

The voters have spoken



By Othor Cain
Guest Writer

Primary election night in Mississippi, Tuesday, August 8, was a night filled with swift transitions, delayed progress and some slow returns in Hinds County. Voters decided that some change was needed and some things needed to remain the same. In Hinds County, voters overwhelmingly re-elected Tyree Jones as sheriff. Unofficial results show Jones received 25,872 votes to former interim Sheriff Marshand Crisler’s 4,460. This is the second time Jones has defeated Crisler in the race for sheriff. The job became vacant after former Sheriff Lee Vance died after falling ill to Covid-19. Jones will now face independent

candidate Reginald Thompson in the November General Election. Only one supervisor in Hinds County cruised to victory Tuesday night. District 1 Supervisor Robert Graham easily defeated two challengers and will serve another four years. Should Graham complete this next term, he would have served 20 years as supervisor. Voters in District 2 of Hinds County, however, issued a stern referendum against incumbent Supervisor David Archie. Archie was defeated by newcomer Anthony Smith. Smith received (based on unofficial results) 4,520 votes compared to Archie’s 2,682. At press time, it appeared that Supervisors Credell Calhoun (District 3), Vern Gavin (District 4) and Bobby (Bobcat)

McGowan (District 5) are all headed into a runoff because neither candidate received enough votes to be declared the outright winner. Justice Court Judge District 4, Kenny W. Lewis, Hinds County Tax Collector Eddie Fair and Hinds County Tax Accessor Charles Stokes easily defeated their challengers Tuesday night, proving that voters have confidence in the job they are doing. “I’ve implemented some processes in our office that have made things more efficient and effective,” Fair said. “The lines are shorter, customer service is better.” Statewide, in a hotly contested race, Lt. Governor Delbert Hosemann defeated Donald Trump-backed candidate, State Senator

Chris McDaniel. Over the last few months mudslinging and accusations were common place in this race. Hosemann was able to secure 189,757 votes to McDaniel 157,422. One of the most watched races last night was Mississippi House of Representative District 72. In this four person-race, Attorney Justis Gibbs received the highest number of votes. At press time Gibbs had received 1,351 votes based on unofficial returns. It appears he will face Rukia Lumumba who received the second largest (1,030) amount of votes. In Senate District 29, Incumbent Senator David Blount enjoyed an easy victory to reelection as he defeated Pastor Dwayne Pickett. Blount received 5,264 to Pickett’s 1,380.

Fresh Start Christian Church holds 2nd Annual ‘Grandparents Do Matter’ luncheon

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

Grandparents are valuable because they have many stories of their lived experiences to share with their grandchildren. They are role models, teachers and caregivers for them. For these reasons, grandchildren can always look to their grandparents for love, comfort and guidance. Regular contact provides grandchildren with emotional intimacy and unwavering support. When their grandchildren need a confidant, grandparents can allow them to open up and share their difficulties and problems. The above truths were revealed at a familiar site to many in Jackson: Fresh Start Christian Church at 5210 Manhattan Road. The church’s 2nd Annual Grandparents Do Matter luncheon was held (11 a.m.-2 p.m.) Thursday, August 3, 2023. The theme for the occasion was “Grandparents Are Solid as a Rock.” Minister Nancy Gaynor, CEO/founder, mentioned that the event was more than an event. Rather, she referenced it as “a mission, a ministry that has become a movement.” Jackson’s Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba went back in time and paid deference to his father, the late Honorable Mayor Chokwe Lumumba, who brought “wisdom” to the City of Jackson. “He loved people and [recognized that family is the essential unit of togetherness].” “We need your wisdom to help



Jackson’s Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba honors his father and pays homage to grandparents. PHOTOS BY JANICE NEAL-VINCENT

these young people who are going astray,” he said. The mayor also reflected on memories of his grandparents who spent time with him and impacted his life. He closed his talk with an appeal to the audience “to become a village again.” City officials and candidates for upcoming positions linked their grandparents and great grandparents to the occasion while expressing gratitude to grandparents for being inspirations to their grandchildren. During their testimonies, many revealed that they had been raised by their grandparents. Some recalled special

moments that they had shared with their grandparents. Others mentioned that they, themselves, were grandparents. “We are the answer, we are the solution to all the problems we’re facing,” stated one official as he honored grandparents. Sherri Jones, a regular commentator on 90.1 WMPR, reminded the audience of the essentiality of working with the children in Jackson. Praying for them and assisting them from a positive stance was his main focus. Indicating the need to emphasize common sense, Jones made it clear that observing and listening to the children is valu-



Amanda Furdge, mistress of ceremony, performs original poem, “The Coolest.”

able to a healthy relationship. “I’m a grandfather of seven. “When I roll up to McDonald’s, I can’t roll out without spending \$40,” he maintained. Emotions ran high with talent that was shared. Two representatives from Greater White Anointed Praise Group performed “Jesus is All I Need” and “You Don’t Know How Many Times I Prayed.” Amanda Furge performed her original poem, “The Coolest.” Pastor James L. Henley, shepherd of Fresh Start Christian Church, relied on biblical scrip-

Grandparents
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White ex-officers in Mississippi plead guilty to racist assault on two black men during raid



Rankin County Sheriff Bryan Bailey (r) at press conference

By Michael Goldberg
Associated Press/Report for America

Six former Mississippi police officers, including some calling themselves “The Goon Squad,” pleaded guilty Thursday to a racist assault on two black men that ended with an officer shooting one man in the mouth. The officers, who are all white, entered a house without a warrant on Jan. 24, assaulting the men with a sex toy and using stun guns and other objects to abuse them over a roughly 90-minute period, court documents show. After one victim was shot and wounded in a “mock execution” that went awry, documents say the officers conspired to plant and tamper with evidence instead of providing medical aid. The Justice Department launched its civil rights

probe in February. The Mississippi Attorney General’s office announced Thursday it had filed state charges against the six former officers, including assault, conspiracy and obstruction of justice. Five former Rankin County Sheriff’s Department employees pleaded guilty, including Christian Dedmon, Hunter Elward, Brett McAlpin, Jeffrey Middleton and Daniel Opdyke. Joshua Hartfield, a former Richland police officer who was off duty when he participated in the raid, also pleaded guilty. Dedmon, Elward and Opdyke also pleaded guilty to three federal felony offenses for a separate incident on Dec. 4. Prosecutors said Dedmon beat a white man,

Assault
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Response to yesterday’s guilty pleas from Rankin County deputies

By Constance Slaughter-Harvey
Retired MS Attorney and Judge

As I read the complaint filed January 31, 2023, USA vs. McAlpin, Middleton, Dedmon, Ward, Opdyke and Hartfield, which was filed by U. S. Attorney Darren J. LaMarca, Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clark (former Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law – LCCRUL) executive director and Christopher J. Perras, my heart missed several beats. I wanted to pinch myself because I thought I was dreaming. How is this possible? Am I misreading or is this real? Are these officers actually pleading guilty? What is the deal? Is this the real Rankin County – the county where the Rev. John Perkins, Tougaloo College students William Miller, Jimmy Harvey, and other black men were brutalized in 1970, simply for pursuing the constitutional rights

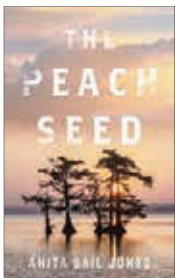


Slaughter-Harvey

COMMENTARY

guaranteed all American citizens? My heart hurts and aches for the families of these young men, Michael Corey Jenkins and Eddie Terrell Parker, who were brutalized by officers “under the color of law.” My anger and pain re-surfaced as I read and re-read these allegations (facts). Unfortunately, I mentally re-

Slaughter-Harvey
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Inaugural Black Men's Conference a success

Special to The Mississippi Link

The Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health Black Men's Health Equity Council recently hosted its inaugural Black Men's Health Conference.

On Saturday, August 5, 2023, black men from across the Metro Jackson area gathered at Tougaloo College and identified strategies to reduce disparities in health, economics and social justice.

The theme for the event was Mississippi Men Under Construction: Building Bridges of Respect, Relationships and Legacy!

Keynote speakers were Dr. Justin Turner, chief medical officer, Mississippi Department of Health; Charles Taylor, executive director, MS NAACP and Dr. Steven Smith, owner, iCandy Custom Clothier.

PHOTOS BY TIMOTHY WARD



Less worrying and more living.



Assault

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used a Taser on him and fired a gun near his head to coerce a confession, while Elward and Opdyke failed to intervene.

“The defendants in this case tortured and inflicted unspeakable harm on their victims,” U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland said, adding they “egregiously violated the civil rights of citizens who they were supposed to protect.”

The civil rights charges come after an investigation by The Associated Press linked the deputies to at least four violent encounters with black men since 2019 that left two dead and another with lasting injuries.

U.S. law enforcement brutality has come under increased scrutiny following the 2020 killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police and the January beating death of Tyre Nichols after a traffic stop in Memphis, Tennessee.

Kristen Clarke, who heads the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division, said the Mississippi officers “caused harm to the entire community who feel that they can’t trust the police officers who are supposed to serve them.”

Court documents say the officers took on the Goon Squad nickname “because of their willingness to use excessive force and not to report it.”

The victims, Michael Corey Jenkins and Eddie Terrell Parker, filed a federal civil rights lawsuit against Rankin County in June seeking \$400 million in damages. The victims are identified in documents only by their initials, but Jenkins and Parker have discussed the episode publicly.

The former officers, shackled at their wrists and feet, walked into the courthouse with family members and federal marshals took all six into custody. The defense attorneys did not comment on their clients’ behavior during the court appearance.

“They became the criminals they swore to protect us from,” U.S. Attorney Darren LaMarca said. “Now, they’ll be treated as the criminals as they are.”

U.S. District Judge Tom Lee said the men will be sentenced in mid-November. Dedmon and Elward each face a maximum sentence of 120 years plus life in prison and \$2.75 million in fines. Hartfield faces a possible sentence of 80 years and \$1.5 million, McAlpin faces 90 years and \$1.75 million, Middleton faces 80 years and \$1.5 million, and Opdyke could be sentenced to 100 years with a \$2 million fine.

The men are scheduled to plead guilty to the state charges on Aug. 14, said Mary-Helen Wall, a deputy state attorney general.

The officers initially went to the home in Braxton because a white neighbor complained black people were staying with a white woman who owned the house. The documents say Parker was a longtime friend of the homeowner and was helping care for her.

Officers used racist slurs against the two men during the raid and “warned them to stay out of Rankin County and go back to Jackson or ‘their side’ of the Pearl River – areas with higher concentrations of black residents,” the documents say.

Elward shoved a gun into Jenkins’ mouth and fired, court documents say. The bullet lacerated Jenkins’ tongue and broke his jaw before exiting his neck.

Before the raid, the officers agreed to enter without a warrant if they could avoid being spotted by the home’s security cameras. They also planned to use excessive force but not to cause visible injuries to the men’s faces so there would be “no bad mugshots,” the documents say.

The deputies threw eggs on the handcuffed victims and forced them to lie on their backs while pouring milk, alcohol and chocolate syrup down their mouths. They forced the men to strip naked and shower to remove the evidence.

The officers also repeatedly electrocuted the victims with stun guns to compare whether the sheriff’s department or police department weapons were more powerful. One deputy, Middleton, offered to plant an unregistered firearm at the scene.

Court documents identified Opdyke and Dedmon as the suspects who assaulted the two men with the sex toy.

Despite recurring instances of police corruption and brutality, most officers are doing their jobs properly, said Keith Taylor, a criminal justice professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice and a former New York City police officer.

“In this situation, you have, of course, racism and just the inhumanity that exhibited itself in officers’ behavior,” Taylor said.

Rankin County Sheriff Bryan Bailey announced on June 27 that five deputies involved in the episode had been fired or resigned. Hartfield was later revealed to be the sixth officer and also was fired.

Bailey on Thursday said he first learned everything that happened to Jenkins and Parker when he read unsealed court documents.

“This is the most horrible incident of police brutality I’ve learned of over my whole career, and I’m ashamed it happened at this department,” Bailey said.

Malik Shabazz, an attorney representing Jenkins and Parker, thanked the Justice Department in a statement Thursday from Black Lawyers for Justice.

“These guilty pleas are historic for justice against rogue police torture in Rankin County and all over America,” Shabazz said. “Today is truly historic for Mississippi and for civil and human rights in America.”

Amanda Furdge served as mistress of ceremony for the occasion.

Grandparents Do Matter is having a recruitment drive for grandparents raising their grandchildren full-time.

To learn more contact Minister Nancy Gaynor at 601 942-6280 or email astagaynor@yahoo.com.

Slaughter-Harvey

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visited the terrible atrocities of the civil rights era.

I am thankful to God that I have lived long enough to see that justice has finally been realized, albeit fleeting, and that these Rankin County law enforcement officers are now held accountable for continuing the age-old tradition of “Ku Klux Klan” tactics and practices against black persons. Praise God!

This is the county where Chancellor L. B. Porter threatened me in the courtroom and called me a “nigger” in May 1970. At that time (five months after graduating from the University of MS School of Law) I represented 22 young African-American students who were jailed with hardened criminals for protesting and staging a walk-out after requesting permission to honor and celebrate the life and legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

I filed a motion in federal court to remove the case against these students because they would not be able to receive a fair trial in Rankin County. As a semblance of professional courtesy, my LCCRUL chief counsel, George Peach Taylor, and I appeared before Chancellor Porter to advise him that he no longer had jurisdiction over these students. As I stood to make that announcement (rising but not yet standing), he said, “Nigger if you get out of that chair, I will have you arrested.” He then turned to the sheriff, Jonathan Edwards, and said, “I’ll order you to arrest her.” Looking at the students, I paused as I was almost out of my seat, and saw Jim Harvey signaling me to sit, and heard George Taylor telling me, “Please sit down because when you are arrested, who will get these children out of jail. (I was the only LCCRUL lawyer licensed to practice in MS at that time.)

With tears in my eyes and cosmic anger in my heart, I sat down. I have never forgotten that day nor that feeling which smolders beneath the surface to this day.

Several other cases involved Rankin County officials including the arrest of Bobby Jolley in December 1971, who was thrown through a plate glass door when he tried to integrate a local eating establishment in Pelahatchie. He was charged with disturbing the peace and when we represented him in Justice Court, the Justice of the Peace (JP) responded to our contention that our client was denied basic constitutional rights, stating: “This is Rankin County, not the United States.” Initially, we (Nausead Stewart and I) laughed until we realized he was serious. Not only was Jolley found guilty, but no action was taken for the cruelty he suffered. We appealed to the Rankin County Circuit Court and lost!

The defendants in this case have perpetuated and demonstrated a culture of evil and injustice that has existed in Mississippi and this country for generations. Despite the efforts made by very brave, determined people to change that culture in Rankin County and the country, it persists.

The present Rankin County Sheriff has said he is committed to reviewing and changing department policy to prevent a repeat of this kind of atrocity. As citizens we can hope, but we also have a duty to hold public officials accountable for their actions, inactions, and the actions of those who report to them.

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing” (John Stuart Mill; Edmund Burke). We must all be concerned and ever vigilant.

Grandparents

Continued from page 1

ture in his comments to grandparents. Recognizing that theirs was a role filled with numerous responsibilities and accountabilities, he asserted that they could encourage their granddaughters and grandsons to have fulfilling lives by (1) sharing God’s word; (2) being positive role models; and (3) engaging in “healthy” activities with them.

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Jean Delores Jacobs left a memorable legacy

Sunrise: March 31, 1955- August 3, 2023



Jacobs

Jean embodied the reality that fearlessness, dedication, compassion and purpose can all thrive in the space of a huge loving heart. Jean’s zest for life was reflected in her love of food, traveling, decorating, fashion and music.

Jean was never too busy or pre-occupied to lend a hand, an ear, or a word of sage advice – never hesitating to say exactly what needed to be said, always from a spirit of love.

Jean passed away peacefully at St Dominic Medical Center in Jackson, MS, on August 3, 2023. Just sixty-eight years prior, on March 31, 1955, she made entry into this world, via Raymond, MS and was welcomed as the second of four children by her mother, Rachel Jacobs.

Jean dedicated her life to Christ and was a member of College Hill MB Church in Jackson, MS, pastored by Reverend Chauncy L. Jordan where she faithfully, served as a member of Mission Circle Number Five, Sam Bailey Scholarship Committee, Women’s Day chairperson, and a member of the Sunday School.

She was a graduate of Jim Hill

High School and went on to earn a Bachelor of Business Administration Degree from Jackson State University. As a loyal alumna, she was zealous in her support for JSU.

Jean’s impeccable work ethics and drive resulted in a noteworthy career path with Entergy that spanned over 30 years, where she retired as business diversity manager for Mississippi and Arkansas.

She was a member of the American Association of Blacks in Energy (AABE), where she served two terms as MS Chapter president. Her influence was impactful and contributed to the MS chapter being awarded Chapter of the Year by the American Association of Blacks in Energy. She chaired the scholarship committee and was passionate about providing educational opportunities to young students.

Additionally, Jean was a volunteer for Habitat for Humanity.

Jean served in various roles to include MS Food Network, board member; Women Enterprise Business Council South, board member; Dress for Success, board member; Rotary Club Kosciusko, chair of the board; Kosciusko Chamber of Commerce, board member; and Mississippi Minority Business Alliance, board member.

Jean was recognized among top Women Business Leaders in the Delta Business Journal (2009), listed in Inaugural Edition Who’s Who in Black Mississippi, and she chaired the 2009 Grenada Women’s Conference.

While serving on the board of directors for the Women’s Business Enterprise Council South

(WBECS), Jean’s contribution was unquestionable as the team won Corporation of the Year by the Southern Region Minority Supplier Development Council and was recognized as one of the top corporations for women owned businesses and received the prestigious Advocate of the Year award from WBECS.

Jean is survived by her mother Rachel Jacobs; her sisters Doris Jacobs Thomas and Fannie Jacobs; and her brother Joseph Jacobs, all of Jackson, MS. Jean’s departure is, also, mourned by nephews, including Xavier Thomas (Bivian) of Madison, AL; Nicholas Thomas and Justin Thomas of Las Vegas, NV; and nieces, including Kimberly Taylor of Tampa, FL and Jazmyne Robinson (Cameron) of Ridgeland, MS.

She is sorely missed by great-nephew Nicholas Thomas Jr; and great-nieces including Raven Taylor, Reagan Taylor, Khloe Robinson, Nikkiela Thomas, Journee Thomas, and her beloved great-niece and roommate, Zy’an Thomas of Houston, TX.

Jean leaves a large multitude of other relatives and friends who will miss her presence and her smile.

Jean’s journey provides a legacy for future generations-a duplicable recipe for a successful life with precise measurements of laughter, love, courage, passion, focus, commitment and strength!

Visitation: Friday, August 11, 2023 at Westhaven Funeral Home, 9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.; Funeral: Saturday August 12, 2023 at College Hill Baptist Church –11:00 a.m.

George Woodard

Sunrise: March 18, 1944 Sunset: August 3, 2023



Woodard

George Andrew Woodard was born on March 18, 1944, in New Orleans, Louisiana, as the youngest of four children to Richard Woodard and Vearlear McKeller-Woodard.

Raised by his late grandparents, Clayton and Pircilla McKeller, George’s early introduction to Christianity led him to join the Peace Creek Baptist Church in Petal, Mississippi. It was there that his passion for singing took root, as he became an active member of the choir.

After the passing of his grandparents, George and his three siblings found a home with his late Aunt Georgia Bea Johnson and her husband Malcom Johnson. Graduating in 1963 as salutatorian from Earl Travillion High School, he participated enthusiastically in the school’s band and glee club. His thirst for learning led him to Jackson College, now known as Jackson State University, where he pursued music on scholarship under the mentorship of Dr. Jimmie James Jr.

During this time, he also

proudly became a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated.

In his professional journey, George departed from Jackson College and entered the world of pharmaceutical sales, achieving a significant milestone as the first black pharmaceutical representative at Roche Laboratories. Following his tenure there, he lent his talents to Dynamic Photos working with the late Rev. James R. Johnson, before transitioning to a role as a photographer with Herff Jones. In this capacity, he artfully captured photos of the students in schools across Mississippi, endearing himself as the “School Picture Man.”

Building on his photography background and entrepreneurial spirit, George established his own photography business, rising to prominence as one of Jackson’s preeminent photographers. Later on, he utilized his expertise to become a dedicated small business consultant and tax expert, offering guidance to numerous enterprises throughout the remainder of his professional career.

Beyond his professional pursuits, George was an active member of College Hill Baptist Church, where he embraced the leadership of Reverend R. E. Willis in 1970. His commitment extended to serving as the president of the senior choir.

On October 1, 1997, he united in marriage with Nellie Haynes, forming a partner-

ship of love and support.

Throughout his life, George’s melodic voice found expression not only in the choir but also alongside Ray McGee on the TV show “The Voice of Goodwill.” Revered for his soul-stirring and spiritual resonance, his singing drew comparisons to the great Sam Cooke.

George’s life was marked by unwavering faith and dedication to his spiritual beliefs.

He transitioned peacefully on August 3, 2023, at Lakeland Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.

He was preceded in death by his parents Richard Woodard and Vearlear McKeller-Woodard, his brother Sgt. Richard Woodard, his stepson Kevin Bernard, his uncle Malcom Johnson, and his aunts, Georgia Bea Johnson and Vermell McKeller-Hudson.

George leaves behind a legacy cherished by his wife, Nellie Haynes-Woodard; his children, Dr. Jelunder Woodard-Clark and Yusuf Woodard (Annie Ellis Woodard m. 1965-1986); sisters, Dorothy Nell Rogers and Mary Myers; and his cherished grandchildren: Jeremy Nichols, Marcus Clark, Juan Clark, Jamilla Clark, Ilyas Woodard, Yunus Woodard and Aasma Woodard. Additionally, his presence lives on in the lives of his sisters-in-law, Shirley Price and Sandra Haynes; brothers-in-law, T. C. Haynes Jr. and Louis Haynes Sr.; as well as a host of nieces, nephews, family and countless friends who hold his memory dear.

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Racist abuse by Mississippi officers reveals a culture of misconduct

By Michael Goldberg
Associated Press/Report for America

Monica Lee sat outside her parents’ home, where a former Mississippi sheriff’s deputy pummeled her son, who died hours later in the hospital. It was a sweltering afternoon in Braxton, the same town where, in a separate episode, six white law enforcement officers tortured two other black men in January, shaking seasoned federal prosecutors, elected officials and ordinary people to their core.

The officers, one of whom also was involved in the violent episode with Lee’s son two years prior, pleaded guilty Thursday to a long list of federal civil rights charges.

Lee believes former Rankin County Deputy Hunter Elward is responsible for the 2021 death of her son, Damien Cameron, who was accused of vandalizing a neighbor’s home while living with his grandparents. A grand jury declined to indict Elward and he was never convicted of a crime. The brazen acts of violence to which he would plead guilty two years later were made possible because of a police culture that has festered for years, Lee said.

Five deputies from the Rankin County Sheriff’s Office, some of whom called themselves “the Goon Squad,” and an officer from the Richland Police Department, admitted to taking part in a racist assault against Michael Corey Jenkins and Eddie Terrel Parker. The men never thought their abusers would pay for their crimes.

“It’s really a shock, but I enjoyed every moment of it,” Parker said, recounting the former officers being led out of a federal courtroom in shackles.

Court documents unsealed by federal prosecutors suggest only some members of the Goon Squad participated in the raid. There are other Rankin County deputies “known to the United States Attorney,” the documents say.

Lee, who spoke to The Associated Press the day after the guilty pleas, rejoiced that Elward is headed to federal prison. Elward’s attorney did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

But even as Elward and the other deputies face accountability for their brutal crimes against Jenkins and Parker, she said, a culture of corruption and violence exists within the sheriff’s office, which she worries



Parker



Jenkins

will persist.

“They say one bad apple spoils the whole bunch,” Lee said. “If they do it once, they’ll do it again.”

The charges follow an investigation by The Associated Press linking some of the deputies to at least four violent encounters with black men since 2019 that left two dead and another with lasting injuries. Law enforcement officers are seldom charged for crimes committed on the job, and it is rarer still for them to plead guilty.

When a white neighbor complained black people were staying with a white woman on Jan. 24, the officers went to the home and found Jenkins and Parker. They burst inside without a warrant and handcuffed the men. They beat and sexually assaulted the pair and shocked them with stun guns. They poured milk, alcohol and chocolate syrup over their faces and mocked them with racial slurs. Elward shoved a gun in Jenkins’ mouth and fired, lacerating his tongue.

To cover up their crimes, they planted drugs on Jenkins.

“That behavior is taught,” said the Rev. Ricky Sutton of Mount Carmel Ministries, a Rankin County church. “When I think about this culture, I just ask myself, how deep does it run?”

The behavior runs deep enough, Sutton said, that some black people are afraid to spend time in Rankin County, a majority-white county just east of the state capital, Jackson, which is home to one of the highest percentages of black residents of any major U.S. city.

As if channeling that fear as a tool to layer their physical abuse with maximum psychological terror, the officers warned Jenkins and Parker to stay out of Rankin County and go back to Jackson or “their side” of the Pearl River, court documents say.

The former officers who pleaded guilty included Elward, Christian Dedmon, Brett McAlpin, Jeffrey

Middleton and Daniel Opdyke of the Rankin County Sheriff’s Office, and Joshua Hartfield of the Richland Police Department.

The officers believed they could operate with impunity because of the negligence of Rankin County Sheriff Bryan Bailey, said Angela English, president of the Rankin County NAACP.

“It starts at the top, and I don’t believe you regain our trust if the same people are running the show,” English said.

Bailey has presided over a “code of blue” in which officers protect one another instead of citizens, English said.

Bailey, who said he was lied to by the officers, told reporters Thursday that he would not resign.

“The only thing I’m guilty of in this incident right here is trusting grown men that swore an oath to do their job correctly. I’m guilty of that. But the people of Rankin County elected me to do a job during good times and during bad times,” Bailey said. “There’ve been times during this I want to hide under a rock because I’m ashamed and embarrassed about what they’ve done.”

Keith Taylor, a professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice and former New York police officer, said the mindsets of officers are often downstream of department culture.

“If you have a policing culture that tolerates all the -isms – sexism and racism and classism – if you have a department that allows for that kind of behavior to thrive, then it’ll be exhibited by the officers on the street,” Taylor said.

Had a better internal system been in place for conducting oversight, Lee said her son, Damien Cameron, would still be alive and the January episode would never have happened.

Jenkins and Parker, who aren’t sure if they will ever return to the state for an extended period, took solace that at least one part of the justice system appears to have worked.

“We finally got justice knowing what we went through,” Jenkins said. “They got what they deserved.”

Michael Goldberg is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercover issues. Follow him at @mikergoldberg.

Court blocks Mississippi ban on voting after crimes but GOP official will appeal ruling

By Emily Wagster Pettus
Associated Press

Mississippi is violating the U.S. Constitution’s ban on cruel and unusual punishment by permanently stripping voting rights from people convicted of some felonies, a federal appeals court panel ruled in a split decision Friday.

Two judges on the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals panel ordered the Mississippi Secretary of State to stop enforcing a provision in the state constitution that disenfranchises people convicted of specific crimes, including murder, forgery and bigamy.

If the ruling stands, tens of thousands of people could regain voting rights, possibly in time for the Nov. 7 general election for governor and other statewide offices.

Mississippi Republican Attorney General Lynn Fitch expects to ask the full appeals court to reconsider the panel’s 2-1 ruling, her spokesperson, Debbie Hancock, said Friday.

The 5th Circuit is one of the most conservative appeals courts in the U.S., and in 2022 it declined to overturn Mississippi’s felony disenfranchisement provisions. The 2022 ruling came in a separate lawsuit that argued the lifetime disenfranchisement was designed to keep black people out of power. In June, the U.S. Supreme Court said it would not consider that case, allowing the ruling to stand.

The two lawsuits use different arguments.

The suit that the Supreme Court declined to hear was based on arguments about equal protection. Plaintiffs said that the Jim Crow-era authors of the Mississippi Constitution stripped voting rights for crimes they thought black people were more likely to commit, including forgery, larceny and bigamy.

The lawsuit that the appeals court panel ruled on Friday is based on arguments that Mississippi is imposing cruel and unusual punishment with a lifetime ban on voting after some felony convictions.

“Mississippi stands as an outlier among its sister states, bucking a clear and consistent trend in our nation

against permanent disenfranchisement,” wrote Judges Carolyn Dineen King and James L. Dennis.

Under the Mississippi Constitution, people convicted of 10 specific felonies – including bribery, theft and arson – lose the right to vote. The state’s previous attorney general, a Democrat, expanded the list to 22 crimes, including timber larceny and carjacking.

To have their voting rights restored, people convicted of any of the crimes must get a pardon from the governor or persuade lawmakers to pass individual bills just for them with two-thirds approval. Lawmakers in recent years have passed few of those bills, and they passed none this year.

In the ruling Friday, the two judges in favor of restoring voting rights – King and Dennis – were nominated by Democratic presidents and the one who disagreed – Judge Edith H. Jones – was nominated by a Republican president.

In her dissent, Jones wrote that when the Supreme Court ruled that the Equal Protection Clause does not bar states from permanently disenfranchising felons, justices said people should seek change through state legislatures.

“Today, the court turns that advice on its head,” Jones wrote. “No need to change the law through a laborious political process. The court will do it for you, so long as you rely on the Due Process Clause, rather than the Equal Protection Clause.”

A coalition of disparate groups supports reinstating voting rights to felons, including the libertarian Cato Institute, the American Probation and Parole Association, the American Civil Liberties Union and the Mississippi branch of the NAACP.

Southern Poverty Law Center attorneys were among those representing plaintiffs in the lawsuit that the appeals court panel ruled on Friday. Ahmed Soussi, a staff attorney for the center, said removing voting rights for life “disproportionately impacted black Mississippians.”

“We applaud the court for reversing this cruel and harmful practice and restoring the right to vote to tens of

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Volume 29 • Number 43

August 10 - 16, 2023

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Publisher.....Jackie Hampton
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Photographers.....Kevin Bradley & Jay Johnson

Member:



The Mississippi Link [USPS 017224] is published weekly by The Mississippi Link, Inc. Offices located at 2659 Livingston Road, Jackson, MS 39213. Mailing address is P.O. Box 11307, Jackson, MS 39283-1307 or e-mail us at: publisher@mississippilink.com; Please visit our website at: www.mississippilink.com. Phone: (601) 896-0084, Fax 896-0091, out of state 1-800-748-9747. Periodical Postage Rate Paid at Jackson, MS.

Deadline: The deadline for submitting items to be considered for publication is Tuesday at 10 a.m.

Subscriptions are \$32 per year; \$64 for two years or \$96 for three years.

Postmaster: Send all address changes to The Mississippi Link, P.O. Box 11307, Jackson, MS 39283-1307.

Advertising: For all advertising information, please call (601) 896-0084.

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Two Justins win back seats after expelled/the people in Tennessee have spoken

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

Back by popular demand are Tennessee representatives Justin Pearson (Memphis) and Justin Jones (Nashville). The eyes of the nation were drawn to them during the latter portion of March of this year and henceforth.

On March 27, three children and three adults were killed in a shooting at the Covenant School in Nashville. On March 30 Pearson and Jones participated in a gun control protest with representative Gloria Johnson (Knoxville) on the House floor at the Tennessee Capitol amid thousands of protesters who flooded the Capitol building to demand that the Republican supermajority enact some sort of restrictions on firearms. The three lawmakers approached the front of the House chamber with a bullhorn, and joined the protesters' chants and cries for action.

On April 6, Republican lawmakers declared that the "Tennessee Three" violated House rules and moved that the three be expelled. While Johnson narrowly escaped expulsion by one vote, Pearson was ousted in a 69-26 vote, and Jones was ousted in a 72-25 vote. Such a move left 140,000 voters in primarily black districts in Nashville and Memphis with no representation in the Tennessee House.

The expulsion drew national attention for the "Tennessee Three." President Biden had them as guests at the White House in late April. He was appalled by the expulsion votes. "You're standing up for our kids, you're standing up for our communities," he said. He then added that every generation has to fight for democracy.



Democratic Representatives Justin Pearson and Justin Jones, joined by Democratic Representative Gloria Johnson, rejoicing about their victory.

At the interim level, Pearson and Jones were reinstated by local officials. They fully reclaimed their positions last Thursday. In the area of fundraising, Pearson and Jones raised a combined total of \$2 million which encompassed approximately 70,400 campaign donations from across America. This amount is virtually unheard of for two freshmen Democrats. Furthermore, it superseded the norm for Tennessee's Republican legislative leaders.

The "Tennessee Three" were interviewed by various media; however, during a CNN interview, Johnson claimed that they recognized what they did was wrong, but "we walked to the well for the people. They're allowing children to die while doing nothing," (she voiced about the Republican lawmakers).

Jones said: "Article 2, section 27 of the State Constitution states that 'lawmakers have the right to protest and have their pro-

test marked in the journal of the House. That's what we're doing."

Pearson stated that as legislators, he and his colleagues were exercising their first amendment rights, and the people were exercising their first amendment rights. He continued, "This is not a democracy. This is a dictatorship...That's what they expect, not here in the United States of America."

Vivian Jones of *USA Today* recently reported that "in Nashville, Jones defeated Republican opponent Laura Nelson with nearly 80% of the vote for the House District 52 [seat]. In Memphis, Pearson defeated Republican Jeff Johnson with more than 90% of the vote for the House District 86 seat."

It was last November that Jones was first elected to represent District 52. During a special election primary in January, Pearson was elected to District 86. He was then appointed by Shelby Coun-

ty Commissioners and sworn in before the general election in March, with no opponents.

Vivian Jones recently noted in *USA Today* that Pearson and Jones are amongst the youngest black lawmakers in Tennessee.

After Pearson founded the grassroots organization Memphis Community Against the Pipeline, he became prominent. His founding was a response to a planned crude oil pipeline that would cut through backyards in South Memphis, particularly in the Boxtown neighborhood.

Jones has long been an activist at the state Capitol. He calls for reforms to Tennessee's voting laws, Medicaid expansion, and removal of a bust of Nathan Bedford Forrest which previously was displayed in a prominent location on the second floor of the building. He also led the "People's Plaza" protests on War Memorial Plaza during the summer of 2020.

White Montgomery boaters messed around and found out



Within moments, several African-American men came to the guard's rescue, pulverizing the aggressors.

By Julianne Malveaux
NNPA News Wire Columnist

In a quintessential mess, a group of white boaters on the riverfront in Montgomery, Alabama, attacked a black security guard simply for doing his job. Within moments, several African-American men came to the guard's rescue, pulverizing the aggressors.

Among those helping the guard was an individual dubbed "Black Aquaman" because he swam across the river to intercede.

The guard had been diligently working and requested the boaters move their vessel to allow a ship to dock. However, the white boaters violently refused, attacking the guard who tossed his hat in the air, apparently as a way of acknowledging that "it's on."

Eyewitness Lauren Spivey told CNN that for nearly 45 minutes the vessel obstructed the docking space at Harriott II Riverboat at Riverfront Park.

"The man, the white individual, hurried down there, and that's when things escalated," Spivey said, adding that the guard simply informed the man that he needed to relocate to create space for the larger riverboat.

"[The white boaters] just didn't think the rules applied to them. It was so avoidable. This never had to have happened," Leslie Mawhorter, an eyewitness to the incident, told Yahoo! News.

"Everything just spiraled from there," Mawhorter said. "I knew something was going to go down, because their attitude was just, 'You can't tell us what to do.' They were going to be confrontational regardless of who you were."

The confrontation escalated, with punches thrown and chairs wielded as weapons. At least one individual was tossed into the water amidst the chaotic clash. Police detained several individuals, and charges are pending.

Montgomery Mayor Steven Reed commended law enforcement for their rapid response to detain those responsible for assaulting the security guard. "Those who choose violence will be held accountable by our criminal justice system," he said. "While there is a lot of activity and interest in this, we know that we'll come through this together as a community collectively as we have other situations."

Montgomery Police Chief Darryl J. Albert announced assault charges were filed against Richard Roberts, 48; Allen Todd, 23; and Zachery Shipman, 25; at a Tuesday news conference. Albert said one of the men is in custody and the two others are expected to turn themselves over to police Tuesday afternoon.

"There was no need for this event to take the path it did," Albert told reporters. He said investigators do not believe the incident was racially motivated.

"The people of Montgomery, we're better than that. We're a fun city and we don't want this type of activity to shed a dark eye on what this city's all about."

More factors in the case will surface.

"It was inexcusable behavior," Christa Owen, who was on the Harriot, told NBC News, adding that she believes alcohol was a factor.

"I can't imagine anyone just disregarding moving their boat 2 feet so that a three-story dinner cruise boat could park back in that spot."



Henrietta Lacks's family wins 2021 Federal lawsuit over Thermo Fisher Scientific, Inc.

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

Loretta Pleasant was born on August 1, 1920, in Roanoke, Virginia. At age 31, she died of cervical cancer on October 4, 1951, in Baltimore Maryland. At some point in her life, her name was changed to Henrietta, although she was nicknamed Hennie. In 1941 Henrietta married Day Lacks, and the spouses later had three children.

In the year 1951, Lacks felt a knot in her womb and believed that she was pregnant. On January 29, she went to the only hospital, Johns Hopkins that treated black patients. Physicians confirmed that Lacks was pregnant with her third and last child, Joseph.

Lacks, however, then suffered a severe hemorrhage. William C. Wade, Lacks' primary care physician, referred her back to Johns Hopkins where she was mistakenly misdiagnosed with a malignant epidermoid carcinoma of the cervix. The cells from the cancerous sample were later discovered to come from the HeLa immortal cell line (named after Henrietta Lacks), commonly used in contemporary biomedical research.

Later that year (on August



Lacks MEDIA PHOTO

8), 31-year-old Lacks went to Johns Hopkins for routine treatment but encountered severe abdominal pain. She requested to be admitted and received blood transfusions. The patient continued her stay at the hospital until she died on October 4, 1951. Unbeknownst to Lacks and her family, samples of her cancerous cells were taken by doctors at Johns Hopkins Hospital and given to researchers. Results of a partial autopsy revealed that Lacks' cancer had metastasized

throughout her entire body.

Without her consent in 1951, Lacks' cancer cells were stolen by Johns Hopkins Hospital. Seventy years later (August 1, 2023) the deceased descendants won their lawsuit against Thermo Fisher Scientific, Inc., a multi-billion-dollar biotech company for using their relative's stolen cells.

EUR Web revealed a press release of Attorney Ben Crump who stated that Thermo Fisher Scientific, Inc. "made a conscious choice to sell and mass-produce the living tissue of Henrietta Lacks, despite the corporation's knowledge that Lacks' tissue had been taken from her without her consent by doctors at Johns Hopkins Hospital." The taking is referenced as part of a conspiracy to harvest tissue for research from black women without their knowledge or consent in racially segregated wards throughout the 1950s.

The family's 2021 suit specifies that buyers throughout the world are purchasing the HeLa cell line, and Thermo Fisher is reaping "staggering profits in the tens of millions of dollars." Though this is the case, Lacks' estate and family received no money from the gains.

Lacks' cells, the first human cells cloned, have spawned continuous research and have nearly touched every form of medicine. Such research includes vaccines, cancer treatments, AIDS treatments, vitro fertilization, etc. Unlike what has never been seen before, these cells could be grown continuously in laboratory conditions.

Of this "legacy of racial injustice," Crump mentioned, "Black people have the right to control their bodies, and yet Thermo Fisher Scientific treats Henrietta Lacks' living cells as chattel to be bought and sold."

Others are working to bring justice to the Lacks family.

"Thermo Fisher Scientific is one of several corporations that made a conscious choice to profit from Henrietta Lacks. Recoupment of their ill-gotten gains, which rightfully belong to Ms. Lacks' estate, is just the first step toward obtaining justice for Ms. Lacks and her descendants, maintained co-counsel Chris Seeger."

Lacks' attorneys disclosed to CNN on August 1, 2023 that a "confidential settlement" was reached by the family and Thermo Fisher Scientific outside the court.

Your home – and where it’s located – may affect your health

By Laura Williamson
American Heart Association News

They say home is where the heart is. But can a person’s home also play a role in how healthy that heart is? A large body of research suggests it can.

Experts say housing – where homes are located and if a person has one at all – can make a major contribution to cardiovascular health, impacting numerous risk factors as well as a person’s access to the resources needed to maintain good heart health.

“Your ZIP code is far more predictive of cardiovascular risk than any type of genetic predisposition,” said Dr. Boback Ziaean, an assistant professor of medicine in the cardiology division of the David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles.

“The environment you live in affects the risk factors you develop, and those risk factors can accumulate and affect your health down the road,” he said.

Those factors may include access to doctors and health care facilities, daily stressors such as exposure to violence, pollution and discrimination, attitudes toward health-promoting behaviors and educational, recreational and economic opportunities, said Dr. Mario Sims, a professor of social medicine, population and public health at the University of California, Riverside School of Medicine.



ALECU MOCANU/ VIA GETTY IMAGES

“It’s a multilayered problem.” And not one easily solved.

Factors outside a person’s control may limit their housing options, creating health disparities associated with income and race, Sims said.

He was the lead author of a 2020 American Heart Association scientific statement on the importance of housing for cardiovascular health and well-being. It found housing stability, quality and safety, affordability and accessibility, and neighborhood environment all

played a role.

Studies have shown structural racism and discriminatory practices such as redlining, which historically made it harder for black people to own homes and kept them segregated in neighborhoods with fewer resources, contribute to poor cardiovascular health and higher mortality rates.

A 2014 study published in *Circulation* linked neighborhood-level racial segregation to a 12% higher risk of cardiovascular disease in black people,

compared to their white peers.

“You could be segregated away from primary care facilities, which then determines your access to medical care and treatment,” Sims said.

Living in a lower-income neighborhood also affects a person’s educational and employment opportunities, which in turn affects their earning power, Ziaean said. Black and Hispanic families are more likely than white people to live in low-income neighborhoods, which face higher cardiovas-

cular risks than higher-income neighborhoods. A recent study in *Scientific Reports* found the risks for diabetes, high blood pressure, coronary artery disease, heart failure, stroke and mortality decreased as socioeconomic status rose.

Poor neighborhoods may also have higher crime and fewer safe spaces to exercise or be physically active, Sims said. They may lack sidewalks, reducing opportunities to walk around the neighborhood, contributing to a more sedentary lifestyle, which in turn contributes to obesity – two known cardiovascular risk factors.

Living in racially segregated neighborhoods also may affect a person’s exposure to attitudes about the health care system, he said. For example, people in historically predominantly black neighborhoods may grow up exposed to distrust of the medical community, stemming from past events such as the U.S. Public Health Service’s Tuskegee syphilis study that misled the black men participating and withheld a proven treatment for the disease.

Attitudes about healthy behaviors also may be affected by the people who share a person’s home and neighborhood, Sims said. “They may influence your behaviors directly and indirectly,” based on their value systems, such as whether they value exercise, healthy eating, seeing a doctor regularly or taking needed medications.

Smoking – a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease – also is more prevalent in lower-income neighborhoods.

“When people are socially marginalized and under a lot of strain, they tend to pick up unhealthy habits,” Ziaean said. And people with substance use disorder and addiction, which raise the risk for cardiovascular disease, may be more likely to have unstable housing or no homes at all, he said.

Though it may be harder to do while living in neighborhoods with fewer resources, there are steps people can take to reduce their risk for cardiovascular disease, Sims said.

Research has shown that eating a healthy diet, staying physically active, maintaining a healthy weight, not smoking, getting adequate sleep – most adults need seven to nine hours each night – and controlling blood pressure, blood glucose and cholesterol levels can help improve and maintain good cardiovascular health.

But, Sims said, erasing cardiovascular health disparities related to where one lives won’t happen without broad policy changes that influence income distribution, housing stability, education, neighborhood safety and a myriad of other factors.

“We need to change more of the systemic factors that can reduce the risk of heart disease,” he said, which takes time. “We didn’t get into it overnight, and we can’t get out of it overnight.”

Obesity, what is it?

By Vince Faust
Tips to Be Fit

Has your doctor said you need to loose some weight? Do you know what that means? Most people are happy when they get on the scale and find that they have lost a few pounds. What have they really lost? If they did no exercise, they’ve lost more bone and muscle than fat.

Your doctor should have told you to reduce your bodyfat. You need your bone and muscle. Excess bodyfat has the biggest affect on your health. 40% of adults in the U.S. are obese and another 32% are overweight.

When does your bodyfat become an issue? You are overweight or obese if you have abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that presents a risk to your health.

If you have a body mass index (BMI) over 25 you are considered overweight. If your BMI is over 30 you are obese.

The issue has grown to epidemic proportions, with over 4 million people dying each year as a result of being overweight or obese.

Rates of overweight and obesity continue to grow in adults and children. From 1975 to 2016, the prevalence of overweight or obese children and adolescents aged 5–19 years increased more than four-fold from 4% to 18%.

Obesity is one side of the double burden of malnutrition. Today more people are obese than underweight in every region except sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.



How do we measure our BMI? There are a number of web sites you can use to determine your BMI number.

I weigh 185 lbs and I am 5’9.” According to all sites I visited to determine my BMI found me obese. What the calculation and charts don’t take into consideration is that I carry a lot of muscle. I use the mirror to tell me if I’m overweight. My waist is 30 inches. If you workout, eat healthy, reduce your stress and get enough sleep you will reach a healthy weight without all the gimmicks.

Americans spent over \$78.9 billion on weight reduction ser-

vices and goods in 2019. This includes weight loss clinics, dietary food sales, meal substitutes, supplements and other goods for weight loss. Medically, obesity cost the U.S. \$149.5 billion annually.

Colorado has the lowest rate of obesity (22.6%) among U.S. states. West Virginia has the highest rate (38.1%). In 2019, 28.5% of adults aged 65+ in the United States were obese. Obesity affects 42.2% of persons over the age of 20.

Obesity rates among African-American adults are the highest, at 49.6%, 44.8% for Latino people, 42.2% for white adults

and 17.4% for Asian adults.

There are a number of changes we can make that will lead to a healthier life. These interventions and prevention strategies requires a comprehensive approach that includes both individual and societal effort.

Weight lost through proper diet, exercise, good sleep hygiene and stress reduction will result in a fat loss of around 98% and lean muscle mass and bone will increase.

The average American consumes 40% fat, 30% carbohydrates and 30% proteins daily. Your diet should consist of 15% fat, 20% protein and 65% com-

plex carbohydrates. Saturated fats should make up less than 10% of your total fat intake.

Your daily food intake should include 3 to 4 servings of fruits, 3 to 4 servings of vegetables, 2 to 3 servings of whole grains and 2 servings of proteins everyday.

We should exercise everyday for at least 30 minutes. Start at a comfortable level for your ability. That could be as low as 3 minutes. After an accident I had to start at 3 minutes even after years of exercising.

Exercise can also increase the amount of protein utilization, which takes place in the body. These changes will have an affect on muscle tone, strength and bone density. Both of these factors help to determine the quality of life a person maintains. Exercise also strengthens the bones, tendons and ligaments. Tendons connect muscle to bone. Ligaments connect bone to bone.

You’ll need both aerobic and strength building exercises. Aerobic exercises (walking, jogging, biking or swimming continuously for 15 minutes or more) are important.

Good sleep hygiene should be a part of your weight loss program. If you don’t get enough sleep your muscles will work less efficiently. Get less sleep than what you need and you’ll find yourself stressed more often and you’ll get sick more often.

The amount of sleep needed each night varies among people. Research has shown that

when healthy adults are allowed to sleep unrestricted, the average time slept is 8 to 8.5 hours.

Stress adds weight. There are books and pamphlets, which explain how to practice techniques of dealing with stress. These include breathing techniques for relaxation, meditation, progressive muscle relaxation and autogenic training, which is a form of self-suggestion.

There are many things that we can’t control. But, we must maintain control over how we handle things. If you need to cry, scream, count to ten, smile or simply sigh, do it.

Take things in stride and work through it. Sometimes you just have to go with the flow. If you feel you need help to cope with stress, don’t hesitate to seek professional help!

We also have to treat obesity as a public health issue. We have to create an environment that promotes healthy choices. We need to change policies and create initiatives that help. Schools, workplaces and communities need to implement programs that encourage physical activity, provide access to nutritious foods and raise awareness about the importance of maintaining a healthy weight.

We can collectively combat obesity and improve overall health outcomes for individuals and our communities if we work together. Even a little weight loss can improve your health on almost every level.

P R E S E R V E D

No decision is a decision

By Shewanda Riley
Columnist



A number of years ago, I was talking to a friend about his difficulty in making a choice. Having been there before myself, I could understand his dilemma and tried to encourage him. He kept saying he was torn between two very different options and was having a hard time making a choice. When I pressed him about his ability to make a decision, he said that his final decision was to let God make the choice for him. As I sat there listening to his rationale, I became more and more puzzled by his statement. On the surface, it appeared spiritually mature and even admirable that he was “letting go and letting God” have his way. I agree that in all situations you must seek the guidance of God and then be obedient

to what he tells you to do. However, I questioned the wisdom of what looked like him being passive and waiting for God to tell him what to do. In fact, it seemed like he was trying to avoid the responsibility of making another mistake in his life. If it turned out bad for him, he could easily blame God. At some point, he had to step out on faith. Eventually, I told him that it was apparent that God had already shown him what to do but that he was not willing to do it. He nodded slightly which let me know that he agreed. I encouraged him that as he thought more and more about his decision, he needed to focus on what was or what was not giving him peace. Furthermore, I reminded him that when confused or indecisive, God will always give us peace about the best choice. We even briefly talked about Philipians 4:7 which states that “the peace of God, which

surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” He thought about my statement for a few moments and then he restated that he was just going to let God tell him what to do. The last point that I shared with him concerning this matter was what someone told me when I was also having a hard time making a decision: no decision is a decision. Because I’d seen him make clear and sound decisions concerning other areas of his life, it was peculiar that he was unwilling to make a decision. It was almost as if he was afraid of making another mistake in this area of his life and had settled for being comfortable with indecision. Because I’d found myself in that position many times in my life, I could somewhat understand the internal struggle that he was going through. What I couldn’t understand was how he was

missing the bigger spiritual lesson. This situation was forcing him to grow up spiritually and challenging his faith. Unfortunately, he was allowing his pride and fear of the humiliation of making another mistake keep him stuck. God does not demand perfection but humble and sincere submission. God wants us to have the confidence that he will always be with us regardless of our decisions: the good the bad and the ugly Shewanda Riley (Aunt Wanda), PhD, is a Fort Worth-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 her at preservedbypurpose@gmail.com or follow her on Twitter @shewanda. You can also listen to her podcast at www.chocolateauntiepodcast.com.

Learn to respect authority

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




Can you imagine a nation without a leader, a workplace without a boss, or an army without a general? It would be chaotic. Structure creates order; without it no progress can be made. That’s why you don’t park your car in the bedroom or sleep in the garage. Learn to respect those in authority over you. Honor those who have lived longer than you because they possess a wealth of knowledge. Listen to them and grow. Until you learn to take orders, you will never be qualified to give them. Jesus understood it. He was the Son of God. He knew more than any other human being, yet He honored the authority of the government in power. When the Pharisees asked Him His opinion on paying taxes He answered, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Mark 12:17 NKJV). Are you speaking words of doubt about your own organization? Are you belittling those in

authority over you? Stop it now. True, they are not perfect. Perhaps that’s why they can tolerate you. If you rebel against every instruction you are given, don’t complain when those around you rebel against your words and opinions. The law of reciprocity states that if you want to be treated with respect, you must respect others. That includes those you don’t agree with, or even like. Jesus did. Pray, “Father, I know that respect for authority is taught in your Word. So, remind me today and tomorrow that my success depends upon my attitude toward those you’ve placed in leadership over me. As I honor them, I believe You will honor me.” Paul also said: “For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16). The Gospel is God’s message of how salvation will be brought to mankind – starting with His Church. Simeon R. Green, III, pastor, First Church of God, 6517 Walmsley Blvd., Richmond, Virginia 23224.

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LEGAL

IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF BEATRICE K. YOUNG, DECEASED

CAUSE NO. P2023-89 G/2

PETITIONER: ROSIE BUCKHAULTER

NOTICE TO UNKNOWN CREDITORS

Letters of Administration having been granted by the Chancery Court of Hinds County, Mississippi to the undersigned Administrator upon the Estate of Beatrice K. Young, Deceased, notice is hereby given to all persons having claims against said estate to present the same to the Clerk of this Court for probation and registration according to the law, within ninety (90) days from the first publication of this notice, or they will be forever barred.

This the 28th day of July, 2023.

Rosie Buckhaulte
Rosie Buckhaulte, Administrator

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
COUNTY OF Hinds

Personally appeared before me, the undersigned authority in and for the jurisdiction aforesaid, the within named, Rosie Buckhaulte, Administrator for the Estate of Beatrice K. Young, deceased, who having been by me first duly sworn, states that the foregoing is true and correct as therein stated.

Ann James
NOTARY

MY COMMISSION EXPIRES
March 24, 2027

Damon Stevenson
Stevenson Legal Group, PLLC
1010 N. West Street
Jackson, MS 39202
Telephone: (769) 251-0207, Facsimile: (601) 608-7872

8/3/2023, 8/10/2023, 8/17/2023

LEGAL

RULE 81 SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION

IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF AREATHA S. RULE, DECEASED

CAUSE #: P2022-622 G/2

PETITIONER: JAMAL RULE

SUMMONS

THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

TO: THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF AREATHA S. RULE, DECEASED

You have been made a Defendant in the suit filed in this Court by Jamal Rule Petitioner, seeking the adjudication of heirs of Areatha S. Rule, Deceased.

You are summoned to appear and defend against the complaint or petition filed against you in this action at 1:30 o'clock p.m., on the 2nd day of September 2023, in the Chancery Courtroom of Hinds County before Honorable Tiffany Grove, Chancellor. In case of your failure to appear and defend a judgment will be entered against you for the money or other things demanded in the complaint or petition.

You are not required to file an answer or other pleading but you may do so if you desire.

Issued under my hand and the seal of said Court, this the 28th day of July, 2023.

Hinds County Miss. Chancery Court

Chancery Clerk of Hinds County
Mississippi

K Howard

8/3/2023, 8/10/2023, 8/17/2023

LEGAL

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

NOTICE is hereby given that the Jackson Municipal Airport Authority (JMAA) will receive bids for:

Sale of Various Used Surplus Equipment

until 10:00 A.M., local time on September 13, 2023.

Bids can be submitted electronically at www.jmaabids.com, or via sealed bid at the following location:

JMAA's administrative office, Suite 300
Main Terminal Building
Jackson-Medgar Wiley Evers International Airport
100 International Drive
Jackson, Mississippi 39208.

Bid Documents and Specifications can be viewed and obtained online at www.jmaabids.com.

Questions regarding the website or electronic bidding should be directed to PH Bidding Group at 662-407-0193 or cory@phbidding.com.

The Jackson Municipal Airport Authority is an equal opportunity employer and hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively insure that, in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, minority business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, sex, age, disability or national origin in consideration for an award.

JMAA reserves the right to reject any and or all bids, waive technicalities, informalities or irregularities in the bids received, solicit new bids or to choose that bid which is deemed to be in the best interest of the Jackson Municipal Airport Authority.

8/10/2023, 8/17/2023

LEGAL

RULE 81 SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION

IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF ANNIE LEE BURT, DECEASED

CAUSE #: P2023-27 T/1

PETITIONER: BENETA BURT

SUMMONS

THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

TO: THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF ANNIE LEE BURT, DECEASED

You have been made a Defendant in the suit filed in this Court by Beneta Burt Petitioner, seeking the adjudication of heirs of Annie Lee Burt, Deceased.

You are summoned to appear and defend against the complaint or petition filed against you in this action at 1:30 o'clock p.m., on the 2nd day of September 2023, in the Chancery Courtroom of Hinds County before Honorable Dewayne Thomas, Chancellor. In case of your failure to appear and defend a judgment will be entered against you for the money or other things demanded in the complaint or petition.

You are not required to file an answer or other pleading but you may do so if you desire.

Issued under my hand and the seal of said Court, this the 19th day of July, 2023.

Hinds County Miss. Chancery Court

Chancery Clerk of Hinds County
Mississippi

Eddie Jean Carr, Chancery Clerk

7/27/2023, 8/3/2023, 8/10/2023

LEGAL

NOTICE OF INVITATION TO BID ON CITY-OWNED PROPERTY
CITY OF JACKSON

Notice is hereby given that sealed bids will be received by the City Clerk of the City of Jackson, Mississippi before 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, August 22nd, 2023, for the purchase of certain City-owned property: Parcel 824-548 (Metro Center Dillard's Building and Parking Lot), located at 3645 Highway 80 West in Jackson, Mississippi. Bidding for the property will start at Three Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars and 00/100 cents (\$350,000.00). The City will retain all mineral rights it owns, together with the right of ingress and egress to remove same from said property. For additional information or for a "bid form", contact Vic Sexton at (601) 960 1055 or e-mail vsexton@city.jackson.ms.us.

BID INSTRUCTIONS: All bids must be placed in a sealed envelope and delivered to the City Clerk of the City of Jackson, (located in City Hall at 219 S. President St. Jackson, Mississippi 39201), or submitted through Central Bidding <https://www.centralauctionhouse.com/main.php>. If submitted to the City Clerk, the outside of the envelope must be plainly marked to identify the parcel number being bid on, along with the bidder's name. Enclose one (1) original and one (1) copy of the bid. Bids will be opened on Tuesday, August 22nd, 2023, at 3:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 219 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi.

If there are multiple equivalent high bidders a re-bid process utilizing the Best and Final Offer (BAFO) between those bidders will be held to determine a winner. If multiple equivalent high bidders persist after BAFO, the re-bid process will be repeated, if necessary, until a sole high bidder is certified.

The City reserves the right to reject any and all bids.
CITY OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

8/3/2023, 8/10/2023, 8/17/2023

LEGAL

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Sealed bids will be received by the City Clerk of Jackson, Mississippi, at 219 S. President Street, Jackson, Mississippi 39201 or at Post Office Box 17, Jackson, Mississippi 39205 until 3:30 PM, local time (CT), Tuesday, September 12, 2023, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud for:

The demolition and cleaning of parcel 207-41 located at 203 Ferguson Dr.

The City of Jackson, Mississippi ("City of Jackson") is committed to cultivating and ensuring the quality of life of its citizens, through various programs, employment, initiatives, and assistance.

The City encourages all persons, corporations, and/or entities doing business within the City, as well as those who seek to contract with the City on various projects and/or conduct business in the City, to assist the City in achieving its goal by strongly considering City residents for employment opportunities.

The City of Jackson is committed to the principle of non-discrimination in public contracting. It is the policy of the City of Jackson to promote full and equal business opportunity for all persons doing business with the City. As a pre-condition to selection, each contractor, bidder or offeror shall submit a completed and signed Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Plan, with the bid submission, in accordance with the provisions of the City of Jackson's Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Ordinance. Failure to comply with the City's Ordinance shall disqualify a contractor, bidder or offeror from being awarded an eligible contract. For more information on the City of Jackson's Equal Business Opportunity Program, please contact the Office of Economic Development at 601-960-1055. Copies of the ordinance, EBO Plan Applications and a copy of the program are available at 200 South President Street, Room 223, Hood Building, Jackson, Mississippi.

The City of Jackson hereby notifies all bidders that in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000d-4 that all bidders will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability in consideration for an award.

Contract Documents may be obtained from and/or examined at the offices of the Community Improvement Division located at 200 S. President Street, Suite 331, Jackson, Mississippi 39201. Telephone 601.960.1054. Prospective bidders may obtain copies of all materials required for bidding purposes. There is NO charge for electronic or e-mail copies. Official bid documents can be downloaded from Central Bidding at www.centralbidding.com. Electronic bids can be submitted at www.centralbidding.com. For any questions relating to the electronic bidding process, please call Central Bidding at 225-810-4814.

Bid preparation will be in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders. The City reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any and all irregularities in respect to any bid submitted or to accept any bid which is deemed most favorable to the City of Jackson.

by: Samantha Graves, Manager
Community Improvement Division of Planning and Development

8/10/2023, 8/17/2023

LEGAL

Advertisement

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

FOR Emergency Ambulance Services with Advanced Life Support and Basic Life Support Capabilities

The City of Jackson (City) is requesting proposals from qualified Service Providers to provide emergency ambulance services with advanced life support (ALS) and basic life support (BLS) transport within the City. Said services are to be operated twenty-four (24) hours per day, each day of the calendar year. The successful Proposer, after contract negotiations, will be granted an exclusive contract to provide emergency ambulance services with ALS and BLS transport within the City, as well as non-emergency patient transport/transfer services, for an initial term of four (4) years, with the option to extend the contract for an additional four (4) year term. The award of a contract for this proposal is subject to the availability of funding.

It is the City's intent to evaluate properly submitted proposals based on technical merits, management plans, and service providers' in-person presentations, which will include a discussion of minority participation in said ambulance services. The City intends to choose the Service Provider whose proposal provides the best overall value to the City. Responding Service Providers shall be able to meet the City's demand for quick and safe responses to all emergency calls and must be able to constantly meet strict response time requirements.

Responding Service Providers understand that the City will need to spend, at a minimum, in order to qualify for grants from the State's Emergency Medical Services' Operating Fund (EMSO), fifteen cents (\$0.15) per capita based on the population computed from the most current federal census, which equates to: Twenty-Three Thousand Fifty-Five Dollars and Fifteen Cents (\$23,055.15) (\$0.15 x 153,701 = \$23,055.15).

The City reserves the right to waive any irregularities, reject any and/or all proposals, in whole or in part, when, in the City's opinion, such rejection is in the best interests of the City.

For more detailed information, please review the City's RFP that is the subject of this advertisement.

Selection of the Service Provider for Contract negotiation will be based on an evaluation of the following criteria:

1. Technical Proposal: (50%)
2. Management Plan (which includes prior experience, performance history, references, and the like): (40%)
3. Service Provider's Presentation (which will include discussions of minority participation in Service Provider's ambulance services): (10%)

The City is committed to cultivating and ensuring the quality of life of its citizens, through various programs, employment, initiatives, and assistance. The City encourages all persons, corporations, and/or entities doing business within the City, as well as those who seek to contract with the City on various projects and/or conduct business in the City to assist the City in achieving its goal by strongly considering City residents for employment opportunities.

The City of Jackson hereby notifies all bidders that in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000d to 2000d-4 all bidders will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability in consideration for an award.

Responding Service Providers shall provide:

1) one (1) electronic and (1) bound hard copy of the complete original (non-redacted) version of the proposal including all attachments in a searchable Microsoft Office® format, preferably in Word® or Portable Document Format (PDF®) labeled accordingly.

Section components must be clearly distinguished as follows:

a. COVER LETTER Transmittal Form Sheet (Attachment A)
b. COMPONENT 1 – Technical Proposal
c. COMPONENT 2 – Management Plan
d. SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENTS

2) If the proposal contains confidential or trade information, one (1) additional confidential or trade electronic copy of the complete proposal including all attachments shall be submitted in a searchable Microsoft Office® format, preferably in Word® or Portable Document Format (PDF), shall be labeled CONFIDENTIAL, and shall redact the confidential or trade information only.

All Service Provider responses shall be submitted in a sealed envelope or box. The exterior of the sealed envelope or box shall be clearly labelled "Ambulance Services' Proposal" and include the Proposer's business name. The original and copies of the proposals shall be indexed with tabs as requested in Section 2.13 - Proposal Contents.

Electronic proposals MUST be submitted at www.centralbidding.com. For any questions relating to the electronic bidding process, please call Central Bidding at 225-810-4814.

All proposals (both electronic and physical hard copies) MUST be received no later than 3:30 p.m. Central Daylight Time, on September 12, 2023. All physical hard copies shall be submitted to the attention of:

If by hand delivery:
City of Jackson
Office of the Municipal Clerk
219 South President Street
Jackson, Mississippi 39201

If by mail:
City of Jackson
Office of the Municipal Clerk
Post Office Box 17
Jackson, MS 39205-0017

Specifications for this proposal are available for inspection at the Office of the Municipal Clerk, 219 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi 39201. Specifications are also available for download through Central Bidding online at www.centralbidding.com and at the City of Jackson website, www.jacksonms.gov/bid-opportunities/. Hard copies are available upon request from the City of Jackson Fire Department Headquarters, 555 South West Street, Jackson, Mississippi 39201.

The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any informalities or irregularities therein.

Willie G. Owens
Willie G. Owens, City Fire Chief
Jackson Fire Department

8/3/2023, 8/10/2023

LEGAL

NOTICE OF INVITATION TO BID ON CITY-OWNED PROPERTY
CITY OF JACKSON

Notice is hereby given that sealed bids will be received by the City Clerk of the City of Jackson, Mississippi before 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, August 29th, 2023, for the purchase of certain City-owned property: parcel 71- 27, located on Fortification Street in Jackson, Mississippi. Bidding for the property will start at \$500.00. The City will retain all mineral rights it owns, together with the right of ingress and egress to remove same from said property. For additional information or for a "bid form", contact Vic Sexton at (601) 960 1055 or e-mail vsexton@city.jackson.ms.us.

BID INSTRUCTIONS: All bids must be placed in a sealed envelope and delivered to the City Clerk of the City of Jackson (located in City Hall at 219 S. President St. Jackson, Mississippi 39201). The outside of the envelope must be plainly marked to identify the parcel number being bid on along with the bidder's name. Enclose one (1) original and one (1) copy of the bid. Bids will be opened on Tuesday, August 29th, 2023 at 3:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 219 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi.

Preferential preference will be granted to all equivalent high bidders that submitted an application to the Surplus Property Committee. If multiple equivalent high bidders submitted applications, a re-bid process utilizing the Best and Final Offer (BAFO) between those bidders will be granted to determine a winner. If multiple equivalent high bidders persist after BAFO, the re-bid process will be repeated, if necessary, until a sole high bidder is certified.

If multiple equivalent high bidders did not submit applications to the Surplus Property Committee, a re-bid process utilizing the Best and Final Offer (BAFO) between those bidders will be granted to determine a winner. If multiple equivalent high bidders persist after BAFO, the re-bid process will be repeated, if necessary, until a sole high bidder is certified.

If multiple equivalent high bidders consist of, one equivalent high bidder that submitted an application to the Surplus Property Committee and the other equivalent high bidder(s) that did not submit an application to the Surplus Property Committee, preferential preference will be granted to the bidder that submitted an application to the Surplus Property Committee.

The City reserves the right to reject any and all bids
CITY OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

8/10/2023, 8/17/2023, 8/24/2023

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ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Sealed bids will be received by the City Clerk of Jackson, Mississippi, at 219 S. President Street, Jackson, Mississippi 39201 or at Post Office Box 17, Jackson, Mississippi 39205 until 3:30 PM, local time (CT), Tuesday, September 12, 2023, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud for:

The demolition and cleaning of parcel 409-537 located at 1909 Utah St.

The City of Jackson, Mississippi ("City of Jackson") is committed to cultivating and ensuring the quality of life of its citizens, through various programs, employment, initiatives, and assistance. The City encourages all persons, corporations, and/or entities doing business within the City, as well as those who seek to contract with the City on various projects and or conduct business in the City, to assist the City in achieving its goal by strongly considering City residents for employment opportunities.

The City of Jackson is committed to the principle of non-discrimination in public contracting. It is the policy of the City of Jackson to promote full and equal business opportunity for all persons doing business with the City. As a pre-condition to selection, each contractor, bidder or offeror shall submit a completed and signed Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Plan, with the bid submission, in accordance with the provisions of the City of Jackson's Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Ordinance. Failure to comply with the City's Ordinance shall disqualify a contractor, bidder or offeror from being awarded an eligible contract. For more information on the City of Jackson's Equal Business Opportunity Program, please contact the Office of Economic Development at 601-960-1055. Copies of the ordinance, EBO Plan Applications and a copy of the program are available at 200 South President Street, Room 223, Hood Building, Jackson, Mississippi.

The City of Jackson hereby notifies all bidders that in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000d to 2000d-4 that all bidders will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability in consideration for an award.

Contract Documents may be obtained from and/or examined at the offices of the Community Improvement Division located at 200 S. President Street, Suite 331, Jackson, Mississippi 39201. Telephone 601.960.1054. Prospective bidders may obtain copies of all materials required for bidding purposes. There is NO charge for electronic or e-mail copies. Official bid documents can be downloaded from Central Bidding at www.centralbidding.com. Electronic bids can be submitted at www.centralbidding.com. For any questions relating to the electronic bidding process, please call Central Bidding at 225-810-4814.

Bid preparation will be in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders. The City reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any and all irregularities in respect to any bid submitted or to accept any bid which is deemed most favorable to the City of Jackson.

by: Samantha Graves, Manager
Community Improvement Division of Planning and Development

8/10/2023, 8/17/2023

LEGAL

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Sealed bids will be received by the City Clerk of Jackson, Mississippi, at 219 S. President Street, Jackson, Mississippi 39201 or at Post Office Box 17, Jackson, Mississippi 39205 until 3:30 PM, local time (CT), Tuesday, September 12, 2023, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud for:

The demolition and cleaning of parcel 425-491 located at 3603 Lampton Ave

The City of Jackson, Mississippi ("City of Jackson" is committed to cultivating and ensuring the quality of life of its citizens, through various programs, employment, initiatives, and assistance.

The City encourages all persons, corporations, and/or entities doing business within the City, as well as those who seek to contract with the City on various projects and or conduct business in the City, to assist the City in achieving its goal by strongly considering City residents for employment opportunities.

The City of Jackson is committed to the principle of non-discrimination in public contracting. It is the policy of the City of Jackson to promote full and equal business opportunity for all persons doing business with the City. As a pre-condition to selection, each contractor, bidder or offeror shall submit a completed and signed Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Plan, with the bid submission, in accordance with the provisions of the City of Jackson's Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Ordinance. Failure to comply with the City's Ordinance shall disqualify a contractor, bidder or offeror from being awarded an eligible contract. For more information on the City of Jackson's Equal Business Opportunity Program, please contact the Office of Economic Development at 601-960-1055. Copies of the ordinance, EBO Plan Applications and a copy of the program are available at 200 South President Street, Room 223, Hood Building, Jackson, Mississippi.

The City of Jackson hereby notifies all bidders that in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000d to 2000d-4 that all bidders will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability in consideration for an award.

Contract Documents may be obtained from and/or examined at the offices of the Community Improvement Division located at 200 S. President Street, Suite 331, Jackson, Mississippi 39201. Telephone 601.960.1054. Prospective bidders may obtain copies of all materials required for bidding purposes. There is No charge for electronic or e-mail copies. Official bid documents can be downloaded from Central Bidding at www.centralbidding.com. Electronic bids can be submitted at www.centralbidding.com. For any questions relating to the electronic bidding process, please call Central Bidding at 225.814.4814.

Bid preparation will be in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders. The City reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any and all irregularities in respect to any bid submitted or to accept any bid which is deemed most favorable to the City of Jackson.


by: Samantha Graves, Manager
Community Improvement Division of Planning and Development

Community Improvement Division of Planning and Development

8/10/2023 8/17/2023

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Not guilty. I did nothing wrong. What is Mr. Trump's definition of nothing wrong?

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



Words and phrases can get tangled up in meaning and interpretation. Subjectivity and not objectivity sometimes cloud the true meaning of them.

Former president Donald Trump has taken America on a merry go-round when it comes to right and wrong and good and evil. Since his election in 2016, traditional regulations and laws have been challenged.

He has infiltrated the rule of law with bogus and illegal interpretations. Unfortunately, he believes his own lies and half-truths. During this path of civic destruction, he has convinced many Americans to join him. What they see in Donald Trump is beyond me.

Lying is contagious and too many Americans have caught this illness from him. It seems to be spreading. Can we stop it? It depends upon who you ask.

Chris Christie, former governor of New Jersey, has been a sharp critic of Trump and says that the 2020 election was not stolen, and that Joe Biden is the president. Asa Hutchinson, former governor of Arkansas, has also said that the election results were real and there was no tampering. Both are running for president on the GOP ticket however they haven't made a dent in the polling yet. We'll see what happens as we get closer.

Trump has a big lead now with over 50% of the Republicans favoring him. The big question facing him is the number of lawsuits. The allegations are serious, and trials will be forthcoming. Don't forget, Georgia is still coming.

The latest lawsuit filed by Special Prosecutor Jack Smith in Washington D.C. has four counts to it including conspiring to obstruct an official proceeding. Former US Attorney General Bill Barr believes this lawsuit has the best chance of finding him guilty of a crime.

Barr said, "Trump is toast even if

half the allegations are true." He is certainly assertive in his comments. I just hope he doesn't have to walk them back.

The former president has steadfastly held onto the 1st Amendment in defense of his rights. However, many legal scholars believe that his argument will not hold up in a court of law.

His refrain of "I did nothing wrong" isn't holding any water except among his base of supporters. You don't just take classified documents to your house, nor do you call the Georgia Secretary of State asking for more votes so that you can win the election.

Do you know of any president in the history of our country who has told his vice president to scrub the election because it doesn't count? He wanted to make a mockery of our democracy.

He believes it's his Republic and not our Republic. His thinking is warped and woeful. It is my opinion he has made himself a laughingstock and an embarrassment to the Republican Party.

Many in his party now remain silent. They know that they can't defend the indefensible.

The DOJ is calling more Trump loyalists to testify about his time in office. His shields of protection are slowly but surely melting away. The facts are simply speaking too loudly about his improprieties.

The intersection of trial dates and rigorous campaigning dates will be here in the coming months. The scenario could well be in a trial one day and campaigning the next day. The sustainability of that schedule will not last, and his supporters will invariably fall by the wayside.

Polls have shown that it will be difficult for him to win a general election. Of course, he says something entirely different. This is what happens when your imagination gets the best of you.

If you are a part of Trump's team, your faith and belief will begin to be tested. You hear him saying not guilty now, however you know he doesn't have the final say.

"Wake Up America" In remembrance of Queen Mother Joann N. Watson

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



Last week, I was blessed beyond measure to witness and to join in the remarkable homegoing celebration of the life, legacy and liberation of The

Honorable Reverend Dr. Joann Nichols Watson (1951-2023) in the splendid sanctuary of Fellowship Chapel United Church of Christ in the heart of Detroit, Michigan.

The Reverend Dr. Wendell Anthony, senior pastor of Fellowship Chapel and president of the Detroit Branch of the NAACP, rendered an impassioned and affirming eulogy for Queen Mother Joann N. Watson.

During the homegoing service, I was privileged to sit next to The Reverend Mark Thompson, a devoted colleague in the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA). While there were many important and timely affirmations made throughout the service from elected officials, civil rights associates, family members, and during the transformative eulogistic sermon by Reverend Dr. Anthony, there was one enduring message: We all still have work to continue to do. We have to keep fighting for freedom, justice, equality and equity at all levels as exemplified by the life of Joann N. Watson.

This is not the time to relax, retreat, or to revise our centuries-long struggle for liberation, empowerment and sustainability. The legacy of Sister Leader Watson was her consistency, her courage, and her compassion for the least of these among us in America, in Africa and throughout the Diaspora.

Simply put, Joann Nichols Watson was a gifted, multitalented, ordained preacher and freedom fighter. She was one of a long line of committed Queen Mothers of our global freedom movement.

Joan Watson had a very long list of "records" highlighted by Rev. Anthony. This sister leader had real "receipts." Joann Watson had the grassroots and street credibility of Fannie Lou Hamer and the fearless courage



The Honorable Reverend Dr. Joann Nichols Watson (1951-2023).

of Harriet Tubman and Rosa Parks along with the theological vision of Coretta Scott King and Winnie Mandela.

Watson was the first woman executive director of the Detroit NAACP, an elected member of the Detroit City Council, founding president of the National Association of Black Talk Show Hosts, and a leader of the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (NCOBRA).

"Wake Up Detroit" was one of the famous and outstanding quotes from Queen Mother Joann Watson that hundreds of thousands of Detroiters would hear each morning on the radio throughout the city and Wayne County, Michigan.

Given the fact that today in America, black Americans and other communities of color are being told to shut up, stay asleep, don't stay woke, keep quiet, enjoy the benefits of enslavement, don't vote, engage in self-destruction, be hopeless, and to accept consignment to poverty, police brutality, racial hatred and indignity, I believe that Joann Watson's reverberant call on Detroiters to "Wake Up," should be extrapolated to a national call to all Americans to "Wake Up."

"Wake Up America." We must defend the civil rights of all. We have to come up and get out of the slumber of do-nothingness and get up out of the long-suffering coma of hopelessness. We have to stay awakened. We have to stay woke!

"Wake Up America." We must get

up and reject the miseducation of the Negro. We must demand that the educational system in Florida and in every state across the nation teach the truth about the centuries-long genocide and the brutal enslavement of African people in America and throughout the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

"Wake Up America." We must continue to demand and to ensure voting rights. Our fundamental right to vote is a God-given right that the U.S. Supreme Court cannot take away. We oppose all forms of voter suppression. In 2023 and certainly in 2024 we must GOTV (Get-Out-The-Vote) in record-breaking numbers in every precinct, in every congressional district, in every state, and across the nation in the upcoming national elections. The future of our families and communities is at stake. The future of American democracy is on the ballot.

"Wake Up America." We must not relent. We cannot give up. We cannot get too tired. We must keep marching for freedom. It is time to end poverty in America. We support the Poor Peoples Campaign led by The Reverend Dr. William J. Barber II, The Reverend Dr. Frederick Douglass Haynes III and many others. We support attaining financial literacy led by John Hope Bryant and Operation Hope. We must continue to demand equal justice, social justice, racial justice, economic justice, environmental justice and climate justice.

"Wake Up America." In remembrance and in tribute to the indefatigable spirit of Queen Mother Joann N. Watson, we all have to stay woke, stay committed, stay active, and to stay involved as we strive to raise up a new generation of young freedom-fighting Generation Zs and millennials. Long live the spirit of Joann Nichols Watson.

Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr is President and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), Executive Producer and host of The Chavis Chronicles on PBS TV stations throughout the U.S., and Executive Producer and host of The Good News daily audio commentaries on local radio stations.

Ethnonationalism – corrosive and toxic

By Oscar H. Blayton
Pres. Black Chamber of Commerce



You would be hard-pressed to find a nation without a creation myth. Such myths are the fountain-head of justifications for most belligerent acts by one group of people against another.

But let me back up, because words are important, and the misuse of words is often the cause of belligerence that leads to misery and death.

The Nation

In this commentary, the word "nation" refers to a large body of people who are united by common descent or a history, traditions, cultures and often language. In today's world, nations often are understood to be nation-states – those geopolitical entities displayed in multicolored patchwork fashion on global maps in elementary schools across the country. In many instances, those colorful patches are shaped by one group of people imposing their will upon another.

Despite current geopolitical realities, the word "nation" traces its roots back to the Lat-

in, nationem, which was used to voice the concepts of "birth, origin; breed, stock, kind, species, race of people or tribe." And even though race is a social construct, it weighs most heavily when defining the concept of a nation.

The complex tapestry of human history has created a mish-mash of concepts such as "race" and "nation." The distinguished Irish author Seumas MacManus wrote a celebrated book titled "The Story of the Irish Race: A Popular History of Ireland."

The Irish inhabit the island of Ireland, which sits in the north Atlantic Ocean to the northwest of the landmass many refer to as "Europe." MacManus considered the Irish to be a homogeneous and distinct race of people separate from northern Europeans or the English. But apart from their cultural characteristics, the Irish are indistinguishable from northern Europeans and the English.

To complicate matters further, the Irish are divided politically into two separate nations. Those who live in the north of the island are a part of the United Kingdom and those who live in the south are citizens of the Republic of Ireland. How the

Irish came to be considered a separate and distinct race unto themselves, while at the same time divided into two nations, is illustrative of the complexities of the concepts of race and nation.

Volksgeist

How the Irish became a separate and distinct race can be explained by what Germans call *volksgeist*. It is a German word that expresses the unique spirit and character of a particular people. *Volksgeist* encapsulates their perceived characteristics that distinguish their nation and way of life from all others. These characteristics are believed to have continued to the present from prehistoric times and are as indigenous to the land as the forests and mountains. Inherent in this concept is a sense of intergenerational continuity of thought. And this continuity of thought often is said to lead to conservative nationalism.

Conservative nationalists apply the principle of organic society to nations, believing nations emerge naturally through a *volksgeist* among those who want to live with others who are similar to them. And in this kernel of an idea lies a great plague of human misery. *Volks-*

geist speaks of the spirit of the people, but it does not define "people," because it is understood to mean "people like us." These individuals seek meaning and security through patriotism related to people like them and the national community. This need for meaning and security leads to a desire to maintain national unity by encouraging national pride in people like them. This also justifies a resistance to change or expanding inclusion by conservative nationalists.

Conservative nationalists are fearful of – and see as their enemies – liberal nationalists who believe the principles of balance and natural harmony apply to individuals as well as nations. Balance and harmony imply shared wealth. And shared wealth is anathema to colonialists who exploit the resources and labor of other nations.

And this brings us to ethnonationalism.

Ethnonationalism is a socio-cultural political ideology that connects a particular ethnic or cultural group and a specific territory. It asserts that the interests, rights and identity of a particular group should be preserved and protected.

These people also seek to

strengthen the bonds between them by acts that they claim preserve their cultural heritage, such as flying the Confederate flag to honor the valiant South. But in countries like the United States and other former colonial and post-colonial powers, ethnonationalism often leads to exclusionary and divisive tendencies, resulting in hostility toward those who belong to other ethnic or cultural groups. In multicultural nations, this xenophobia results in injustice and violence against those the ethnonationalists consider to be "the other."

Ethnonationalism marginalizes minority communities by creating a hierarchical society that excludes individuals based on ethnicity or culture. It is exacerbated when it intersects with authoritarianism and conservative political ideologies.

Politicians such as Donald Trump and Marjorie Taylor Greene have put this type of cultural toxicity on full display. Through the use of their hate-filled and nonsensical rhetoric, these despicable individuals use ethnonationalism to stir up a frightful brew of grievance politics, notions of white superiority and general discontent

as a means of gaining political power.

Ethnonationalism erodes democratic institutions and suppresses the voices of the oppressed. It is poison to pluralism and democratic values. The banning of books dealing with race and non-binary individuals is a result of ethnonationalism. The attack on the ability of women to have control over their own reproductive choices is a result of ethnonationalism. The mistreatment and exclusion of migrants arriving at our southern border is a result of ethnonationalism. The decimation of the voting rights laws established during the last half century is a result of ethnonationalism.

There are among our neighbors, co-workers and even relatives individuals who are ethnonationalists. And while we must love our neighbors, co-workers and relatives, we must not allow them to poison the land where we live.

Oscar H. Blayton is a former Marine Corps combat pilot and human rights activist who practices law in Virginia. His earlier commentaries may be found at <https://oblayton1.medium.com/>



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Alcorn student leaders attend NASAP Student Leadership Institute in Savannah

The Mississippi Link Newswire

Alcorn State University student leaders recently attended the National Association of Student Affairs Professionals (NASAP) Student Leadership Institute in Savannah, Ga.

The group included the Student Government Association (SGA) and Mister and Miss Alcorn.

“The NASAP Student Leadership Institute was an amazing experience,” said Jordan Buck, SGA president. “Throughout the leadership institute, we participated in interesting seminars, listened to inspiring speakers and collaborated with numerous HBCU student leaders. We are eager to apply the knowledge and insights we have received to better serve Alcorn State University and our positions as student leaders.”

The NASAP Student Leadership Institute is an interactive six-day program designed for newly elected Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) student leaders, including Student Government Associations, Class Officers, Greek Councils, Student Ambassadors and Programming Boards.

The Institute aims to empower these leaders to uplift their organizations and universities through enhanced leadership skills and a deeper understanding of their roles on campus.

During the Institute, participants engage in numerous activities about student leadership and development.

The program’s goals include fostering an appreciation for the mission and significance of HBCUs, promoting planning and organization to better serve students, catalyzing empowerment and positive change on their respective campuses, and building



Pictured from left, are Eric Thompson II, Joshua Ray, De'Marcus Jackson, Solomon Bryant, Kristyn Wilson, Oniyah Robinson, Kaitlyn Phillips, Jordan Buck, Jillian Mills, and Arrington Robinson.

collaborative relationships with other student organizations, faculty, administration and fellow students.

The NASAP Student Leadership Institute emphasizes the importance of forging meaningful relationships with campus administration to facilitate collaborative solutions and promote holistic growth.

Student leaders that participated in the NASAP Student Leadership Institute include:

Eric Thompson II – NPHC president, psychology major, Cincinnati, Ohio

Joshua Ray – Junior Class president, biology/health science major, Shelby, Miss.

De'Marcus Jackson – SGA parliamentarian, geospatial engineering major, Natchez, Miss.

Solomon Bryant – SGA 1st vice president, secondary education major, Minden, La.

Kristyn Wilson – Senior Class president, biology/pre-professional major, Canton, Miss.

Oniyah Robinson – 2nd vice president, biology/health science major, Greenville, Miss.

Kaitlyn Phillips – Sophomore Class president, social work major, Shaw, Miss.

Jordan Buck – SGA president, agribusiness management major, Crenshaw, Miss.

Jillian Mills – Miss Alcorn, elementary education and English

teaching major, Greenville, Miss.

Arrington Robinson – Mister Alcorn, biology major, Canton, Miss.

Founded in 1954 on the campus of Howard University, NASAP traces its roots back to two parent organizations: the National Association of Deans of Women and Advisor of Girls in Colored Schools, and the National Association of Personnel Dean of Men at Negro Educational Institutions.

Today, NASAP is a prominent association that sponsors various programs and events focusing on the needs of students and the professional development of student affairs professionals.

Clinton Public School teachers use WBGT to manage outdoor activities, keeping safety in mind for students



The JPS Newswire

With the temperatures reaching extreme conditions, the Clinton Public School District is playing it cool when it comes to spending time outside.

The Mississippi High School Activities Association has implemented a mandate that all athletic and band programs utilize the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature reading when planning outdoor practices and rehearsals.

The WBGT is a measure of the heat stress in direct sunlight taking into account humidity, wind speed and cloud coverage. If the WBGT measures 92 or above, no students should participate in outdoor activities.

Teachers at Clinton Park, Northside, Eastside and Lovett Elementary schools have also implemented the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature during scheduled recess.

“Our teachers have been paying attention each day to the WBGT readings,” Eastside Elementary principal Mandy Taylor said. “Just like the football coaches and band directors at the high school, we have started to use the Zeleus WBGT app during recess.”

Taylor said the playground is already equipped with several shade structures to combat the typical Mississippi heat, but new measures have been in place since the start of the school year to manage student health during the abnormal heatwave.

“We stress to students the importance of staying hydrated throughout the day, and we’ve been limiting our recess times to 15 minutes instead of 30.”

Taylor said that in typical Mississippi fashion, the heat is always a factor, but it won’t be around forever. “We can’t control the temperature, but we can control how we manage our outside time,” she said. “Once it cools off, we’ll return to recess as normal.”

Jackson Public Schools and Jackson State launch Jackson Middle College Program

Jackson Public Schools newswire

Jackson Public Schools (JPS) and Jackson State University (JSU) hosted an open house and signing day for the inaugural cohort of the Jackson Middle College (JMC) Monday, August 7, 2023, at 6 p.m. at the JSU College of Science, Engineering and Technology.

The first cohort, composed of 17 high school juniors and seniors, will specialize in mathematics education to address the need for math teachers and educators in JPS.

Tony Latiker, Ed.D., associate dean of accreditation and assessment in JSU’s College of Education & Human Development stated, “I am extremely excited about this collaboration between Jackson State Uni-



versity and the Jackson Public School District. Mathematics teachers are a critical need nationwide, and I am confident that Jackson Middle Col-

lege will become the preferred ‘grow your own’ model in school districts across the nation for ensuring a sustainable teaching force in critical needs

content areas.”

The JMC is a dual enrollment program birthed by the collaboration between JSU and JPS faculty and administrations. With math being the focus for its first year, the program is set to expand to other curriculum areas outside of mathematics in subsequent years. The program will include students from all seven JPS high schools.

In June, the students attended a two-week summer camp on the JSU campus to ensure college readiness and sustained success upon their entry as mathematics education majors. During the camp, students engaged in lessons from JSU instructors, such as an introduction to methods of teaching mathematics, English composi-

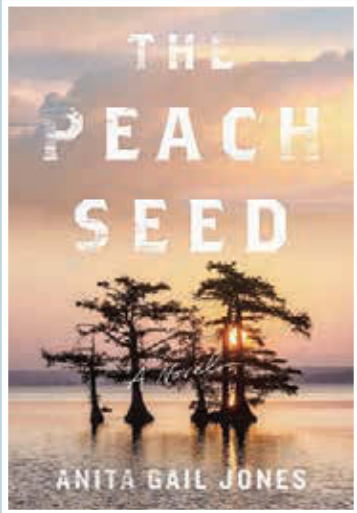
tion content and focused mathematics. They also participated in campus tours and were exposed to university academic and social support.

“The Jackson Middle College will serve as a model of innovation for school districts and universities across the country to meet the teacher shortage needs and, most importantly, to provide a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for students that many would have never experienced,” said Laketia Marshall-Thomas, JPS assistant superintendent of the high school division. “It’s rare that students get excited about math, especially about teaching it. However, these 17 outstanding scholars have shattered that ceiling, and their

fond interest and love of mathematics will afford them an early start into a professional career that I know they will love. As a former JPS math teacher, I’m excited to see these scholars pave the way as future math educators in Jackson Public Schools and the state.”

JMC students will begin coursework in Fall 2023. Courses include college algebra, English composition, introduction to biology, art appreciation, university success and more in the College of Education and Human Development.

Students will attend classes at JSU in the mornings and return to their home schools in the afternoon for any additional high school coursework.



BOOK REVIEW:

THE PEACH SEED

BY ANITA GAIL JONES

C.2023, HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

\$29.99 • 448 PAGES

By Terri Schlichenmeyer
Columnist

Your entire life has been filled with milestones to meet, and many firsts. Your first tooth and first steps were celebrated. Your first word and first day of school were recorded; graduations, proms, puppy love, and beyond, you’ve enjoyed years of achievement.

It’s true that milestones are fewer as you age; still, as in the new book “The Peach Seed” by Anita Gail Jones” life sometimes throws you a pleasant surprise.

There was no mistaking that perfume.

He hadn’t smelled it in decades but Fletcher Dukes, on his weekly visit to Piggly Wiggly with his sister, Olga, knew that scent immediately. He didn’t say anything; he figured Olga smelled it, too, and if the as-yet-unseen woman wearing the fragrance was who he thought she was, it’d take Olga a minute to find the girl Fletcher loved once and who broke his heart.

In the years since, Fletcher had moved on but he never forgot the woman or her perfume.

So what was she doing back in Albany after all this time, after Fletcher married another woman, had three daughters, helped raise a grandson? Could he still think about her when he had his hands full trying get his 20-something grandson, Bo D, to step up like a man?

Fletcher tried not to worry, there was no use in it. But it pricked his mind: the woman he loved as a young man – all during Civil Rights protests, arrests and marches and beatings – was back in town for reasons he didn’t know.

It was probably complicated, just like his relationship with his grandson was.

Fletcher had recently found a peach-pit carved monkey necklace in a fruit bowl where Bo D must’ve thrown it, rejecting Fletcher’s long-ago gift and a precious right of passage that every Dukes male had enjoyed for more than a century. Rejecting it. That hurt.

Knowing, but not really knowing where the first monkey Fletcher had ever carved was kept... now, that hurt, too.

Who says you can’t learn

history from a novel? You can, as you’ll see when you’re inside “The Peach Seed,” where author Anita Gail Jones leans heavily on real events in World History to tell a story that spans from 1796 to 2013, across two continents and several states.


Yes, that’s a chasm to cover and it may be too wide.

Jones does something difficult here: the dialogue in this tale is easy, like a casual conversation but the story seems over-padded. There’s a lot of randomness here, pages of bickering siblings, aimless musing, characters


that feel like they belong in another kind of book.

Still, these flaws are mostly overcome by good main characters that are sometimes caricatures, but aren’t totally disagreeable. A few, in fact, are downright pleasant, like an elderly neighbor you’ve grown fond of.

Had this book been 50 pages shorter, it would’ve been a big winner; as it is, it’s not bad, just too long. “The Peach Seed” is worth a try. For the right reader, it might still meet your expectations.



ZACK WALLACE
Hinds County Circuit Clerk



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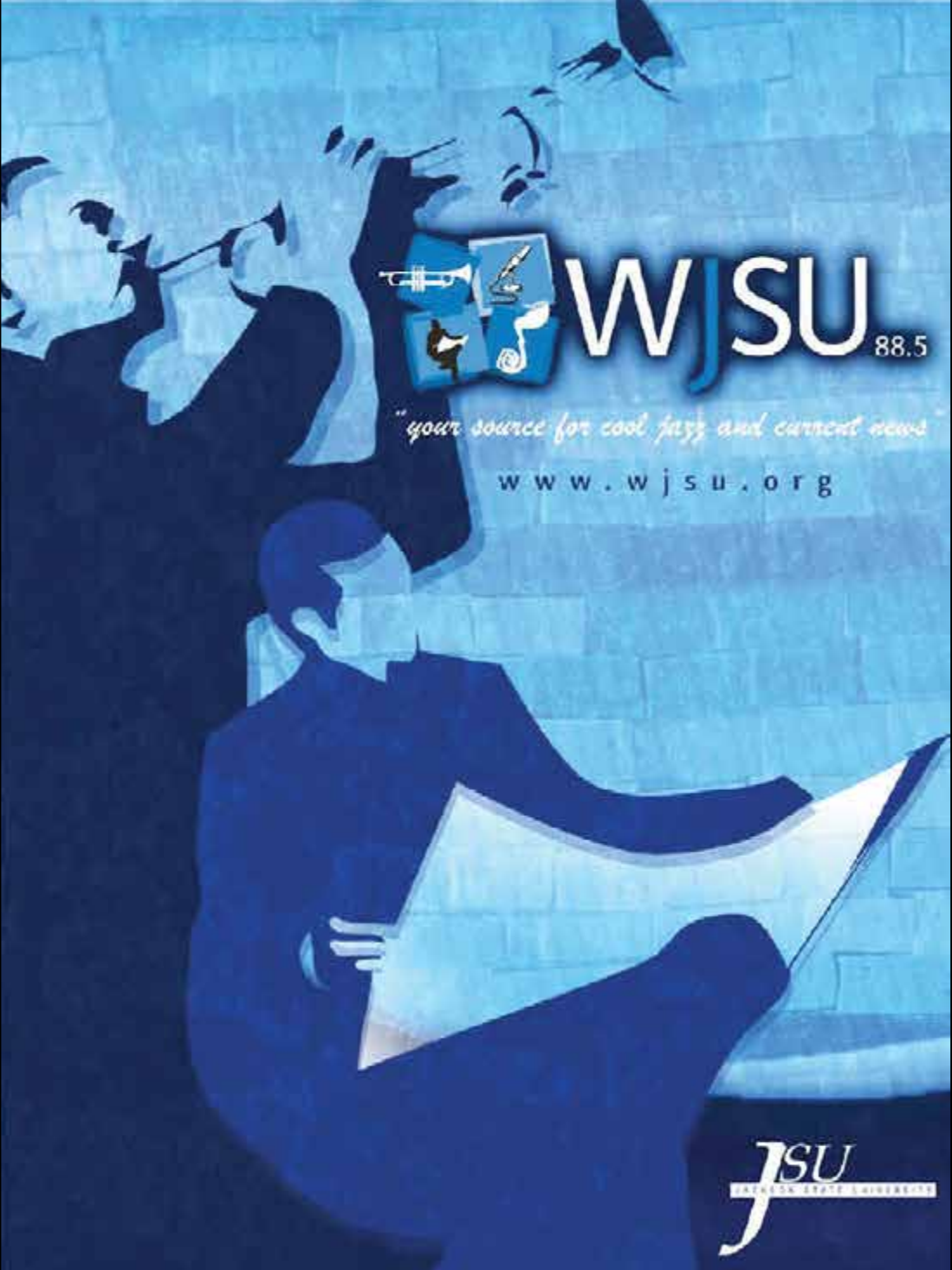
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Demolition in South Jackson for future re-development

The Mississippi Link Newswire

PHOTOS BY JAY JOHNSON

The previously named Jackson Square Promenade is poised for a re-development project in South Jackson.

Monday, August 7, at 10 a.m., the owners, former NBA player and Mississippian Erick Dampier and community leader and businessowner, Dr. Karla L. McCullough, in partnership with Richard Bradley and PDT Logistics, participated in the demolition of the north side building of the 33-acre property. They were pleased to begin this next phase of re-development of the City Plaza.

The new owners envision a development that will have a significant social and economic impact for the the region. "We are excited to see the beginning of what we hope to be significant for Jackson with the support of the county, city and state," said McCullough.

City Plaza will house rental units, an event center (currently in use), retail stores, sports medicine facility, green space for kids, and the first of its kind, state-of-the-art Sports Center, owned by the Erick Dampier Foundation (EDF), to name a few. The Athletic Center will be a multi-sport center that provides youth, the community, and others, with numerous services.

Included will be multiple full-size basketball/volleyball courts, an indoor football turf, restaurants, classrooms, training rooms, full-service fitness center, locker rooms, and concessions. Along with these amenities, the center will provide the community with qualified and knowledgeable staff to ensure all their athletic and youth afterschool academic support needs are met.

The educational component for the youth will be supported by a partnership between EDF and the Juanita Sims Doty Foundation.

The demolition is scheduled for completion by mid-September. The owners and the Erick Dampier Foundation have begun its Capital Campaign and hope to reach its goal by year end. Those who wish to participate in this redevelopment project can contact Karla McCullough, Ph.D. at 601-882-9127.

About Erick Dampier Foundation

The mission is to give youth opportunities to excel in athletics, academic and life.

About Juanita Sims Doty Foundation

The mission is to provide youth with the tools needed to navigate a challenging world while preparing the world to receive them. The goal is to positively impact the lives of children, specifically children of color, through mentoring, youth development, health, education and advocacy and the overall wellness of the family.



Hinds County School District Weekly Update ENGAGING-EMPOWERING-ENSURING-EXCELLENCE

The Hinds County School District welcomed 573 new employees to the Hinds County School District at a New Employee Orientation. Words of congratulations and welcome were offered by Superintendent Dr. Robert Sanders and the Hinds County School Board. They were given great instructions and information from the administrators on how to have a successful year.





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