprecedented public health crisis for all Americans, but in particular for black Americans and other people of color who are disproportionately negatively impacted by COVID-19.

As the trusted voice of black America, the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) in March of 2020 established the NNPA Coronavirus Task Force as a means of increasing public awareness about the overall preexisting health disparities in black America and the disproportionately fatal consequences of COVID-19 for black Americans and other people of color.

In fact, the NNPA and our Coronavirus Task Force were the first to issue a national “State of Emergency” declaration April 3, 2020 to warn black Americans and others about the evolving dangers and public health risks of COVID-19.

Earlier this year, there were just too many myths and other misinformation circulating primarily via social media falsely asserting that “Black people and people of African descent were immune to COVID-19 because of the presence of melanin.” Of course, that assertion is not true. Yet, unfortunately, too many people in our communities began to risk infection to COVID-19 because of falsehoods and misinformation.

The media has a responsibility to research and report the truth.

This year marks the 193rd year of the Black Press of America. Since *Freedom’s Journal* was first published in March of 1827, the Black Press



Black American engagement is crucial and critical in the development of a COVID-19 vaccine – including participation in clinical trials – to make sure that the new vaccine is effective to prevent blacks and others from COVID-19 infections. PHOTO: ISTOCKPHOTO / NNPA

has remained on the front lines of publishing and speaking truth to power by demanding freedom, justice and equality.

All of this brings me to state categorically, “Black Americans have to be involved at all levels of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. We cannot afford to be silent, detached, denied or prevented from being at the decision-making tables in terms of COVID-19-based public health policies, research, clinical trials, remedies and vaccine development. Our lives and future are at stake.”

The good news is that today there are many black American physicians, infectious disease scholars, clinicians, medical researchers, nurses and others on the front lines as first responders and as leaders inside the major pharmaceutical companies that are striving to develop a safe and effective vaccine for COVID-19.

We are profoundly aware that within our communities there has been a historical and contemporary distrust of medical

research. However, the challenge today is for more black Americans to be involved at every point of the development of a COVID-19 vaccine to ensure that the medical rights and interests of black Americans are thoroughly protected, respected, and addressed effectively and truthfully.

In other words, black American engagement is crucial and critical in the development of a COVID-19 vaccine – including participation in clinical trials – to make sure that the new vaccine is effective to prevent blacks and others from COVID-19 infections.

Three years ago, the NNPA, Howard University and Pfizer collaborated to do a national landmark poll and study of awareness of Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) among black Americans. This was important because black Americans are disproportionately impacted by SCD across the nation.

Included in that NNPA-Howard University-Pfizer poll was the issue of black Amer–

cans’ willingness to participate in clinical trials with respect to SCD. We were pleased to learn and to document that 76% of the black American poll respondents had positive or neutral attitudes toward SCD clinical trials, and a majority indicated a willingness to participate in future clinical trials for SCD, given appropriate knowledge and recommendations from health care professionals.

It is urgent that in the strategic rush to develop an effective COVID-19 vaccine for all people, that black Americans are not left out of the process. The health of our families and communities necessitates our involvement to raise all the questions that need to be raised, and at the same time to participate responsibly in the COVID-19 clinical trials.

Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. is the president and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) and can be reached at dr.bchavis@nnpa.org

Deliverance Will Come

H Ralph Samuels Jr.

Storms are raging on the water
And they move and make havoc on land
Nature moves by the hand of God
But senseless killings are by the hand of man

In the wake of a great pandemic
hurricanes are blowing in the Gulf
It’s already hard for some to make it
More destruction will make it tough

But here’s a thought to consider
as we look for heaven’s help
Nature’s storm may bring disasters
But man is destroying himself

Another man was tragically killed
shamelessly shot down in the back
He’s paralyzed now from the waist down
The video showed the chilling facts

Still the same “old” criminal routine

Same story on a different day
When will the perpetrators stop the violence
We know there’s better way

As we’re praying and showing concern
about everything that’s going on
Let’s show some love and understanding
We won’t be blessed by doing wrong

It appears that we’ve become complacent
Even in a state of confusion
Some even think that this pandemic
is not real, but just an illusion

But when someone we know has died
The first thing that will be asked...
Was it because of the virus?
And did they ever wear a mask?

Stay masked and mind your distance
It’s good advice and not for play

This virus is no joking matter
People are dying from it everyday
But there is still hope for tomorrow
and there is rest for the weary soul
God’s grace is still sufficient
and His truth must still be told

It’s not time to give up now
Nor is it time to throw in the towel
Let’s stay focused on what we must do
we may be in this thing awhile

Let us keep all hope alive
Pray in faith and just believe
that God will soon end this pandemic
and give our world a needed reprieve

But there is something we must do
before heaven’s blessing are sent
we must humble ourselves before God
and sincerely and truly REPENT

This is the only way that God
will hear us when we pray
CONFESS our sins both large and small
and then His word we must OBEY

He has promised to forgive us
and to cleanse us from our sins
He’ll create in us a clean heart
and renew a right spirit within

So let’s stop wasting precious time
and give Micah 6:8 a nod
It says do justice and love mercy
and walk humbly before our God

I can see the sun on the horizon
and soon will come the break of dawn
A better day is on the way
God will deliver us from the storm.

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Summer of protest: Chance for change, but obstacles exposed

By Colleen Long, Kat Stafford and R.J. Rico
The Associated Press

Memorial Day brought the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police, prompting hundreds of thousands of Americans to take to the streets in protest. President Donald Trump called Floyd’s death a “disgrace” and momentum built around policing reform.

But by Labor Day, the prospects for federal legislation have evaporated. And Trump is seeking to leverage the violence that has erupted around some of the protests to scare white, suburban voters and encourage them to back his reelection campaign.

The three-month stretch between the symbolic kickoff and close of America’s summer has both galvanized broad public support for the racial justice movement and exposed the obstacles to turning that support into concrete political and policy changes. It has also clarified the choice for voters in the presidential race between Trump, who rarely mentions Floyd or other black Americans killed by police anymore, and Democrat Joe Biden, who argues that the summer of protests can become a catalyst for tackling systemic racism.

Polls show Biden has an advantage among Americans when it comes to which candidate can manage the country better through the protests. An ABC News/Ipsos poll out Friday showed that 55% of Americans believe Trump is aggravating the situation. When it comes to reducing violence, Americans favor Biden to Trump, 59% to 39%.

“No matter what he says or what he claims, you are not safer in Donald Trump’s America,” Biden said Friday.

Yet Trump’s campaign also sees an opportunity to appeal to some voters who may be turned off by scenes of violence cropping up around some of the protests, including in Kenosha, Wisconsin, where police shot Jacob Blake, a black man, seven times last month. The president has openly directed his appeals at the “suburban housewives of America” especially white housewives – casting his reelection as the only thing preventing violence in cities from spilling into their neighborhoods.

Trump traveled to Kenosha this past week, thanked law enforcement for their efforts and met with people whose businesses were destroyed in fires. He did not meet with Blake’s family. Biden did, on Thursday, while on a visit to the city.

“I think that there was a lot of optimism surrounding the protests this summer in the wake of George Floyd because for the first time, we were starting to see all of these white people in the United States pay a great deal of attention to police brutality and racial injustice,” said Ashley Jardina, assistant professor of political science at Duke University, and author of the book “White Identity Politics.”

“But white Americans have always had a low tolerance for protests and unrest around race in the U.S., and that’s particularly true when they think that protests become violent or involve the destruction of property,” Jardina added.

The majority of racial justice protests have been peaceful. But some, including in Kenosha and Minneapolis, saw vandalism and violence. A Trump supporter is charged with homicide in the shooting deaths of two protesters in Kenosha, and an anti-fascist

shot and killed a right-wing protester in Portland, Oregon, and was later killed during his arrest by law enforcement.

Trump has also tried to link the protests to local increases in shootings, murders and other crimes in cities, including Kansas City, Missouri, Detroit, Chicago and New York, even though criminal justice experts say the spike defies easy explanation in a year with historic unemployment and a pandemic that has killed more than 180,000 people. Crime overall remains lower than it has been in years past and criminologists also caution against a focus on crime statistics over a short time frame, such as week-to-week or month-to-month.

Dan Cooper, a white 51-year-old software engineer in Portland, remains supportive of the protests and the Black Lives Matter movement but fears the vandalism is “playing into the right’s hands.”

“A few months ago they started off in a more BLM-focused way. It does seem like they’ve lost their way a little bit,” Cooper said of the protests.

Steve DeFeo, a white 49-year-old manager at an insurance company in Edgewater, Florida, shares that concern. He said that while he supports the protests and the Black Lives Matter movement, he worries that violent protesters allow others to inaccurately portray the movement as dangerous.

“That message gets amplified when you go out and spray-paint and throw rocks and light fires,” he said. “When you see a burnt building, that is helping the wrong side of the narrative. It’s not as effective for the BLM movement and keeping their message for what it should be.”

National Black Lives Matter organizers have never asked for, encouraged or condoned looting or fighting with law enforcement or police supporters on the streets, because they are protesting the violent harm done to their communities.

Thenjiwe McHarris, a strategist with the Movement for Black Lives, a coalition of more than 150 organizations, said Trump’s effort was a “desperate tactic to paint our movement a particular kind of way to stoke fear in communities across the country and to try to steal this election.”

Federal police reform stalled on Capitol Hill after an initial burst of movement. Nationwide, since late May, there have been at least 450 pieces of policing reform proposals introduced in 31 states, according to a count by the National Conference of State Legislatures. Many states had finished their normal legislative session at the time of Floyd’s death and are planning to address police accountability next year.

Breanna Wright, 24, of Louisville, Kentucky, participated in more than 20 demonstrations in her hometown, where Breonna Taylor, a black woman, was killed by police in March. Wright says she remains focused on turning the protests into action.

“Everyone is putting Black Lives Matter on the street, Black Lives Matter in their windows,” she said. “That changes nothing for me because next week they’ll murder me on your Black Lives Matter decorated street.”

“I mean, it’s cute, you’ve tried – thank you. It’s touching that you’ve done that – but the system has to change.”

Stafford reported from Detroit and Rico from Atlanta. Associated Press writer Emily Swanson contributed to this report.

Virginia High School students can now take Black History courses

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Contributor

Virginia students now can take an elective course focusing on African-American history, Gov. Ralph Northam said Aug. 28.

The new courses are available in 16 of the state’s school divisions, including in Arlington and Prince William counties.

“Black history is American history, but for too long, the story we have told was insufficient and inadequate,” Northam said in a news release. “The introduction of this groundbreaking course is a first step toward our shared goal of ensuring all Virginia students have a fuller, more accurate understanding of our history, and can draw important connections from those past events to our present day.”

The full-credit course surveys African-American history from precolonial Africa through the present day. It introduces students to African-American history concepts, including the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the Civil War, Emancipation, Reconstruction and the civil rights era.

Students will also learn about African-American voices, including many not traditionally highlighted, and their contributions to Virginia and America’s story.

According to the news release, the course is expected to challenge students to explore primary and secondary sources documenting the African-American experience.

It includes a capstone project



We can expect young Virginians to understand the enduring impacts of systemic racism only when they fully understand both the oppression experienced by African Americans and their significant contributions to STEM, the arts, education, law and advocacy,” said Virginia Secretary of Education Atif Qarni. PHOTO: ISTOCKPHOTO / NNPA

requiring students to conduct independent research on a question or problem of their choosing and demonstrate a deeper understanding of African-American history.

“We can expect young Virginians to understand the enduring impacts of systemic racism only when they fully understand both the oppression experienced by African Americans and their significant contributions to STEM, the arts, education, law and advocacy,” said Virginia Secretary of Education Atif Qarni.

“As a history teacher, I know that this course is long overdue and is a first step toward telling a more inclusive story about the past and how it has shaped the present.”

In 2019, Northam signed an

executive order to establish the Commission on African-American History Education.

The commission was charged with reviewing Virginia’s history standards, and the instructional practices, content and resources to teach African-American history in the Commonwealth.

The inclusion of African-American history in high school classes in Virginia comes as protests continue in the aftermath of the police shootings of George Floyd in Minnesota, Jacob Blake in Wisconsin and many others.

It also comes at a time when professional athletes and entertainers have stood in force behind the Black Lives Matter Movement in a push for social justice and all to understand the history of African Americans.

“The full history of Virginia is complex, contradictory, and often untold – and we must do a better job of making sure that every Virginia graduate enters adult life with an accurate and thorough understanding of our past, and the pivotal role that African Americans have played in building and perfecting our Commonwealth,” Northam stated.

“The important work of this commission will help ensure that Virginia’s standards of learning are inclusive of African-American history and allow students to engage deeply, drawing connections between historic racial inequities and their continuous influence on our communities today.”

Naked with ‘spit hoods’ on, protesters decry Prude’s death

Associated Press

Naked except for “spit hoods” in a reference to the killing of Daniel Prude, several protesters sat outside Rochester’s police headquarters Monday morning to push for police accountability, local news outlets reported.

Photos and video showed roughly a half-dozen demonstrators, naked or in minimal clothes and some with “Black Lives Matter” written on their backs, sitting silently with their hands behind them, on a rain-slicked street outside the city Public Safety Building. *The Democrat & Chronicle* reported that after a time, the demonstrators were given blankets and left in cars.

Meanwhile, President Donald Trump tweeted that Rochester was among cities that had “bad nights,” while Mayor Lovely Warren commended activist leaders, police and community elders on a night of calm protest Sunday.

Prude, a 41-year-old black man, died after police found him running naked in a street March 23, put a hood over his head to stop him from spitting, then held him down for about two minutes until he stopped breathing. He died a week later after he was taken off life support.

His brother, Joe Prude, had called 911 seeking help for Daniel Prude’s unusual behavior. He had been taken to a hospital for a mental health evaluation earlier that night but was released after



Prude

a few hours, his brother told officers.

His death sparked outrage after his relatives on Wednesday released police body camera video and written reports they obtained through a public records request.

Seven police officers were suspended Thursday, and state Attorney General Letitia James said Saturday she would form a grand jury and conduct an “exhaustive investigation” into Prude’s death. Warren and Police Chief La’Ron Singletary have faced calls for their resignations over the delay in releasing details of Prude’s death.

Police union officials have said the officers were following their training.

Protesters have demanded police accountability and legislation to change how authorities respond to mental health emergencies.

Free The People ROC released a statement Monday saying marches will continue until Warren and Singletary resign, officers involved in Prude’s

death are fired and prosecuted, and the Rochester Police Department is stopped from responding to mental health calls and defunded.

Protesters gathered in a Rochester park Monday evening before moving to the city’s Public Safety Building by nightfall, for a sixth consecutive night of demonstrations.

Police lined up under the Frederick Douglass-Susan B. Anthony Memorial Bridge late in the night and announced on a loudspeaker that the gathering outside of the building had been deemed unlawful, and threatened that refusing to leave could lead to arrests.

The protest ended peacefully around 1 a.m. with the crowd dispersing voluntarily.

On Sunday, police said more than 1,000 protesters marched to the Public Safety Building on a night more peaceful than the rest, with community elders acting as a buffer between officers and protesters. The Police Department said no arrests were made.

“Last night the world saw the true spirit of Rochester,” Warren said in a statement, adding that she had told the police department Sunday “to adopt a smaller and more restrained posture.”

Trump, however, mentioned Rochester in a Monday morning tweet about cities he said “all had bad nights” and were “weakly run by radical left Dem-

ocrat governors and mayors!”

“Get the picture?” the Republican president added.

Demonstrations before Sunday had intensified into clashes between police and protesters, with officers dousing activists with a chemical spray and firing what appeared to be pepper balls to drive them from barricades around the headquarters building. At points, fireworks were shot off and a bus stop was set ablaze.

Warren, a Democrat, urged people to ignore Trump’s comments, accusing him of trying “to bait people to act with hate and incite violence that he believes will benefit him politically.”

This summer, Trump has repeatedly portrayed Democratic mayors as weak leaders who have let their cities be overrun by violence and disorderly protests, casting himself as the president of “law and order” who will protect the country from chaos.

Shootings, killings and other crimes have increased this summer in cities including New York, Chicago and Detroit, though crime overall remains lower than it has been in years past.

Trump has sought to tie street violence to protests. Criminal justice experts say the crime spikes defy easy explanation in a year with historic unemployment and a pandemic that has killed more than 180,000 people.

LEGAL

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR
JAN FIRE ALARM SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS
BY THE JACKSON MUNICIPAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY
PROJECT NO. 12100-004-20
SEPTEMBER 9, 2020**

The Jackson Municipal Airport Authority ("JMAA") is seeking electronic proposals ("Proposal") for services related to the JAN Fire Alarm System Improvements Project for the Jackson-Medgar Wiley Evers International Airport.

JMAA will receive electronic sealed Proposals only. All Proposals will be accepted until Thursday, October 8, 2020 at 4:00 pm (CST) (the "Proposal Deadline"). Electronic submissions are to be submitted to Chad Parker, Director of Procurement, via email at cparker@jmaa.com. JMAA will also receive hand delivered electronic Proposals up to the Proposal Deadline at JMAA's administrative offices, Suite 300, Main Terminal Building, Jackson-Medgar Wiley Evers International Airport, 100 International Drive, Jackson, Mississippi 39208.

The following identification information must be provided with the submission: (i) Attention: Chad G Parker, Director of Procurement, (ii) Bidder's company name, and (iii) the wording: "JAN Fire Alarm System Improvements Project, Project No. 12100-004-20." If the submission is submitted via email, then the identification information must be provided in the email subject line. If the submission is submitted by hand delivery, then the identification information must be marked on the outside or exterior of the bid envelope or container.

JMAA will not consider any Proposals received after the Deadline for any reason whatsoever. Information for Respondents relating to this Request for Proposals ("RFP") is on file and open for public inspection at the offices of JMAA. The Information for Respondents contains a copy of the RFP, General Information for Respondents, Information Required from Respondents and Criteria for Selection. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the Information for Respondents from JMAA by contacting Mr. Chad Parker, JMAA's Director of Procurement, as follows:

Jackson Municipal Airport Authority
100 International Drive, Suite 300 (39208)
Post Office Box 98109
Jackson, Mississippi 39298-8109
Attention: Chad Parker, Director of Procurement
Telephone No.: (601) 664-3516
Facsimile No.: (601) 939-3713
E-Mail: cparker@jmaa.com

or from JMAA's website at <https://jmaa.com/corporate/partner-with-us/procurement/>

Based on the Proposals received and the scoring of each proposal, JMAA will initiate negotiations with the Respondent ranked first. If such negotiations fail to produce an agreement in form and content, satisfactory to JMAA, within a reasonable period of time, then JMAA may reject the first- ranked Respondent and follow the same process with the other Respondents, in the order of their ranking, until a Respondent agrees to and enters into an agreement satisfactory to JMAA.

JMAA will hold a Pre-Submission Conference via video conferencing on Tuesday, September 22, 2020 at 10:00 am (CST). Here is the information needed to access the Pre-Submission Conference:

Link: <https://call.lifefizecloud.com/4056382>
Dial in Number: (312) 584-2401 | Extension: 4056382

Participation in the Pre-Submission Conference is highly recommended for all those interested in submitting a Proposal as a Prime Contractor for the service and persons seeking opportunities to provide the service as a Sub-Contractor. The benefits of attendance include networking opportunities between Prime Contractors and Sub-Contractors, the opportunity to be on a list of contacts that will be published to interested parties as part of the minutes from the Pre-Submission Conference, and the opportunity to receive detailed scope related information from the project owner.

JMAA reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals, for any reason, any time before execution of a contract with a Respondent selected by JMAA to perform the Services.

There is no DBE participation goal for this RFP.

JACKSON MUNICIPAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY

9-10-2020, 9-17-2020

LEGAL

**Jackson Redevelopment Authority
Jackson, Mississippi
Proposals For Contractor Services For J.R.A. Properties – September 2020**

INVITATION FOR BID

Sealed Bids for the services for general repair, bush hogging and property cleaning at various properties located throughout Jackson, Mississippi will be received by the Jackson Redevelopment Authority (JRA) at the Porter Building, 218 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi, 3rd Floor until 2:00 pm on Friday 9 October 2020, and thereby publicly opened and read.

Separate sealed bids will be received. Bids shall be on a unit price basis, as indicated on the Bid Form.

Bidding Documents are available at the JRA offices at 218 S. President Street, 3rd Floor, Jackson, MS 39201, Mondays through Fridays between the hours of 9:00 am and 5:00 pm. Contact Mary Ealey at (601) 960.1815 or mealey@jacksonms.gov.

JRA will hold a non-mandatory Pre-Bid Conference at 2:00 pm on 30 September 2020, in its 1st Floor Conference Room, located at 218 S. President Street, 1st Floor, Jackson, MS 39201. All visitors are urged to wear a face-covering to ensure protection against transmission of COVID-19 and to practice social distancing at all times inside the building. The Owner will transmit to all prospective Bidders of Record such Addenda as the Owner considers necessary in response to questions arising at the conference. Oral statements may not be relied upon and will not be bind

9-10-2020, 9-17-2020

LEGAL

Advertisement for RFP

RFP 2020-19 JPS Digital Curriculum (K-12: English/Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies)

Sealed, written formal rfp proposals for the above rfp will be received by the Board of Trustees of the Jackson Public School District, in the Business Office, 662 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi, until 10:00 A.M. (Local Prevailing Time), September 28, 2020 at which time and place they will be publicly opened and read aloud. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject any and all rfps, to waive informalities, and to withhold the acceptance of any rfp if approved for forty-five calendar days from the date rfps are opened.

Proposal forms and detailed specifications may be obtained free of charge by down loading from JPSD website at www.jackson.k12.ms.us. Click on Department at the top of the screen, click on Business Office to the left of the screen and click on RFPs & Bid Notices.

9-10-2020, 9-17-2020

LEGAL

Advertisement for RFPs

RFP 2020-17 Web-Based Human Resources Management and Professional Development System

Sealed, written formal rfp proposals for the above rfp will be received by the Board of Trustees of the Jackson Public School District, in the Business Office, 662 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi, until 10:00 A.M. (Local Prevailing Time), September 17, 2020 at which time and place they will be publicly opened and read aloud. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject any and all rfps, to waive informalities, and to withhold the acceptance of any rfp if approved for forty-five calendar days from the date rfps are opened.

Proposal forms and detailed specifications may be obtained free of charge by emailing, bjones@jackson.k12.ms.us or calling (601) 973-8582, or documents may be picked up at the above address or downloaded from JPS website at www.jackson.k12.ms.us.

9-3-2020, 9-10-2020

LEGAL

Advertisement for RFPs

RFP 2020-18 English/Language Arts Digital Curriculum for K - 5

Sealed, written formal rfp proposals for the above rfp will be received by the Board of Trustees of the Jackson Public School District, in the Business Office, 662 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi, until 10:00 A.M. (Local Prevailing Time), September 18, 2020 at which time and place they will be publicly opened and read aloud. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject any and all rfps, to waive informalities, and to withhold the acceptance of any rfp if approved for forty-five calendar days from the date rfps are opened.

Proposal forms and detailed specifications may be obtained free of charge by emailing, bjones@jackson.k12.ms.us or calling (601) 973-8582, or documents may be picked up at the above address or downloaded from JPS website at www.jackson.k12.ms.us.

9-3-2020, 9-10-2020

LEGAL

**Notice of Sale
Abandoned Vehicle**

Notice of Sale is hereby given in accordance with the Mississippi Statutes governing the sale of abandoned motor vehicles that the following vehicle will be sold for repair and storage charges and for cost of this sale.

2006 NISS MEL : Vin #1N4BA41E66C861607
Registered to Jessie Miller
Mississippi Title Loans, Inc., Lien Holder
Date of Sale: September 11. 2020
Place of Sale: Archie Towing Services; 6700 Medgar Evers Blvd., Jackson, MS

Sellers reserve the right to bid on the above property and to reject any and all bids.
Time: 10:00 A.M.

8-27-2020, 9-3-2020, 9-10-2020

LEGAL

**Notice of Sale
Abandoned Vehicle**

Notice of Sale is hereby given in accordance with the Mississippi Statutes governing the sale of abandoned motor vehicles that the following vehicle will be sold for repair and storage charges and for cost of this sale.

2008 GMC Yukon : Vin # 1GKFC13098R219926
Registered to Pickett, Wanda
Mississippi Title Loans, Inc., Lien Holder
Date of Sale: September 11. 2020
Place of Sale: Archie Towing Services; 6700 Medgar Evers Blvd., Jackson, MS

Sellers reserve the right to bid on the above property and to reject any and all bids.
Time: 10:00 A.M.

8-27-2020, 9-3-2020, 9-10-2020

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80th Year Birthday Parade for Summer Hill H.S. Majorette

Springridge Road • Raymond, MS • September 7, 2020

PHOTOS BY KEVIN BRADLEY

By Jackie Hampton
Publisher

Rev. Alphanette Bracey Hemphill-Martin was honored Saturday with a birthday parade hosted by her daughter Doristiene. Martin was born Sept. 7, 1940 in Raymond, MS.

There were over 50 well-wishers driving by to wish the former head majorette and basketball player from sixty-one years ago, a happy birthday. Martin, who on several occasions, told her daughter, "no one could dribble that ball like me," greeted her friends at their cars, often stepping high as though she was getting ready for a performance with the marching band.

After the parade she said, "Everyone that came through touched my life in an amazing way. What a celebration, one that I will never forget."

She said, "I was so amazed, and surprised by the outpouring of love. I'm still excited. It was so unbelievable how during this pandemic people were still wanting to celebrate this milestone."

Martin said she really wanted to thank Anderson United Methodist Church family, Central United Methodist Church family (where she was a former pastor), Seven Springs United Methodist Church family, her home church, JSUNA Byram Terry Chapter, JSUNA Mississippi Region, Metro Jackson Chapter of Alcorn State University, Hinds County Sheriff and *The Mississippi Link Newspaper*. She said, "You all made this a day, to remember. I can live another 80 years."

Martin attended Jackson State College after graduating from

high school where she was also a majorette. While at Jackson State, without the knowledge of her mother, Martin, who was active during the civil rights movement, decided she wanted to attend Ole Miss because Jackson State, at that time, was not offering what she really wanted to study. With the help of the librarian at Jackson State, she completed the application even though the late civil rights leader Medgar Evers advised her to wait so she could have the NAACP behind her. Martin didn't wait.

Thurgood Marshall escorted her back and forth from Jackson to Ole Miss.

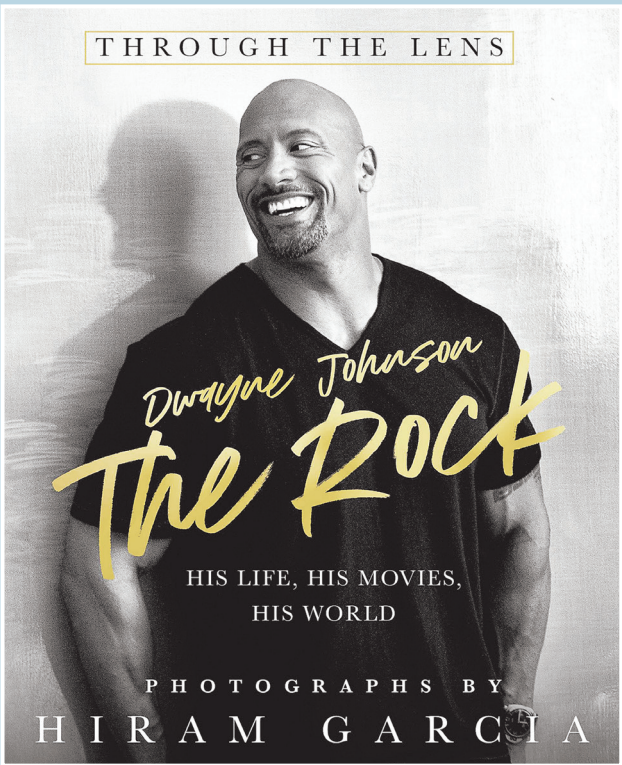
When news broke on air that a Negro girl from Raymond had applied to Ole Miss, Martin's mother, who learned it was her daughter, had a heart attack and Martin therefore decided to complete her degree in physical education at Jackson State.

Martin's daughter, Doristiene, was very pleased with the success of the party.

She said, "I had mentioned to a friend that my mom will be 80 years old in September." Her friend suggested she should have a birthday parade and would be happy to help her.

"I was nervous at first, but after hearing the positive responses from people, I was like this can work. Everyone I called said they'll do anything for Rev. Martin because she is always there for us. My mom needed to be celebrated. I am glad she was able to receive her flowers in this lifetime. I am so glad I was able to do this for her," she said.





By Terri Schlichenmeyer
Columnist

Your favorite Hollywood star seems ten feet tall.

After all, he’s bigger than life. Everybody knows him; he’s handsome and funny and, well, you’re pretty sure that if you ever met him, you’d probably be tongue-tied. After all, the man’s famous.

So would you be surprised, as in “The Rock: Through the Lens: His Life, His Movies, His World,” photographs by Hiram Garcia, to learn that your favorite star is a regular guy after all?

Garcia was just a freshman in high school back in 1991 but he was tall, often towering over the dudes his sister dated. And then she invited him to the University of Miami to meet her “new boyfriend” and she introduced Garcia to someone who was bigger than he was. He met a man he calls “DJ,” and a life-long friendship was formed.

For nearly three decades, Dwayne Johnson, Garcia and Garcia’s sister have “come together in many creative ways,” including through their production company, which is respon-

sible for some of Johnson’s biggest films and small-screen programs. But, as this book shows, Johnson isn’t just the star of Jungle Cruise or The Titan Games; he’s also a pro wrestler, a father and a guy who truly appreciates his fans – and that includes kids, a group that Garcia says Johnson particularly enjoys.

Both staged and candid pictures in this book show all those aspects of Johnson’s life, and more. Here, for example, you’ll see Johnson’s love of family, his wife and daughters,

his ex-girlfriend, as well as in-laws and extended family.

There are many photos of “The Rock” in training, working out, and eating right. Readers will see what kind of work it takes to maintain a double-career and still have time for a personal life and “horsing around” with friends and colleagues.

You’ll see Johnson’s fun side, and his fan side. And you’ll see how Garcia came to understand that taking snapshots of his buddy, “DJ,” could ultimately take a hobby to the next level...


Looking for something you can read quick? Here, it won’t take you long to get through “The Rock: Through the Lens: His Life, His Movies, His World” because there really isn’t much to read at all.

No, most of what photographer Garcia includes as narrative consists of captions to go along with the dozens of pictures of the man he calls “the ultimate entertainer...” Some of these captions are only a few words long, others have more explanation to them, but the truth is that readers likely

won’t dwell on this aspect of the book.

Instead, the real reason to want this well-done coffee-table book is for the photos inside. They invite readers to linger, showing Johnson at his most pensive, enjoying his fans and at work. The pictures appear to have been carefully chosen, and they won’t disappoint anyone ages 16 to adult.

So get “The Rock: Through the Lens: His Life, His Movies, His World,” especially if you love the guy. Because this is a fan’s book, after all...



ZACK WALLACE

Hinds County Circuit Clerk

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Fax: (601) 973-5547

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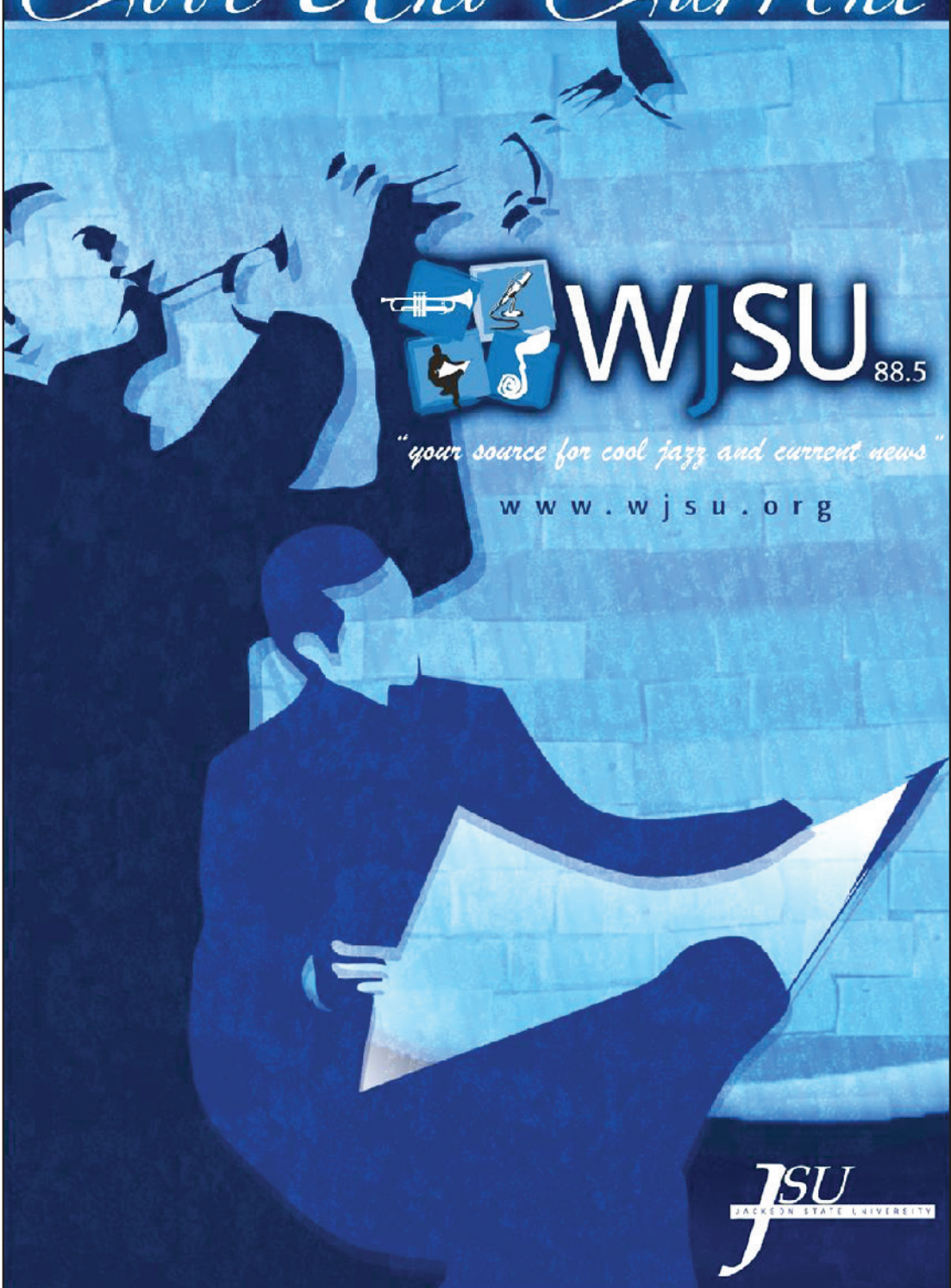
- You must be registered 30 days before the Election.
- Absentee Voting begins 45 days before the Election

MARRIAGE INFORMATION

- Marriage License: \$36.00
 - Both applicants must come to the Circuit Clerk's office together to apply
 - Proof of age must be provided in the form of Driver's License, Birth Certificate or other legal document which contains name and date of birth.

Website: www.hindscountymississippi.com

Cool And Current



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JSU
JACKSON STATE UNIVERSITY

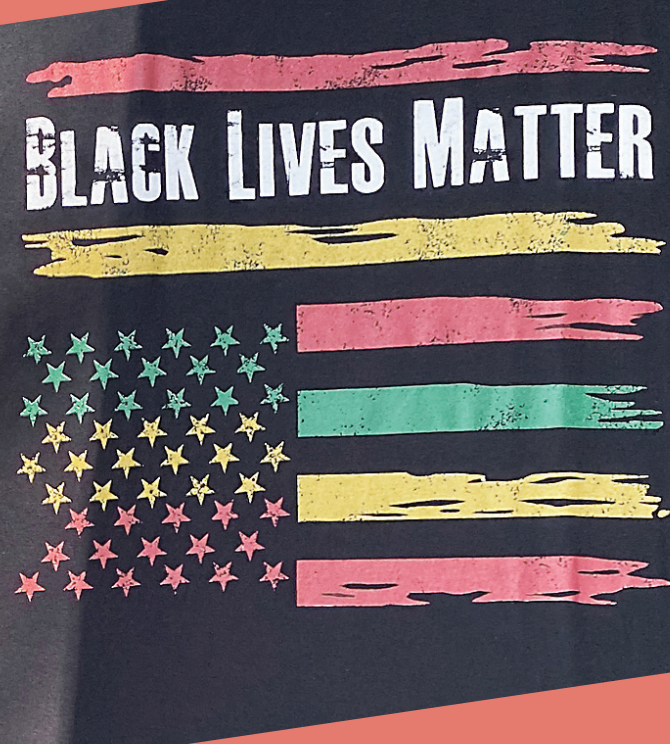
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Hinds County School District Weekly Update

ENGAGING-EMPOWERING-ENSURING-EXCELLENCE

MDE Releases Compulsory School Attendance Law Reminder

HCSD Office of Community Relations – As the new school year begins, the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) Office of Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement would like to remind parents about the law governing school attendance and about the deadline for notifying school districts of home school decisions.

The Compulsory School Attendance Law requires a parent, legal guardian or custodian who has legal control or charge of a child age 6 to 17 to enroll him or her


in an education program (public, private or home school). Based on the Compulsory School Attendance Law, a compulsory-school-age child means a child who has reached the age of 6 years on or before September 1 of the calendar year and who has not reached the age of 17 years on or before September 1 of the calendar year. The law also includes any child who will be age 5 on or before September 1 and has enrolled in a full-day public school kindergarten program.

Parents interested in providing educational services to their child/children at

home are required to complete a certificate of enrollment, which includes a simple description of the educational services. The certificate of enrollment must be submitted to the school attendance officer by September 15 of each year the child home schools. This is in accordance with the Compulsory School Attendance Law. Parents should keep a copy of the enrollment form for their records.


For additional information, please contact the local school district or the school attendance officer in your county. Families may also visit <https://mdek12.org/OCSA>

Congratulations to Bobbi Gordon on her promotion to Associate Superintendent of Curriculum-Instruction-Assessment




Mrs. Gordon formerly known as Ms. Burdett is entering her 31st year as an educator, all of which have been completed here in Mississippi. After earning a B.A. in elementary education from Southeastern Louisiana University, she worked as a classroom teacher for 7 years before attending Mississippi College where she received Master's Degrees in both school counseling and school psychometry. Mrs. Gordon has served as a district test coordinator, psychometrist, school counselor and assistant principal. She also served 7 years as the principal at North Pike Elementary in Summit, MS. Last year she served as the curriculum coordinator at Hinds County School District was very instrumental in retooling the curriculum department to meet the needs of the student, faculty, staff, administrators and parents. Congratulation on your promotion..... well deserving.

Congratulations to Lani Lois on her promotion to K-2nd Instructional Specialist with Curriculum-Instruction-Assessment



Lani is celebrating her 17th year in the field of education where she has served as general and MDE literacy coach, special education teacher, interventionist and district behavior specialist. She currently serves as K-2 instructional specialist in the Hinds County School District where she provides teachers professional development in the areas of literacy and instructional technology tools. She also provides instructional coaching to support teachers in reaching their full potential in the classroom. During recent months, she has developed great interest in supporting virtual learners and parents as they strive to access the full curriculum. She is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi where she received her B.S. in special education. She also studied learning disabilities at the University of Southern Mississippi where she received her Master's in Education in 2006. She has presented at various conferences including Blueprints for Literacy, Making Connections 2018, Proficiency and Beyond, Superheroes in Training and regional Parents as Partners meeting in the state of Mississippi. Her passion is fueled by her love for ensuring that all educators are equipped to enable all learners to reach their fullest potential in the area of reading.

Congratulations to Dr. Johnathan Page on being named New Coordinator of State and Federal Programs for the HCSD




Hinds County Schools is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Johnathan Page as the incoming coordinator of federal programs. Dr. Page recently served as the executive director of School Improvement in Georgia which included overseeing federal programs; therefore, he is no stranger to managing the program with Hinds County Schools. "I am extremely humbled to be named coordinator for federal programs," said Page. "Entrusting me with this appointment will allow me to progress the continuous efforts of establishing a climate and culture where the office of federal programs works hand in and hand to ensure that the academic and professional needs are met for all within the Hinds County School District. I will work closely with the administration, teachers, staff and parents to ensure that the funds are allocated appropriately, and Hinds County Schools continue to be a premiere district."

Dr. Page earned his Bachelor of Arts in history education from Alcorn State University in 2002 and his Master of Education in social science education from Mississippi College in 2003. In 2006 he obtained a Specialist in Education in educational leadership from Mississippi College. In 2013, Dr. Page earned his Doctor of Philosophy in administration and supervision from Jackson State University. Dr. Page also holds an endorsement for English as a Second Language.

Dr. Page has served in the following roles: social studies teacher, assistant principal, principal, consultant, and district level administrator prior to joining the Hinds County School District. Originally from Mississippi, Dr. Page is glad to return to his home state after serving in various administrative capacities in Georgia. He looks to serve many years with the Hinds County School District.

Congratulations to Dr. Will Smith on being selected as the Jackson State University MACTE Outstanding Administrator 2019-2020



The Jackson State University College of Education and Human Development is pleased to announce Dr. Will Smith as their MACTE Outstanding Administrator 2019-2020.

Dr. Will Smith began his career as an educator at age 20. He has served as a teacher, assistant principal and principal. Additionally, he has prepared the next generation of teachers and school leaders as an adjunct professor at Jackson State University and Western Governors University.

As principal of Utica Elementary Middle School (UEMS), Dr. Will Smith provides school-wide instructional leadership that focuses on improving teaching and learning. Dr. Smith has spearheaded many initiatives to promote a positive learning environment. Under his leadership, UEMS improved its academic rating from a "D" to a "B." Utica's rating of a "B" is the first time in the school's history. Utica is leading as an innovative school in the State of Mississippi and our nation.

Recently, Dr. Smith has received the following awards and recognitions for his school improvement efforts: Mississippi Cool School for Parental Engagement – WJTV (2020); School SPOTLIGHT Award - Learning Forward MS (2019); Hinds County Board of Supervisors' Resolution for Outstanding Leadership (2019); Trailblazing Tiger in Education Award – Jackson State Alumni/Byram-Terry Chapter (2019); Mississippi TRIO Achiever (2019); and Mississippi Department of Education Award for Improving Student Outcomes (2019/2018).

Dr. Smith was also named Jackson's Metro Teacher of the Year and Tom Joyner's Hardest Working Teacher. His contributions to improve schools have been recognized by other educational leaders, media outlets, researchers and nonprofit organizations.

Dr. Smith is the first in his family to graduate from high school and college. He earned his Bachelor of Science in social science and a Master of Science in educational administration from JSU. He completed the Master Teacher of Economics Program at Mississippi State University and earned his Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Southern Mississippi at the young age of 26.

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