

Judah School of Performing Arts glitters and dances into Christmas 2023

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

Judah School of Performing Arts cultivates students’ artistic gifts and talents in a Christian environment and channels their artistic expression to glorify God. Generations are revived through the arts as a result of these efforts. Multiple genres of the arts, for ages 18 months-adults, include ballet, jazz, modern tumbling/acrobatics, piano and more.

Amidst an overflowing crowd of more than 700, the school held its annual Christmas program at Madison Central High School (1417 Highland Colony Pkwy) at 2 p.m. Saturday, December 9, 2023. In adherence to the theme, “Tis the Season Christmas Spectacular,” the musical recital featured a number of tunes that made the performers crowd pleasers. Dressed in glittering costumes that reflected Christmastime, they held the audience captive with each tune that highlighted their strides.

Each act was encompassed with excellence, pride and grace. From time to time the crowd could not resist the temptation to nod their heads and rock their bodies. Additionally, the elements of exuberance lifted the crowd to their feet amidst thunderous applause.

Monica Jones, the school’s director, noted: “The students



Some jubilant dancers posing after the show.

PHOTOS BY JANICE NEAL VINCENT

worked rigorously since August and trained in ballet, jazz, tap, acro and hip hop. Over 100 students participated from Hinds, Madison, Rankin and Holmes Counties.” The director further commented that she and her team were pleased with the “projected” turnout.

Approximately 50% of the children in Judah School of Performing Arts were enrolled this year. Many new enrollees

came as a result of witnessing past performances by the school, print advertisement and word of mouth.

The enrollees are excited about opportunities provided by the school. Parents and grandparents expressed pleasure with the school’s persistence in getting the students to perform as they do. Many said that their firsthand witnesses of several performances encouraged them

to tell others about the opportunities that have been provided for their loved ones.

Here, for instance, is what a grandparent couple said: “It was good and I enjoyed it. I will come back again on another occasion (Lula Easterling).”

“It was wonderful. When [our granddaughter] Jamie started, she progressed every year. I en-

*Judah
Continued on page 3*

PART 2 Discrimination in U.S. Department of Agriculture against black farmers



Dr. Willie P. Taylor providing community outreach in Moorhead, MS. PHOTO COURTESY OF DR. TAYLOR

By Christopher Young
Contributing Writer

In Part 1 of this article *The Mississippi Link* newspaper told the full story of the nearly 100-year history of the decline of black farming in America, rife with discrimination by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

January 13, 2024, is the most recent deadline for black farmers to apply for the \$2.2 billion Discrimination Financial Assistance Program (DFAP).

In Part 2 of this article, we will highlight interviews with Reverend Dr. Willie P. Taylor, pastor of King of Kings Christian Center in Vicksburg and the Honorable Mike Espy – experts in all thing’s agriculture, farming and ranching.

Dr. Taylor is the Mississippi director of Outreach for the DFAP and a project

manager for ACTS Agricultural Consultant and Technology Services. In this capacity, he reports to the Gainesville Technology Entrepreneurship Center in Florida, who is in turn accountable to The Windsor Group, LLC, who has been contracted by USDA to administer DFAP for Region 2.

There are a total of four regions covering all states, commonwealths and territories. Taylor has a regional office in Okolona, MS with four employees. He has nearly 40 years’ experience working with USDA in various capacities. In the seventeen months at the helm of Mississippi DFAP, direct outreach numbers exceed 5,000 black farmers and for those seeking information, he has received over 1,700 applications. He can be reached

*Farmers
Continued on page 3*

WMPR’s ‘Mr. Sock It to You,’ Randy ‘Wild Man’ Brown completes degree started 48 years ago

Internship at The Mississippi Link newspaper and We Believe Digital Broadcast Streaming Network amongst final coursework

By Jackie Hampton
Publisher

The man known to some as ‘Mr. Sock It to You’ and others as Randy ‘Wild Man’ Brown, is really Rander Phillip Adams, a 2023 graduate of Jackson State University.

Adams received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Journalism and Media Studies from Jackson State University December 8, 2023, fulfilling a dream he started in 1975.

In a Facebook post he stated, “I thank my wife Janice D. Adams, “Miz Wild” for keeping my eyes and energy focused on the goal. I thank God for picking me up and carrying me through this valley as always.”

Adams, a 1971 graduate of Lanier High School in Jackson shared some of his journey in an interview with *The Mississippi Link*. The first question being, how did you get the names Randy ‘Wild Man’ Jones and Mr. “Sock It to You”?



Rander Phillips Adams, 70 proudly holds degree received Dec. 8

Adams said while at Lanier high school, on what was considered Tacky Dress-Up Day, he cut his mother’s bed spread in half and made a poncho and wore a really big wild afro. His classmates called him Randy Wild Man Jones and the name stuck. He gave himself the name ‘Mr. Sock It to You’ working in the radio industry.

After receiving his high



President Thompson shakes hands with Adams.

school degree, Adams enrolled at Tougaloo College having received a full choral music scholarship; however, after two years he moved to Detroit, Michigan.

In 1975 he returned to Jackson and enrolled at Jackson State University. After completing his junior year, he dropped out, and started a 45-year career in commercial radio.

Throughout the years, Adams continued his dream of obtaining a college degree. While still working, in 1986, he returned to JSU but told *The Link*, “I bombed out. After just one year, I bombed out.”

It was in 2021 that Adams once again enrolled at JSU. “I went non-stop until the summer of 2023,” he said. After the summer break, he registered for

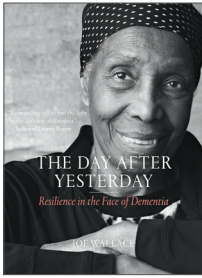
the fall semester. He only had a couple more classes to take, one being an internship class where one of the requirements for graduation was to work with a company in his chosen field of journalism. He was getting excited and could see the end result. After working for over 45 years as an on air personality, Adams could visualize getting his college career, in a field he had already been working in.

He spent his final semester working with *The Mississippi Link* newspaper and We Believe Digital Broadcast, both in the same building, located on Livingston Road in Jackson, MS.

He said, “I turned 70 years old on Thanksgiving Day and I finally got my degree December 8. Adams received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Journalism and Media Studies, presented to him by the new Jackson State University Presi-

dent, Dr. Marcus L. Thompson

As his internship ended, Adams wrote in his daily diary, “The Mississippi Link, in combination with We Believe Digital Broadcast Network, has proven enlightening and essential to the development of my intellectual skills. It has provided me with requisite insight to enter a modern-day media field, where the sky is the limit to that which one can achieve, when you allow your imagination and vision to exceed your comfort zone. I wholeheartedly thank We Believe Digital CEO Socrates Garrett, *The Mississippi Link* Publisher Jacquelyn Hampton, JSU Interim JMS chair, Professor Don Spann, Chelsea Thomas and Pertis Williams of We Believe Digital, and many others who provided their support through this process to finish the job. I hope and pray this internship creates an indelible relationship between all exhibited herein.”



The Beloved Community Ward 2 Dine & Dialogue

Deep investment in listening to Ward 2 community takes center stage at Callaway High

By Christopher Young
Contributing Writer

The City of Jackson Beloved Community Pilot Project, with all their partners, brought about a Ward 2 Community Survey, whose results became the centerpiece of this event. The gathering, just shy of 100 residents at Callaway High School, from 6-8 p.m. on December 7, 2023, got much more. By viewing the 15-minute-long video, narrated by Dr. Sandra Melvin, they got to see up close and personally that people in Ward 2 are not invisible and they surely have a voice.

The list of partners on this project includes City of Jackson, International Museum of Muslim Cultures (IMMC), Tougaloo College, Waggoner Engineering, St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, Masjid Muhammad Islamic Complex, Working Together Jackson and People's Advocacy Institute. The evening began with prayer and ended with a to-go box of delicious food provided by TchatAfrika Cuisine.

Okolo Rashid and David Bickham spoke in depth about The Beloved Community Project against a backdrop of principles of human dignity and community. Amandla Abdul-Tawwab provided a presentation of Our Vision & Mission. Ikhlas Muhammed shared a live performance of her poetry, sung a Capela. Savannah Willis, an organizer with Working Together Jackson, teed up the Ward 2 Community Survey, drawing attention to



Okolo Rashid-IMMC founder and David Bickham, Bickham Innovation Catalysts, LLC
PHOTOS BY CHRIS YOUNG



Amandla Abdul-Tawwab, youth member, The Beloved Community Pilot Project



Sabrina Howard with the 'live' painting she did during the evening.

the real guests of honor – the residents of Ward 2: their inputs to the survey, and requests for their further comments, questions, ideas and involvement.

Dr. Sandra Melvin, owner of Global Health Solutions, LLC, reported on the data contained in the Ward 2 Community Survey, accompanied by her expert analysis. Key data includes:

Ward 2's population is 21,584, with a median income of \$34,523. The community is predominantly African American and female, 51% are high school graduates, 16% have a bachelor's degree, and 30% hold a master's degree. Two point four to 35.6% of residents had incomes below the poverty level in the past 12-months. The percentage of children less than 18 years living below the poverty level is 51.9% – for 60 and older the levels are 9.9 to 54.9%.

The survey used the social justice model, with the five principles of: access to resources, equity, participation,

diversity and human rights. The analysis was divided into four parts: demographic profile, quality of life in Ward 2, quality of life in the City of Jackson, community engagement and participation.

There were 410 surveys received. The survey was 40 questions – which took an average of 15 minutes to complete. Most respondents were 45 and older, black and female. 90% lived in Ward 2. The analysis did not include those who did not live in Ward 2.

Ward 2 was found to have a good cross-section of businesses, faith-based organizations, community resource centers, schools and healthcare facilities. Critical areas of concern for over 70% of respondents were: housing, education, environmental health, policing, public safety, poverty and civil rights. Over 50% of respondents said that local and state leadership in Ward 2 was poor. 72% of survey respondents ranked economic development and business entrepreneurship as

fair or poor. 50% responded that the arts, culture and entertainment in Ward 2 was poor; that parks and other recreational activities are lacking.

With only two grocery stores in Ward 2, it is a fresh food desert and lacks easy access to regional services. A good education is often a pathway out of poverty. 82% did not have children attending school in Ward 2. School closures often worsen segregation, neighborhood disinvestment and gentrification. 20% of Ward 2 has income of \$50k or greater per Census data, this is relevant because three of the seven schools in Ward 2 are rated C or D, suggesting that access to quality education is limited even when income is controllable. 42% of respondents rated the criminal justice system in Ward 2 as poor, and 32% rated it as fair.

Melvin closed out her presentation asking, where do we go from here?

She suggested:

Forming partnerships with faith-based organizations in Ward 2 to address gaps in availability of resources such as food, childcare, tutoring and mentorship. Creating mentorship opportunities for youth, which could impact future economic success and could reduce brain drain.

Building trust between law enforcement and the community to include human dignity as part of any strategies to improve the Ward.

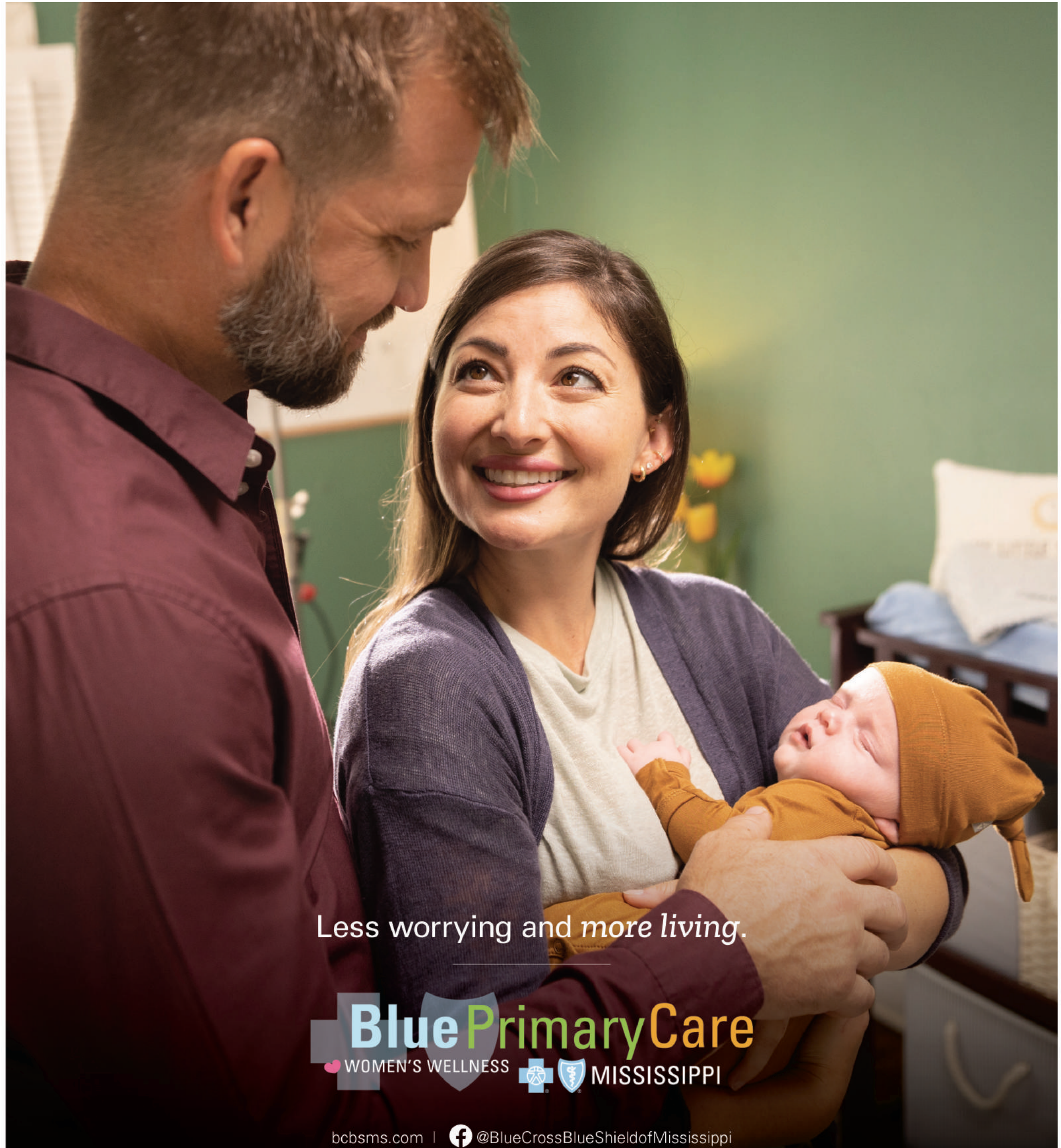
Ward 2 Council member Angelique Lee thanked The Beloved Community

Pilot Project partners for their dedication and the evening's presentation and indicated that she had learned a lot about her Ward just from listening. She added that all the Ward 2 schools are now A and B except for one school at a D – Kirksey Middle. She also pointed out that since the survey data was taken, both grocery stores in Ward 2 are closed.


Attendees were then asked for feedback on the presentation and eventually moved into small groups that focused on the headings of poverty, education, policing/public safety, civil/human rights, environmental health, housing, infrastructure and access to food/nutrition – then returned to share thoughts and ideas with the full gathering.

Throughout the two-hours, Jackson artist, creator and visionary Sabrina Howard was off to the side of the room doing a live painting. Her canvas was blank as the event began, yet an hour and forty minutes later she emerged with her rendering of The Beloved Community, incorporating the themes of change and justice.

Howard shared, "Justice is usually viewed by the weight of the evidence – but the hummingbird is practically weightless, but it is heavy in what it can accomplish – and somewhat like faith which can't be seen yet is powerful and can bring about change." Her painting (above) will be displayed at International Museum of Muslim Cultures, 201 E. Pascagoula Street in Jackson.



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Farmers

Continued from page 1

at 601 966-2822.

Taylor spoke in detail about the 40-page application and his approach to outreach. He emphasized the need to document a basis of discrimination, the racial inequity in USDA Farm Loan Program interest rates over time, and what could be called “systemic failure” that allowed the inequities.

“These farmers must come out to apply; the focus of our outreach not only responds to farmers seeking information, but we seek them out as well – every community has a voice, and if we can find that one person, then others can get the help that is needed. The key is trust. With anything connected to USDA in Mississippi – there’s a long history of mistrust. People know my name, and that means a lot in Mississippi, and I’m honest and so people will talk to me and that opens the door that has led to even greater outreach. I ride on a horse called Favor – I speak the language of the black farmer because I have boots on the ground, I know the struggles, I know the issues – that’s why I fulfill this assignment.”

In addition to scores of statewide outreach activities for the DFAP, there are big things happening at HBCUs in Mississippi. The Reuben V. Anderson Institute for Social Justice at Tougaloo College, in partnership with the Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Policy Center at Alcorn State University, announced the launch of a comprehensive grassroots leadership development initiative aimed at addressing economic development in the Mississippi Delta.

The Bennie G. Thompson Delta Leadership Initiative is designed to accelerate the development of socially disadvantaged black and indigenous grassroots community leaders living in Mississippi’s 2nd Congressional District, with innovative and promising sustainable solutions in areas, including sustainable food systems training, social enterprise development models and workforce transportation.

In October 2023, Jackson State University received a \$10 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These funds will help fuel The Gateways to a Greener Jackson, an initiative led by JSU to engage and employ community partners in the completion of projects that enhance equitable access to tree canopy, reduce stormwater runoff and implement and maintain green spaces in underrepresented communities, and will collaborate with the cities of Jackson, Rolling



Mike Espy

Fork, Vicksburg and Greenville, Mississippi.

The current Secretary of “The People’s Department,” is the 32nd in their history. Twenty-four white male secretaries preceded Secretary Mike Espy, who served from Jan 22, 1993-Dec 31, 1994. The five that followed him have been white; one a woman.

Former U.S. Congressman from Mississippi’s 2nd District and Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Espy, sat down with *The Mississippi Link* newspaper to discuss the DFAP and broader farming picture.

In sharing about the \$2.2 billion DFAP, he said, “This DFAP program is more complicated than any of the previous ones. It’s 40 pages long, and the deadline was extended because USDA received a lot of opposition that had merit, and they have regional administrators that were selected, and there is some distrust going on. The demographics, administrators selected, and the complexity of the application process have led to more delay and hopefully they will correct it.”

When asked – in considering the deep impact of USDA’s discrimination against black farmers – does the DFAP program do enough? Espy replied, “No way. With the historic nature of discrimination – you can’t calculate the wealth that was lost over the decades. \$2.2 billion can never cover it, just like Pigford Two; \$1.3 billion can’t cover it. The land loss, the generations that received no benefit, the legacy cost of land being taken, loans not being given – there’s no way, it’s unimaginable. What they have to do is be more equitable now.”

When asked – what counsel would you have today, knowing everything that has gone on, for those that want to carry on the family farming legacy – what would you whisper in their ear if you could? Espy replied, “Export, export, export. This country is so abundantly productive that we must export two-thirds of what we produce...that’s where the money is.”

Espy continued, “I was just appointed to the Export-Import Bank of the United States, I’m on their Advisory Board. They have programs that will underwrite and guarantee financing to export production and produce overseas. I would also say take advantage of all the USDA programs available – technology, technical advice and markets.”

Espy also reminded us that earlier this year the USDA reintroduced a partnership, the USDA/1890 Scholars Program, aimed at producing more minority scholars of agriculture science.

More information can be found at <https://www.usda.gov/youth/scholarships>.

Judah

Continued from page 1

joy the productions more and more.”

Judah School of Performing Arts has been in existence since 2016.

It is located in The Odyssey Shopping Plaza, 731 S. Pear Orchard Road, Suite 30,

in Ridgeland, Miss.

The school is now enrolling for the winter semester.

To register, go to www.judahschool.com or call 769 257-0330.



Dance of Joy



Dancers demonstrate the wonderment of Christmas



Dancers striding to Hallelujah Good Time



Dancers highlight the elegance of Christmas



Little dancers reflect angelic rhythms as Christmas cheers.

In Remembrance Larry Donnell Turner

April 2, 1956 – December 10, 2023



Turner
PHOTO COURTESY OF JAY JOHNSON

Larry Donnell Turner was born in Jackson, Mississippi, on April 2, 1956. Following a brief illness, Larry gained his heavenly wings on December 10, 2023, surrounded by loved ones.

Larry was the third child born to David and Lizzie McPherson Turner. Both parents preceded him in death. He accepted Christ as his Savior, was baptized, and grew up in the Mt. Nebo Baptist Church (Jackson, MS). He attended Farish Street Baptist Church and Anderson United Methodist Church (Jackson, MS) and maintained associate memberships in churches whenever he resided outside of the State of Mississippi.

Larry was a product of Jackson Public Schools, graduating from Jim Hill High during the height of desegregation in Mississippi. After graduating high school, he accepted a scholarship to Tougaloo College, where he majored in chemistry and was initiated into the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.

Larry transferred to the University of Mississippi, where he received his bachelor’s degree in forensic chemistry. He began his coveted career as a forensic scientist at the Mississippi Crime Lab in Jackson, Mississippi.

He received additional education and training at the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation Academy in Quantico, Virginia.

After graduating, Larry mar-

ried Cheryl Weakley, his college sweetheart at Ole Miss. Their union produced one son, Jared Weakley Turner, whom he loved dearly.

During his 26-year career as a forensic scientist, Larry excelled in the crime laboratories in four (4) states, including San Diego, California, Nashville, Tennessee, and as the director of the Crime Laboratories in Jackson, Mississippi and San Jose, California.

Accepted as a certified expert in courts throughout the United States, Larry helped solve and provide expert testimony in criminal cases involving murder, rape, illegal drugs, blood serology, DUIs and personal injury cases. He was also employed as a college professor in Scottsdale, Arizona, where he taught the theories and practical applications of forensic science to students and other professionals. Larry broke barriers in forensic science and paved the way for the many African Americans in Mississippi and across the nation who would follow in his footsteps.

A renowned speaker, author and professional entrepreneur, Larry wrote and published “Vicious Cycles” in 2013 under the pen name of ‘L. Donnell’. He also made appearances on three television shows where they highlighted cases that he helped solve: “The New Detectives,” “America Most Wanted” and “The FBI Files.”

Larry is survived by his son, Jared (Sharonda) Turner and grandchildren Kaylen McKenzie Turner and Jared Ian Turner, II of Jackson, MS. He is also survived by his siblings, Judge Tomie Green of Jackson, MS, David (Rebecca) Turner of Henderson, NV, and Dr. Brigetta Kay Turner of Jackson, MS. A beloved friend Linda Johnson and a host of loving nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins and friends remember him.

Memorial services will be held December 17, 2023 at 3 p.m. at Westhaven Funeral Home Chapel, 3580 Robinson Rd., Jackson, MS



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Greater Mount Calvary Church Annual Gospel Choir Concert

Greater Mount Calvary Baptist Church, pastored by Rev. John E. Cameron, Sr., held its annual Gospel Choir Concert Sunday, Dec. 10 at 11 a.m. The theme was "No Ordinary Worship."

The minister of music is Dowell G. Taylor and choir director is Jan Taylor Ellis at Greater Mount Calvary.

Serving as Master and Mistress of Ceremonies were Deacon Jesse and Deaconess Judy Thompson. Guest speaker for the occasion was Dr. Larry Jointer, pastor of St. James M.B. Church in Brookhaven, MS

PHOTOS BY JAY JOHNSON



Mississippi State Hospital announces Christmas parade winners 2023



Jim Hill High School Band provided the live band energy that every parade needs.

Special to the Mississippi Link

Mississippi State Hospital’s annual Christmas Parade rolled through their campus Friday, December 1 at 10 a.m. Combining a movie and decades idea, this year’s theme was “Top Movies from 1960 to 2010.”

Participants were asked to decorate a float with movie themes such as Jurassic Park, Avatar, Jaws, Cleopatra, Ghostbusters, 9 to 5, Grease, Up, Who Framed Roger Rabbit, Finding Nemo, Batman, Men in Black, The Love Bug, Shrek, Spiderman, Cars, The Lion King and Pirates of the Caribbean.

More than 20 floats and walking groups hit the streets as they kicked off the 2023 Christmas season for patients and residents. There were no actual Christmas movies permitted, but each entry had been encouraged to add a Christmas twist.

Sheila Shows, Volunteer Services director stated, “We are so thankful for the Jim Hill High School Band for participating in this year’s parade. They are long-time volunteers and provided the live band energy that every parade needs.”

Friends of Mississippi State Hospital board members served as parade judges. The awards were presented as follows:

- Most Magical Award: Batman
- Christmas Star Award: Jurassic Park
- Holiday Spirit Award: Up
- Tin Soldier Award: Pirates of the Caribbean
- Christmas Joy Award: Cleopatra
- Best Christmas Twist with Your Theme: Jaws
- Best Support Services Entry: Who Framed Roger Rabbit
- Merry Melodies Award: Grease
- Honorable Mentions: 9 to 5 and Shrek.



The Friends of MSH Board served as judges for the MSH Christmas Parade. Pictured: Bobby Stephens, Amy Walker, Gale Martin, Kim Edwards & Aubree Satterfield, Ray Wallace (president), Kim Rayburn, Dee Payne (treasurer), Marilyn Garth, Danielle Kitchens (WAPT guest judge) and Betty Harpe



Tin Soldier Award – Pirates of the Caribbean, Hinds Behavioral Health Services (Region 9)

The Christmas season continues throughout the month of December with Santa Day on December 19 and volunteer groups visiting with patients and residents at Mississippi State Hospital to celebrate and share the Christmas Spirit.

MSH, a program of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, was

founded in 1855 and helps the individuals it serves achieve mental wellness by encouraging hope, promoting safety, and supporting recovery. The hospital is accredited by the Joint Commission.

Call the MSH Public Relations office at 601 351-8018 for more information.

Maternal mortality rate is much higher for black women than white women in Mississippi, study says

By Emily Wagster Pettus
Associated Press

Black people make up about 38% of Mississippi’s population, but a new study shows that black women were four times more likely to die of causes directly related to pregnancy than white women in the state in 2020.

“It is imperative that this racial inequity is not only recognized, but that concerted efforts are made at the institutional, community, and state levels to reduce these disparate outcomes,” wrote Dr. Michelle Owens and Dr. Courtney Mitchell, leaders of the Maternal Mortality Review Committee that conducted the study.

The Mississippi State Department of Health published the findings Wednesday.

The committee said 80% of pregnancy-related deaths in Mississippi between 2016 and 2020 were considered preventable, and cardiovascular disease and hypertension remain top contributors to maternal mortality.

Women need comprehensive primary care before, during and after pregnancy, but many people live in areas where health care services are scarce, Owens and Mitchell wrote.

“A substantial portion of this care is being shouldered by smaller hospitals with limited resources, many of whom are facing possible closure and limiting or discontinuing the provision of obstetrical services, further increasing the burdens borne by the individuals and their communities,” they wrote.

The Maternal Mortality Review Committee was formed in 2017, and its members include physicians, nurses, public health experts and others who work in health care.

The committee found that from 2016 to 2020, Mississippi’s pregnancy-related mortality rate was 35.2 deaths per 100,000 live births. The study did not provide a comparable five-year number for the U.S. but said the national rate was 20.1 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2019 and 32.9

deaths per 100,000 live births in 2020.

Mississippi has long been one of the poorest states in the U.S., with some of the highest rates of obesity and heart disease.

A state health department program called Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies offers care management and home visits for pregnant women and for infants who are at risk of having health problems.

“Losing one mother is too many,” Dr. Daniel Edney, the state health officer, said in a news release about the maternal mortality study.

The committee recommended that Mississippi leaders expand Medicaid to people who work in lower-wage jobs that don’t provide private health insurance – a policy proposal that Republican Gov. Tate Reeves has long opposed.

Earlier this year, Reeves signed a law allowing postpartum Medicaid coverage for a full year, up from two months.

Medicaid expansion is optional under the health care overhaul that then-President Barack Obama signed into law in 2010, and Mississippi is one of 10 states that have not taken the option. The non-expansion states have Republican governors, Republican-controlled Legislatures or both.

“Medicaid expansion should be incorporated for rural hospitals to remain open and include access to telehealth services,” the Maternal Mortality Review Committee leaders wrote. “There is a need for rural healthcare facilities to provide higher levels of critical care, recruit and retain adequate providers, and have access to life saving equipment, especially in the most vulnerable areas of the state.”

The study examined deaths that occurred during or within one year after pregnancy. It defined pregnancy-related deaths as those “initiated by pregnancy, or the aggravation of an unrelated condition by the physiologic effects of pregnancy” and pregnancy-associated deaths as those “from a cause that is not related to pregnancy.”

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Family of man who died after police used a stun gun on him file lawsuit against Alabama city

The Associated Press

The family of Jawan Dallas, 36, alleges that Mobile police used excessive force that led to his death. The lawsuit, filed in federal court in Mobile, names the city and two unnamed officers as defendants. It seeks \$36 million in damages.

Dallas, 36, died July 2 after he was shocked with a stun gun while police were trying to subdue him.

“He was assaulted multiple times, struck multiple times and tasered multiple times,” attorney Harry Daniels said during a Monday news conference announcing the lawsuit.

The district attorney announced last month that a grand jury cleared the officers of criminal wrongdoing and said Dallas died of underlying medical conditions that were exacerbated by drug use and the struggle with officers.

Attorneys for the family said the body camera footage, which was viewed by the family last month, shows that officers used excessive force. Family attorneys urged the police department to publicly release the video.

The city did not immediately respond to an email seeking comment on the lawsuit.

Biden-Harris Administration launches Safer States Initiative to tackle gun violence



By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

In a move to combat the rising issue of gun violence, Vice President Kamala Harris is leading the Biden-Harris Administration’s Safer States Initiative. The White House said the initiative aims to provide states with essential tools and support to effectively reduce gun violence and save lives, building upon President Biden’s commitment to addressing this critical issue.

The White House established the Office of Gun Violence Prevention in September 2023, under the direction of Vice President Harris, focusing on strengthening federal partnerships with cities and states to support their efforts to reduce gun violence.

To kick-start this initiative, administration officials have unveiled the comprehensive Biden-Harris Safer States Agenda, outlining key actions for states to adopt. These include encouraging states to establish dedicated offices for gun violence prevention, invest in evidence-informed solutions, prioritize support for survivors and victims, reinforce

The lawsuit also contends that officers had no reason to try to detain Dallas and that he was under no suspicion of criminal wrongdoing at the time of the confrontation.

Officers approached Dallas after they responded to a possible burglary report at a trailer park when a 911 caller reported that a “homeless guy” was in his yard. Police approached Dallas, who was in his vehicle at another trailer, and another man who was in the yard at the home. According to the lawsuit, an officer demanded Dallas get out of the car and produce his identification. Dallas had told the officers that they were violating his rights, and he attempted to flee on foot at some point but was tackled by an officer, the lawsuit said.

Attorneys said Dallas can be heard in the body camera video screaming, begging for help and at one point saying, “I can’t breathe. I don’t want to be George Floyd.”

The Dallas family is represented by attorneys Daniels, John Burrus, Ben Crump and Lee Merritt, who have represented families in a number of high-profile cases where black people have died during confrontations with police

NNPA President Chavis will teach Race and Racism Course at Duke University

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

Duke University plans to welcome National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. as the 2024 Environmental Justice and Racial Equity Fellow. A distinguished civil rights leader, global business figure, faith leader, and public intellectual, Chavis will bring his wealth of experience to the inaugural fellowship, linking his teaching, research and service contributions with Duke’s overarching strategic objectives, notably climate change and racial equity.

“I believe Rev. Dr. Chavis embodies the history and hopes of Duke University. His experience at the crossroads of church and society will inspire our racial and environmental justice work,” Dean Edgardo A. Colón-Emeric of the Duke Divinity School, stated. “It’s a gift, in this centennial year, to welcome back a distinguished alum of Duke Divinity School and a prophetic intellectual from rural North Carolina.”

Throughout his illustrious career, Chavis, a North Carolina native, has been a stalwart advocate for social, environmental, and political justice, coining the term “environmental racism” and leading prominent organizations such as the NAACP, National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, and National Council of Churches.

An organizer of the Million Man March, Chavis has led the NNPA, the trade association of over 230 African-American newspapers and media companies comprising the Black Press of America, for nearly a decade.

His fellowship promises to enrich Duke University through expert instruction and scholarly research, offering a



Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis

valuable opportunity for the community to delve into critical issues at the intersection of environmental justice and racial equity.

“Dr. Chavis’ appointment elevates the perspectives of climate justice and the intersection of race and environmental quality in the implementation of Duke’s Climate Commitment,” said Lori Bennear, the Stanback Dean of the Nicholas School of the Environment.

In the upcoming spring semester, Chavis will co-convene an undergraduate course titled “The Lived Experience of Race and Racism” alongside Duke Public Policy Professor Jay Pearson. The Office of Undergraduate Education and the Office of the Provost are

supporting the study, which will examine the complexities of race and racism while highlighting the socially constructed nature of race and its implications across legislative, political, legal, economic and material dimensions.

“Rev. Dr. Ben Chavis is a giant in this regard,” Pearson noted. “We are fortunate to have someone with his experiential expertise and well-deserved reputation earned from working on the front lines for racial justice over many decades. I am honored to share an educational space with him and look forward to the synergies we create during the semester and beyond.”

Now open for registration, the course aims to provide stu-

dents from Duke and Triangle-area colleges and universities with knowledge, effective communication strategies, relationship building and collaborative racial equity planning.

Officials said “The Lived Experience of Race and Racism” course will employ experts from various disciplines with scholarly research and formal educational practices.

The Office of the Provost has scheduled a free, public fireside conversation Monday, Jan. 22, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. at the Karsh Alumni and Visitor Center. Provost Alec Gallimore will engage in a conversation with Chavis, discussing his impactful work and contributions to the fields of environmental justice and racial equity.

Supreme Court to revisit Capitol riot charges

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent

In a development with potentially far-reaching implications, the United States Supreme Court announced Wednesday that it will hear an appeal that could unravel hundreds of convictions linked to the deadly January 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol. The case, revolving around charges related to the Capitol riot, includes accusations against the twice-impeached and four-times indicted former President Donald Trump.

The focus of the Supreme Court’s attention is an appellate ruling that reinstated a charge against three defendants accused of obstructing an official proceeding. The charge explicitly concerns disrupting Congress’ certification of Joe Biden’s 2020 presidential election victory over Trump, who currently faces more than 90 felony criminal charges and whom a civil jury ruled should pay \$5 million in damages for sexually assaulting a writer. The obstruction charge just one of the four counts in the case that special counsel Jack Smith has made alleging that Trump conspired to tamper with election results and obstruct a legal process.

The court’s decision to review the obstruction charge could disrupt the timeline of Trump’s impending trial, currently scheduled for March 4. The justices are also debating whether to quickly rule on Trump’s claim that he cannot face charges for actions taken while he was president, which a federal judge has already rejected.

The Associated Press noted that the ob-



struction charge has been leveled against more than 300 defendants as part of the extensive federal prosecution following the violent insurrection on January 6, 2021, when a mob of Trump supporters stormed the Capitol in an attempt to prevent Biden, a Democrat, from assuming the presidency.

The case’s origins trace back to a lower court judge who dismissed the obstruction charge against Joseph Fischer, a former Boston police officer, and two other defendants, contending that it did not cover their actions. The Supreme Court’s involvement resulted from Fischer’s attorneys filing an appeal. The other defendants involved in the appeal are Edward Jacob Lang from New York’s Hudson Valley and Garret Miller, who has already pleaded guilty to additional charges and

received a 38-month prison sentence. Notably, Miller, hailing from the Dallas area, may still face prosecution on obstruction charges.

U.S. District Judge Carl Nichols played a pivotal role by ruling that prosecutors stretched the law beyond its intended scope in those January 6 cases. Nichols maintained that, under the law, a defendant must have taken specific actions concerning a document, record, or object to obstruct an official proceeding. The Justice Department contested the ruling, and in April, the appeals court in Washington sided with prosecutors, deeming Nichols’ interpretation too restrictive.

More than 1,200 individuals have been charged with federal crimes linked to the Capitol riot, and more than 650 defendants have pleaded guilty.

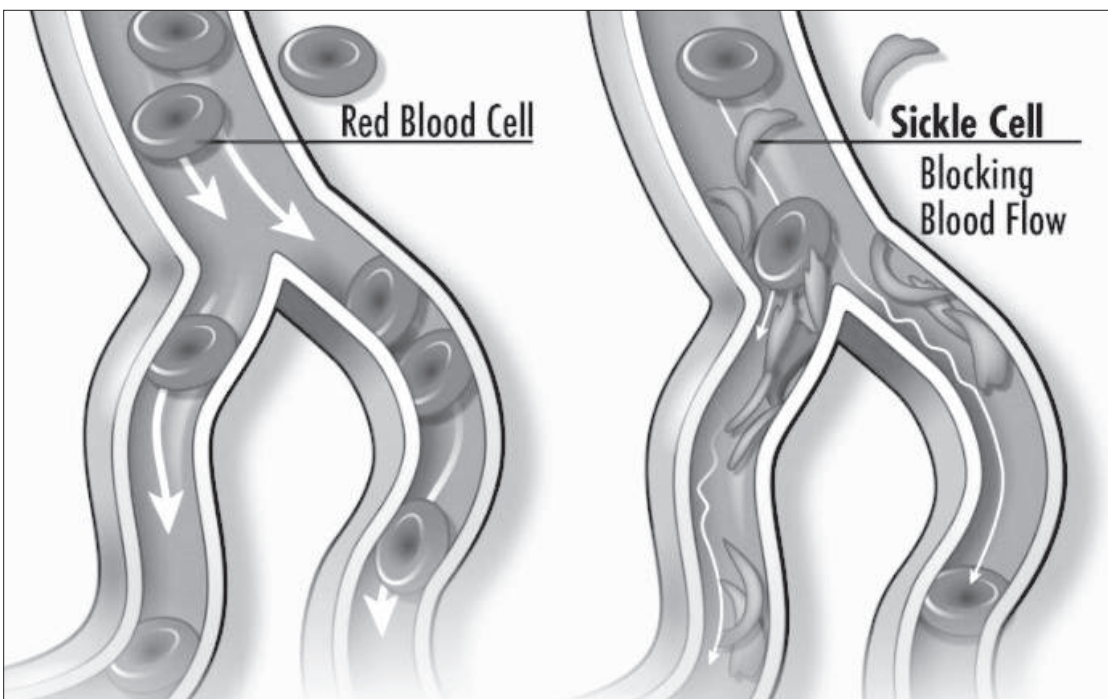
FDA approves groundbreaking cell-based gene therapies for sickle cell disease

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Contributor

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has green-lit two revolutionary cell-based gene therapies, Casgevy and Lyfgenia, marking a significant leap forward in treating sickle cell disease (SCD) for patients aged 12 and older.

The approval by the FDA signifies the commencement of a novel epoch in managing sickle cell disease, providing optimism to individuals whose lives have been significantly disrupted by the arduous condition.

Sickle cell disease, a group of inherited blood disorders, affects around 100,000 individuals in the United States and is predominant among African Americans. Health officials said the root cause of SCD is a mutation affecting hemoglobin, a crucial protein in red blood cells responsible for oxygen delivery. The genetic problem causes red blood cells to have a unique “sickle” shape, which can lead to vaso-occlusive events (VOEs) or vaso-occlusive crises (VOCs), which are very painful and



damage organs. The recurrence of these crises poses life-threatening risks and potential disabilities.

“Sickle cell disease is a rare, debilitating, and life-threatening blood disorder with significant unmet need, and we are excited to advance the field,” said Nicole Verdun, M.D., director of the Office of Therapeutic Products within

the FDA’s Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research.

Casgevy, a groundbreaking cell-based gene therapy, is the first FDA-approved treatment employing CRISPR/Cas9, a revolutionary genome editing technology. The therapy is for individuals 12 years of age or older who have recurrent vaso-occlusive crises. It changes the patient’s hematopoietic stem

cells using CRISPR/Cas9, a technology that can precisely edit DNA.

The edited cells are then transplanted back into the patient, enhancing the production of fetal hemoglobin and preventing the sickling of red blood cells.

Lyfgenia is another cell-based gene therapy that uses a lentiviral vector to change

genes. The FDA approved it for those 12 years of age or older who have SCD and a history of vaso-occlusive events. Lyfgenia changes blood stem cells to make HbAT87Q, gene-therapy-derived hemoglobin that looks like adult hemoglobin and makes it less likely that red blood cells will sickle.

Both therapies utilize the patients’ blood stem cells, administered through a one-time, single-dose infusion following myeloablative conditioning.

“These approvals represent an important medical advance with the use of innovative cell-based gene therapies to target potentially devastating diseases and improve public health,” said Dr. Peter Marks, director of the FDA’s Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research.

The Casgevy and Lyfgenia applications received Priority Review, Orphan Drug, Fast Track, and Regenerative Medicine Advanced Therapy designations. Casgevy was granted approval to Vertex Pharmaceuticals, Inc., and Lyfgenia to Bluebird Bio, Inc.

The FDA said its approval of Casgevy was based on a single-

arm, multicenter trial evaluating its safety and effectiveness in adult and adolescent SCD patients. Of the 44 treated patients, 93.5% achieved freedom from severe VOC episodes for at least 12 consecutive months.

Common side effects included low platelet and white blood cell levels, mouth sores, nausea and musculoskeletal pain.

Lyfgenia’s approval was based on a 24-month multicenter study, with 88% of patients achieving complete resolution of VOEs between 6- and 18-months post-infusion. Side effects included stomatitis, low blood cell levels, and febrile neutropenia. A black box warning highlighting the risk of hematologic malignancy accompanies Lyfgenia’s label, emphasizing the need for lifelong monitoring in patients.

“Today’s actions follow rigorous evaluations of the scientific and clinical data needed to support approval, reflecting the FDA’s commitment to facilitating the development of safe and effective treatments for conditions with severe impacts on human health,” Dr. Marks asserted.

Doctors’ tips to stay healthy during the holiday season

StatePoint

The holiday season is a joyous time to reconnect with family and loved ones, but it also brings unique health and safety risks, according to doctors, who recommend a bit of extra vigilance to protect yourself and those close to you.

“During the hectic holiday season, it can be hard to carve out time to focus on your wellness. Awareness, along with the adoption of a few healthy habits, can help you and your family enjoy this special time of year in the best of health,” says American Medical Association (AMA) president, Jesse M. Ehrenfeld, M.D., M.P.H.

For a healthy, happy season, follow these tips and recommendations from the AMA:

1. Vaccination is the best protection against a number of serious respiratory viruses circulating this fall and winter. To protect yourself and your family, get up to date on your vaccines, including the annual flu shot, as well as the updated COVID-19 vaccine for everyone 6 months and older. Vaccines are also available to protect older adults from severe RSV. New tools to protect infants during RSV season include maternal vaccination as well as the monoclonal antibody immunization.

If you have questions, speak with your physician and review trusted resources, including [getvaccineanswers.org](#).

2. Watch what you eat this holiday season. Pay particular attention to labels and avoid processed foods as much as you can, especially those with added sodium and sugar. Drink water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages, and eat nutritious, whole foods like fresh fruits and vegetables alongside richer holiday fare.

3. If you’re consuming alcohol, drink only in moderation. The U.S. Dietary Guidelines for



Americans defines that as up to one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men, and only by adults of legal drinking age.

4. Make time to exercise during this busy time of year. A good rule of thumb for adults is at least 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity activity, or 75 minutes a week of vigorous-intensity activity. Brisk walks, or even a family trip to the gym, can provide easy and fun ways to get off the couch and elevate your heart rate over the holiday season. If you’re traveling, don’t forget to pack your sneakers.

5. Factors like holiday spending and navigating time with extended family can bring on extra seasonal stress. Invest in your mental health and manage stress by getting sufficient sleep, exercising and seeking help from a mental health professional when you need it.

6. Make smart choices and plan ahead if you’re driving. In December 2021 alone, 1,013 Americans died in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes. Do not under any circumstances drive if you intend to drink. And if you are the designated driver, make a 100% commitment to sobriety.

7. Get your New Year’s resolutions started early. Speak with your doctor or health care professional about quitting tobacco and nicotine use, and declare your home and car smoke-free to eliminate secondhand smoke exposure.

“Amid the holiday cheer, don’t neglect your health and safety. By eating well, exercising, and taking necessary steps to stop the spread of respiratory viruses, you can help protect yourself against common seasonal health risks,” say Dr. Ehrenfeld.

Still smoking? Still got friends that smoke?

By Vince Faust
Tips to Be Fit

“I know smoking is not good for me, but I just can’t seem to quit. I switched to a low tar cigarette. Is that a start?” – Mark, Miami FL

Today’s cigarettes are a lot different than your grandparent’s cigarettes. They have favors, more chemicals, filters, lower tar levels and packaging. If you think you’re doing something special for your lungs by smoking a low tar cigarette you need to think twice. A study found that the risk of lung cancer was the same for participants who smoked medium-tar or very low tar filter cigarettes. There has been a huge increase in the death rates from cancer involving smoker that smoke low tar cigarettes. There is no safe cigarette and there’s no way to edge your bet.

A study that compared cigarettes with very low tar (7 mg mgs or less) filtered, low tar tour (8 to 14 mg) filtered and high tar (22 mg or more) no filter cigarettes and smokers of conventional medium tar (15 to 21 mg) for the risk of lung cancer.

There were over 400,000 men and over 500,000 women 30 years old or older. They were followed for six years to try to determine if there was a relationship between the types of cigarettes that were smoked and death from lung cancer.

All of the smokers had a higher risk of lung cancer than people that never smoke or who had quit. The participants that smoked very low tar and low tar brands had the same risk as the participants that smoked medium tar brands. Men and women who smoked nonfiltered cigarettes with high tar had higher risks of lung cancer.

Other studies have shown that regular smokers of low tar brands often inhaled more deeply or hold the smoke in their lungs longer to compensate for the lower amounts of nicotine and tar.

Any amount of smoke is dangerous from any brand of cigarette.

Exposure to secondhand smoke also called environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) or passive smoke annually, causes an estimated 53,000 deaths among nonsmoking American adults. Of those deaths, 3,000 are from lung cancer and 40,000 deaths from cardiovascular disease. Each year second hand smoke is responsible for 26,000 new asthma cases, up to one million cases of aggravated asthma, up to 300,000 cases of bronchitis and pneumonia in toddlers. 15,000 of these toddlers required hospitalization.

Thirdhand smoke is residual chemicals that include nicotine left on surfaces by tobacco smokers. We are exposed to these chemicals by touching contaminated surfaces or breathing in the off gassing from these surfaces. This residue can react with common indoor pollutants to create toxic mixes including cancer causing compounds, which pose a potential health hazard to the smoker, non-smokers and children.

Thirdhand smoke clings to clothes, furniture, drapes, walls, bedding, carpets, dust, vehicles and other surfaces long after the smoker is gone. The residue from thirdhand smoke builds up on surfaces over time. To remove the residue, hard surfaces, fabrics and upholstery need to be regularly cleaned or laundered. You can’t eliminate thirdhand smoke by airing out rooms, opening windows, using fans or air conditioners or confining smoking to only certain areas of a building.

Children and nonsmoking adults are at risk of tobacco-related health problems when they inhale, swallow or touch substances containing thirdhand smoke. Infants and young children might have increased exposure to thirdhand smoke due to their tendency to mouth objects and

touch affected surfaces.

Almost half (46.8%) of black nonsmokers in the United States are exposed to smoke or smoke residuals. Tobacco smoke exposure is higher among people with low incomes. 2 out of every 5 (43.2%) nonsmokers who lived below the poverty level were exposed to smoke residuals. This means if you are black and below the poverty line you are almost assured you will be exposed to thirdhand smoke.

Don’t be misled into believing that low tar cigarettes are less dangerous. All the studies showed there is very little difference in the brand of cigarettes and lung cancer. The only guaranteed way to reduce the risk to your health, as well as the risk to others, is to stop smoking completely. If you smoke quit.

As an ex-smoker you will find yourself in situations that trigger your urge to smoke. When this happens don’t tell yourself, one cigarette won’t hurt, it will. There are no “buts” about it, you have to think of yourself as a non-smoker. Three days after you’ve quit your body will not need the nicotine. The psychological need will be the obstacle to overcome at this point but it will become easier to resist with time.

You will experience some withdrawal symptoms that may include headaches, intestinal discomfort, mood swings, aggressiveness, irritability and insomnia. These to will pass.

As difficult as it may be to quit remember it’s never too late. Immediately after you quit you will begin to reverse the damage done to your body and reduce your risk for disease. Ten years after cessation an ex-smoker’s risk for heart disease approaches that of a non-smoker and the same applies to lung cancer, fifteen years after cessation.

Before starting any health or fitness program consult your physician.

P R E S E R V E D

The King is coming

By Shewanda Riley
Columnist



Christmas has always been one of my favorite times of year. I like the overall good mood most people are in and love hearing Christmas music nearly everywhere I go. Even as a child, I think that the emotion that I would say best described how I saw Christmas was anticipation. As a kid, I anticipated the joy of getting gifts. Now I anticipate the joy of giving gifts.

Even though I like gifts (getting and giving), another thing I like about the Christmas season is the celebration of Advent, the centuries old tradition that uses the four weeks before Christmas as a time of focused preparation of Christ's birth. Since I wasn't raised a Methodist, it took me a few years when I was a member of a Methodist church in Dallas to fully

understand the importance of Advent. As the candles and podium coverings colors changed each week, it seemed to shift the focus from gift shopping to creating an eagerness about Christ's birth.

Maybe I'm homesick for my former church home, but for some reason this year I find myself thinking more and more about seeing the weeks before Christmas differently. Or maybe it is the chaotic political situation in the United States right now. So much now seems turned upside down with some Christians proudly supporting politicians who have either admitted to or have been accused of treason, illegal and immoral activities.

As disappointing as it is that some Christians are supporting these obviously un-Christlike individuals, it's an even greater disappointment that the most hateful racist and sexist remarks are being made during this season of the anticipation of the birth of

Christ. It's obvious that these actions go against the teachings of love and compassion Christ.

2 Timothy 4:3-4 warns about what appears to be happening right now with these "Christians: "For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine and accurate instruction [that challenges them with God's truth]; but wanting to have their ears tickled [with something pleasing], they will accumulate for themselves [many] teachers [one after another, chosen] to satisfy their own desires and to support the errors they hold, and will turn their ears away from the truth and will wander off into myths and man-made fictions [and will accept the unacceptable] (Amplified)."

The sad part is that some Christians are so deceived that they either do not realize or care about the irony of the timing. This is a modern language version of a familiar scripture that describes

our contemporary times so very accurately. I recently witnessed this happening with one person so convinced that her version of Christianity was right that it did not matter to her how hurtful her perspective was.

So, as we have a few weeks left before Christmas, imagine how things would be if instead of focusing on shopping for gifts for people that we may or may not like or politics, we spent time focusing on celebrating the anticipation, hope, joy and love found in the birth of Jesus Christ.

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.

P A R T 1

A world's cry, love one another

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



We are shaped by those who love us or refuse to love us, and by those whom we love or refuse to love. Love is crucial. This is no news to God – He created us for love, and Jesus said our love for God and for our neighbor is the fulfillment of all the law of God. The world cries out for genuine love, love which heals, unites and encourages.

It's a well-known fact that children who receive an inadequate amount of love from their parents either die in infancy or grow up to be mentally and spiritually stunted adults. Stories about the absence of love are frequently found in literature beginning in the earliest days of history.

Agape is a love which comes from a God who is love. It is love lavished upon others without a thought of whether they are worthy to receive it. It is this kind of love that is to characterize the Christian. We read in 1 John 4:11-13, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. 12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. 13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit."

At least fifty-five times in the New Testament we are commanded to love. It is one of Scripture's most repeated, inescapable directives for the believer. It touches us in all our relationships and affects us in each of the many roles we play – as parents, spouses, children, friends and fellow believers.

It even defines the way we are to respond to our enemies (Matthew 5:43-44). Christ provided the crowning example of this when from the cross He prayed for those who were abusing Him. Romans 5:8-10 tells us He died for us even when we were yet His enemies.

Believers are to follow the way of love (1 Corinthians 14:1), to do everything in love (1 Corinthians 16:14), to serve one another in love (Ephesians 4:2), to live a life of love (Ephesians 5:2) to speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), to put on love (Colossians 3:12-14), to pursue love (1 Timothy 2:22), to spur one another on to love (Hebrews 10:24), and to love not only in words but in actions and truth (1 John 3:18). We are to be controlled by the Holy Spirit and to bear the fruit of the spirit which is love (Galatians 5:22). God is concerned that we grow and mature in this love. Three times in Paul's epistles and one in Peter's writing we are told to continue to grow in love. Simeon R. Green, III, First Church of God 6517 Walmsley Blvd. Richmond, Virginia 23224.

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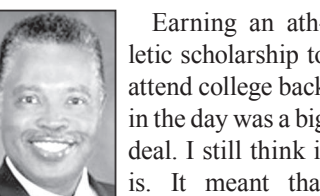
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Should college scholars be able to receive the same NIL agreements as college athletes?

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



Earning an athletic scholarship to attend college back in the day was a big deal. I still think it is. It meant that you distinguished yourself as a high school athlete and receiving the scholarship was a reward for your accomplishments. It also meant that families were relieved of paying for college expenses. We know the cost of college is increasing every year. It was a proud moment in your community if you received a scholarship to play a sport in college.

Humbly, I say that I was in that

position many years ago. As I reflect now, there was a high degree of humility from the student-athletes who received them. There were no press conferences and generally not a lot of publicity. Newspaper and television coverage was minimal. Family members and friends knew and that was about it. Over time, reports would surface about the college student-athletes being paid to play sports. It is my opinion that, in some cases, that probably did happen. Some players that we know have publicly admitted that they received some financial considerations. However, that has largely been a non-issue with college athletes. Now, let's fast forward to July 2021. The NCAA approved

a name, image and likeness concept that basically allowed college players to make some money. However no federal or NCAA guidelines have been implemented. If this continues to go unchecked this could become a problem. The number of student-athletes taking advantage of these NIL agreements continues to increase each year. Some athletes will get more deals than other athletes. Will this cause some problems with on-field performance? There are different opinions on that question. Some athletes, because of their potential, will get NIL agreements. The opportunities are there for the taking. NIL and the transfer portal are the two biggest things in college athletics

right now. This is my opinion. Female athletes are also taking full advantage of these NIL agreements. LSU basketball player Angel Reese is doing quite well from an NIL standpoint. She continues to increase her market value. Being a national champion certainly helps her case. Maybe my background in higher education has led me to this novel idea. The idea is why not have NIL agreements for academically talented college students? I suspect there would have to be some tweaks when it comes to financial commitments by companies and corporations. Students would have to be assured they would not lose any college credits or must stay in college longer.

College faculty have been able to receive prestigious awards and recognition for their work. For example, the MacArthur Fellowships are awarded for intellectual and artistic achievement. Critics of the NIL agreements might ask two questions. First, would a student be able to remain at the same school. The answer would be yes. It would be no different than what is currently happening with student-athletes. Second, how important is school loyalty? I suspect that students receiving NIL agreements would have to gauge that for themselves. As we can see now, some student-athletes stay, and others leave for another college experience. Monetary gain in higher education so far has been limited

to coaches, players and faculty members. Academically talented students have not benefitted as much from companies. While study abroad programs and internships are available, NIL agreements would break new ground for deserving students. Just as there was a groundswell of support for NIL agreements for student athletes, there can also be that same support for talented scholars. It is my hope that colleges will align themselves with businesses and begin discussions about ways to assist the next generation of leaders. There is a time and place for everything. Maybe it is the time for NIL agreements for the best and brightest students in our colleges and universities.

Merry Christmas everybody

By Jannie Johnson
Caring n' Sharing



It's Christmastime in America, the land of the free and the home of the brave. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.... The Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6a,c) Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men. Luke 2:4 Telling the Christmas story at Christmastime is an American tradition. It is a tradition to be remembered and passed on.... Christmas is a Christian holiday. It celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ, the Christ of Christmas. No one knows the exact date of Christ's birth, but most Christians observe Christmas on December 25. On this day, many go to church, where they participate in special religious services. During the Christmas season, people exchange gifts

and decorate their homes with holly, mistletoe, Christmas trees, wreaths and lights. Many churches display the Nativity scene. It shows figures of the Holy family, Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus surrounded by farm animals. Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head. In many parts of the United States, groups of carolers walk from house to house singing Christmas songs: "Silent Night," "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," "O Holy Night." It's a tradition. Some traditions should be remembered and passed on because they are more than just customs. We Americans can sense the difference. We can separate "the baby from the bath water" without throwing a tantrum or going into an emotional tizzy. The question is who among us will dare to defend America's right to keep Christ in Christmas? Who will commit to the unspoken,

unwritten duty of recording, preserving and handing down those tradition that have made America uniquely America? "(It is) our duty to present that which is timeless (the same yesterday, today and tomorrow) in the particular language of our age... our teaching must be timeless at its heart and wear a modern dress." – C. S. Lewis When I think about adult responsibility and civil duty, a little story comes to mind: Once upon a time, there were four people named Everybody, Somebody, Nobody and Anybody. When there was an important job to be done, Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Everybody got angry because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought that Somebody would do it, but Nobody realized that Nobody would do it. So it ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could

have done in the first place. On this Christmas day, in the midst of enjoying and admiring our children, grandchildren and family, let us remember that they need more than gifts from the store. They need the intangible gifts, too. They need to know how to live with themselves and others. They need to know how to cope with the pressures of life, the pressures of growing up, becoming and remaining responsible people. They need the gift of "insulation" to help them to weather the storms of life. They need controls within to be honest, trustworthy and industrious all year round. They also need the gift of Truth from above because sometimes the difference between right and wrong is the razor edge of truth. "Wisdom does not consist in knowing more that is new, but in knowing less that is false." – Josh Billings Now to you and yours an old-fashioned Christmas and a traditional New Year!

All I want for Christmas is you

By LaShunda Calvert, Ph.D.
Tips for a Good Marriage



One of the greatest Christmas songs to ever be written is titled, "All I Want for Christmas is You," by Mariah Carey. I love the music, the sound, the beats and melody of the song but most importantly, I love the message of the song more than anything. Although, there was some controversy centered around the origin of this song, it is one of my favorite Christmas songs to listen and dance to during the most wonderful time of the year. In fact, some consider Carey's song to be the official beginning of the Christmas season. Furthermore, according to USA Today, it has hit the top of the Billboard 100 chart numerous times. All in all, "All I Want for Christmas," is a song that conveys a meaningful message, which opposes many of our long holiday wish lists. Some of the popular lyrics include: I don't want a lot for Christmas There is just one thing I need I don't care about the presents underneath the Christmas tree I just want you for my own More than you could ever know Make my wish come true All I Want for Christmas is you Carey basically emphasizes that she is more interested in having the one thing she needs and wants. What she wants for Christmas exceeds Christmas presents. She makes presents plural; doesn't matter if its diamonds under the tree, doesn't matter if its designer bags, designer clothes and shoes, new cookware set, gift cards, etc. all she wants for Christmas is the man she loves to be her own. Carey goes further and expresses that she doesn't need to hang her Christmas stockings on the fireplace, she doesn't want Santa Claus to bring her a toy for Christmas, she's not even interested in asking for snow; she just wants one thing, which is her soulmate. Do you share the same sentiments about your spouse? Does the presents matter? Do the Christmas dinners and Christmas parties matter? Do Christmas vacations matter? Would you rather have your husband or wife as your own rather than what he or she can give you or what gifts you could receive? In other words, if you could have anything you wanted under the tree versus having your spouse; which one would you choose? I already know that some of you immediately chose the stuff (pres-

ents) versus the spouse, which is understandable depending on the spouse you have unfortunately. However, for those of you, who have a good spouse – a spouse who is not perfect but is trying, wouldn't you rather have him or her than a bunch of presents? Most gifts can't fill the void of loneliness, you can't bond with most gifts, you can't reasonably communicate with most gifts, many gifts can't provide affection, touch, attention, time, love, empathy, friendship, intimacy, affirmation, warmth, comfort, and even happiness, well at least not long-term happiness. Should we bombard our spouses with a long list or even a short list of items we want for Christmas? Don't get me wrong, it is nothing wrong with asking your spouse for a gift or gifts for Christmas (I gave my husband my list months ago). But if your spouse is unable to purchase what you really want for Christmas – shouldn't you reassure them that all you need is he or she for Christmas? In the instance that you can't get what you want in general for Christmas, is having your spouse and family enough for Christmas? Please realize that you are blessed to have a spouse who loves you and vice versa. In conclusion, it is hard to find love today. I know many who are sad, hurt, and deeply lonely because they don't have a significant other in their life. Further, I know spouses, whose spouses have passed away, who wish they could spend one more Christmas with them. Also, I know many spouses who are separated and divorced suffering in pain and turmoil wishing that things were different. Therefore, if you love your spouse and you have no doubt that he or she is your soulmate – embrace, celebrate and enjoy each other for Christmas even if you don't have multiple presents, etc. I have reassured my husband that all I want for Christmas is him! I believe the best gift you can give your spouse is reassuring your spouse is that all I want for Christmas is you. Contact Dr. LaShunda Calvert for speaking engagements (motivational, ministering, marriage counseling, marriage workshops, marriage seminars, marriage conferences, etc.) Marriage Ministry: The Restoration Church, Suite H, Jackson, MS. 39206, on: Instagram: letsstay2gether4ever (Dr. LaShunda Calvert) Facebook: Dr. LaShunda Calvert Email:letsstaytogether4eva@gmail.com or 601-874-6176.

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LEGAL

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A USE PERMIT
ZONING CASE NO. 4236

By virtue of and pursuant to the authority and direction of that Ordinance by the City Council of Jackson, Mississippi, appearing in Minute Book 3G at page 115 thereof, notice is hereby given to all persons interested in or in any way affected thereby, that Ebony Pearls Foundation Incorporated has filed with the Planning Board for the City of Jackson, an application requesting a Use Permit to allow for the operation of a community recreational center within a C-3 (General) Commercial District on property located at 6060 Bonita St. (Parcel 709-4-5) in the First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi, and being more particularly described as:

That certain tract or parcel of land situated in Section 1, T6N-R1E, Jackson, Hinds County, Mississippi, and being more particularly described as follows: Beginning at the Western most corner of Lot 1, Block H, of Beverley Heights, Part I, as recorded in Plat Book 7 at Page 17 of the Chancery Records of Hinds County, Mississippi, and run thence S 63 degrees 30' E, along the Southern boundary of said Block H of Beverley Heights, Part I, 212.00 1; run then S 27 degrees 33' W, 293.18'; run thence N 62 degrees 27' W, 20.00'; run thence S 27 degrees 33' W, 112.50'; run thence N 62 degrees 27' W, 141.11' to the East boundary of Lot 33, Block K, Beverley Heights, Part 3, as recorded in Plat Book 11 Page 36 of the aforesaid Chancery records; run thence N O degrees 00' 57" E, along the East boundary of said Lot 33, 40.68 1 to the NE corner thereof; run thence N 62 degrees 361 37" W, along the Northern boundary of Lot 33, 3209' to the Eastern R.O.W. line of Bonita Avenue; run thence N 27 degrees 33' E, along the said East R.O.W. line of Bonita Avenue, 369.52 to the point of beginning, containing 1.888 acres, more or less,

Plus: A non-exclusive easement for ingress and egress over that certain tract of land also situated in Section 1, Township 6 North, Range 1 East, First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi, and described as follows:

Commence at the Western most corner of Lot 1, Block H, of Beverley Heights, Part I, as recorded in Plat Book 7 at Page 17 of the Chancery Records of Hinds County, Mississippi, and run thence S 27 degrees 33' W, along the Eastern R.O.W. line of Bonita Avenue, 293.00' to the Point of Beginning for the herein described easement; run thence S 62 degrees 27' E, 334.90' to the beginning of a curve; run thence Southeasterly, counter-clockwise, along the arc of said curve, 132.92 1 to the point of tangency; said curve having the following characteristics: central angle of 27 degrees 13' 03", radius of 279.81' and chord bearing and distance of S74 degrees 02 1 44" E, 131.67"; run thence S 89 degrees 40' 03" E, 362.38' to the Western R.O.W. line of Interstate Highway 55, as it is now (July 1989) in use; run thence S 3 degrees 51' 07" W, along the Western R.O.W. line of Interstate Highway 55, 60.11'; run thence N 89 degrees 40' 03" W, 358.69' to the beginning of a curve; run thence Northwesterly, clockwise, along the arc of said curve, 161.42' to the point of tangency; said curve having the following characteristics: central angle of 27 degrees 13' 03", radius of 339.81' and the chord bearing and distance of N 74 degrees 02 44" W, 159.91"; run thence N 62 degrees 27' W, 334.98' to the Eastern R.O.W. line of Bonita Avenue; run thence N 27 degrees 33' E, along the Eastern R.O.W. line of Bonita Avenue, 60.00' to the point of beginning. (the "Subject Property")

Said application will be heard at the City Planning Board Hearing in the Andrew Jackson Conference Room, First Floor, Warren A. Hood Building, 200 S. President Street in Jackson, Mississippi, at 1:30 p.m., on Wednesday, December 20, 2023, at which time all parties interested in or affected thereby will be heard both pro and con on said question, after which a record will be established upon which the City Planning Board can make its recommendation to the City Council of Jackson. Any objection thereto may be made by any person owning property within the area, and if made in writing must be filed with the City Zoning Administrator before said time if a hearing thereof or consideration thereof is desired, or by counsel on said date. If a request is made to the Zoning Administrator at least 72 hours in advance, the City will take steps to accommodate citizens need for interpreters or auxiliary aids for the visually/hearing impaired.

DUE TO COVID-19 AND THE CONCERN FOR THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE, THE PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS AND THE APPLICANTS HAVE THE OPTION TO ATTEND THE MEETING VIA TELECONFERENCE/VIDEO OR IN PERSON WITH REGARDS TO THE WEARING OF MASKS AND THE SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND VIA TELECONFERENCE/VIDEO BY EMAILING EAINSWORTH@CITY.JACKSON.MS.US TO REGISTER PRIOR TO DECEMBER 13, 2023.

WITNESS my signature this 22nd day of November 2023.

/s/Ester L. Ainsworth
Zoning Administrator
City of Jackson, Mississippi

11/30/23, 12/14/23

LEGAL

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A SPECIAL EXCEPTION
ZONING CASE NO. 4237

By virtue of and pursuant to the authority and direction of that Ordinance by the City Council of Jackson, Mississippi, appearing in Minute Book 3G at page 115 thereof, notice is hereby given to all persons interested in or in any way affected thereby, that Myriam B. Richard has filed with the Planning Board for the City of Jackson, an application requesting a Special Exception to allow for the operation of a residential community facility within a R-4 (Limited Multi-family) Residential District on property located at 1031 North Congress St. (Parcel 41-17) in the First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi, and being more particularly described as:

Commencing at a 1/2" iron rebar found at the intersection of the north right-of-way line of Fortification Street with the west right-of-way line North Congress Street and thence run North 00 degrees 39 minutes 22 seconds East, along the west right-of-way line of said North Congress Street, for a distance of 180.65 feet to a 1/2" iron rebar found, said point also being the True Point of Beginning of the tract herein described:

From the True Point of Beginning thence leave said right-of-way and run South 89 degrees 53 minutes 13 seconds West for a distance of 149.45 feet to a 1/2" iron rebar found in the centerline of an abandoned 10 foot alley; thence run North 00 degrees 16 minutes 44 seconds East, along said centerline of alley, for a distance of 71.83 feet to a 1/2" iron rebar set; thence leave said alley and run North 89 degrees 55 minutes 25 seconds East for a distance of 149.49 feet to a 1/2" iron rebar set; thence run South 00 degrees 18 minutes 33 seconds West for a distance of 71.73 feet back to the True Point of Beginning, and being situated in Lot 73 of the H.C. Daniels Official City Map, dated 1875, City of Jackson, Hinds County, Mississippi.

Said application will be heard at the City Planning Board Hearing in the Andrew Jackson Conference Room, First Floor, Warren A. Hood Building, 200 S. President Street in Jackson, Mississippi, at 1:30 p.m., on Wednesday, December 20, 2023, at which time all parties interested in or affected thereby will be heard both pro and con on said question, after which a record will be established upon which the City Planning Board can make its recommendation to the City Council of Jackson. Any objection thereto may be made by any person owning property within the area, and if made in writing must be filed with the City Zoning Administrator before said time if a hearing thereof or consideration thereof is desired, or by counsel on said date. If a request is made to the Zoning Administrator at least 72 hours in advance, the City will take steps to accommodate citizens need for interpreters or auxiliary aids for the visually/hearing impaired.

DUE TO COVID-19 AND THE CONCERN FOR THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE, THE PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS AND THE APPLICANTS HAVE THE OPTION TO ATTEND THE MEETING VIA TELECONFERENCE/VIDEO OR IN PERSON WITH REGARDS TO THE WEARING OF MASKS AND THE SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND VIA TELECONFERENCE/VIDEO BY EMAILING EAINSWORTH@CITY.JACKSON.MS.US TO REGISTER PRIOR TO DECEMBER 13, 2023.

WITNESS my signature this 22nd day of November 2023.

/s/Ester L. Ainsworth
Zoning Administrator
City of Jackson, Mississippi

11/30/23, 12/14/23

LEGAL

Advertisement For Bids
MEDIUM TO HEAVY DUTY LOW OR NO EMISSION TRANSIT BUSES
CITY PROJECT NO. RFP#2023-04

Sealed bids will be received by the City Clerk of the City of Jackson, Mississippi at the office of the City Clerk, City Hall, 219 South President Street, P.O. Box 17, Jackson, Mississippi 39205 until 3:30 P.M. CST, Tuesday, February 6, 2024, from qualified providers to manufacture and delivery of medium to heavy duty Low or No Emission Transit Buses, along with training, testing/diagnostic equipment and special tools in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth in RFP #2023-04. The Contract shall be a firm-fixed-price contract over the term of five (5) years. Each proposer must submit six (6) signed copies of its proposal and of the required forms, certifications, and affidavits attached hereto or electronically submit on www.centralbidding.com.

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 provision of the City of Jackson's Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Executive Order. Failure to comply with the City's Executive Order 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 Division of Equal Business Opportunity at 601-960-1856. Copies of the Executive Order, EBO Plan Applications and a copy of the program are available at 200 South President Street, Suite 223, 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, or sex, in consideration for an award.

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 ensures that the Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), as outlined in 49 C.F.R. Part 26, as amended, have the maximum opportunity to participate in the performance of contracts. Therefore, it is imperative that you read the DBE Section and complete the necessary paperwork in its entirety. If there is any evidence or indication that two or more bidders are in collusion to restrict competition or are otherwise engaged in anti-competitive practices, the submission of all such bidders shall be rejected, and such evidence may be cause for disqualification of the participants in any future solicitation undertaken by the City of Jackson.

Bids shall be made out on the bid proposal forms to be provided, sealed in an envelope and plainly marked on the outside of the envelope: "Bid for MEDIUM TO HEAVY DUTY LOW OR NO EMISSION TRANSIT BUSES (RFP)#2023-04." Bids, EBO and DBE plans shall be submitted in triplicate (bound/stapled separately), sealed and deposited with the City Clerk, City Hall, Jackson, Mississippi prior to the hour and date hereinbefore designated. No bidder may withdraw his bid within 90 days after the actual date of the opening thereof.

Official Bid Documents can be downloaded from Central Bidding at www.centralbidding.com. Electronic Bids may be submitted at www.centralbidding.com. For any questions related to the electronic bidding process, please call Central Bidding at 225-810-4814.

Awarding public contracts to non-resident Bidders will be on the same basis as the non-resident bidder's state awards contracts to Mississippi Contractors bidding under similar circumstances. Current state law, Mississippi General Laws of 2010, Chapter 383, section 31-3-21 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended, requires a non-resident bidder to attach to the bid a copy of the Bidder's resident state's current laws pertaining to such state's treatment of nonresident contractors. Non-resident bidders must attach to their bid a copy of any bid preference law of the state, city, county, parish, province, nation or political subdivision where they are domiciled. If there is no such law where they are domiciled, all non-resident bidders shall attach a letter to their bid stating that there is no bid preference law where they are domiciled. The bid of any non-resident bidder who fails to attach to its bid a copy of its domicile's bid preference law or a letter stating that its domicile has no such bid preference law, whichever is applicable, shall be rejected and not considered for award.

The City of Jackson hereby notifies all Bidders that minority and women business enterprises are solicited to bid on these contracts as prime contractors and are encouraged to make inquiries regarding potential subcontracting opportunities, equipment, material and/or supply needs.

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

Christine Welch, Deputy Director
Office of Transportation

12/7/2023; 12/14/2023; 12/28/2023; 1/4/2024; 1/11/2024; 1/18/2024; 1/25/2024; 2/1/2024

LEGAL

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF NORNEE SIMPSON, DECEASED CAUSE NO. P.2023-491 M/4

PETITIONER: ARUNDEL SIMPSON

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 Nornee Simpson, Deceased, notice is hereby given to all persons having claims against said estate to present the same to the Clerk of this Court for probaton 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 4 day of December, 2023.

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
COUNTY OF Hinds

Personally appeared before me, the undersigned authority in and for the jurisdiction aforesaid, the within named, Arundel Simpson, Administrator for the Estate of Nornee Simpson, deceased, who having been by me first duly sworn, states that the above Notice to Creditors is true and correct as therein stated.

Arundel Simpson
NOTARY

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



12/14/2023 12/21/23 12/28/23

LEGAL

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A VARIANCE
ZONING CASE NO. 4235

By virtue of and pursuant to the authority and direction of that Ordinance by the City Council of Jackson, Mississippi, appearing in Minute Book 3G at page 115 thereof, notice is hereby given to all persons interested in or in any way affected thereby, that the Martin Ingram has filed with the Planning Board for the City of Jackson, an application requesting a four foot (4') Variance from the required twenty-five feet (25') front yard setback requirements for properties within a R-1A/R-1 (Single-Family) Residential District to allow for the construction of a carport for the property located at 1322 Simwood Place (Parcel 450-186) in the First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi, and being more particularly described as:

LOT FOURTEEN (14), ROXBURY PARK SUBDIVISION, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF ON FILE IN THE OFFICE OF THE CHANCERY CLERK OF HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI IN PLAT BOOK 14 AT PAGE 41, LESS AND EXCEPT BEGINNING AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF LOT 14; THENCE NORTHERLY ALONG THE EASTERN BOUNDARY LINE OF LOT 14 FOR A DISTANCE OF 108.62 FEET TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF LOT 15, ROXBURY PARK; THENCE TURN LEFT 89 DEGEES 24 MINUTES AND GO WESTERLY 7 FEET; THENCE TURN LEET AND GO SOUTHERLY AND PARALLEL TO THE EASTERN LINE OF LOT 14 A DISTANCE OF 108 FEET TO THE NORTH LINE OF SIMWOOD PLACE; THENCE TURN LEFT AND GO EASTERLY 7 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

Said application will be heard at the City Planning Board Hearing in the Andrew Jackson Conference Room, First Floor, Warren A. Hood Building, 200 S. President Street in Jackson, Mississippi, at 1:30 p.m., on Wednesday, December 20, 2023, at which time all parties interested in or affected thereby will be heard both pro and con on said question, after which a record will be established upon which the City Planning Board can make its recommendation to the City Council of Jackson. Any objection thereto may be made by any person owning property within the area, and if made in writing must be filed with the City Zoning Administrator before said time if a hearing thereof or consideration thereof is desired, or by counsel on said date. If a request is made to the Zoning Administrator at least 72 hours in advance, the City will take steps to accommodate citizens need for interpreters or auxiliary aids for the visually/hearing impaired.

DUE TO COVID-19 AND THE CONCERN FOR THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE, THE PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS AND THE APPLICANTS HAVE THE OPTION TO ATTEND THE MEETING VIA TELECONFERENCE/VIDEO OR IN PERSON WITH REGARDS TO THE WEARING OF MASKS AND THE SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND VIA TELECONFERENCE/VIDEO BY EMAILING EAINSWORTH@CITY.JACKSON.MS.US TO REGISTER PRIOR TO DECEMBER 13, 2023.

WITNESS my signature this 22nd day of November 2023.

/s/Ester L. Ainsworth
Zoning Administrator
City of Jackson, Mississippi

11/30/23, 12/14/23

LEGAL

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF AREATHA S. RULE, DECEASED CAUSE NO. P.2022-622 G/2

PETITIONER: JAMAL RULE

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 Areatha S. Rule, Deceased, notice is hereby given to all persons having claims against said estate to present the same to the Clerk of this Court for probaton 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 5th day of July, 2023.

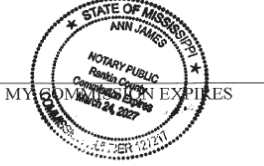
Jamal Rule
Janial Rule, Administrator

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
COUNTY OF Hinds

Personally appeared before me, the undersigned authority in and for the jurisdiction aforesaid, the within named, Jamal Rule, Administrator for the Estate of Areatha S. Rule, deceased, who having been by me first duly sworn, states that the above Notice to Creditors is true and correct as therein stated.

Damon Stevenson
NOTARY

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



12/7/2023 12/14/2023 12/21/2023

LEGAL

NOTICE OF APPEAL FOR A REZONING
ZONING CASE NO. 4228

By virtue of and pursuant to the authority and direction of that Ordinance by the City Council of Jackson, Mississippi, appearing in Minute Book 3G at page 115 thereof, notice is hereby given to all persons interested in or in any way affected thereby, that Kristi Kirkwood has filed with the Planning Board for the City of Jackson, an application requesting a Rezoning from R-1A (Single-Family) Residential District to R-2 (Single-Family & Two-Family) Residential District to allow for the construction of a two family residential unit for the property located at 0 Old Canton Rd. (Parcel 564-16) in the First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi, and being more particularly described as:

Lot 1, Block B, Canton Club Subdivision, Part 1, a subdivision according to the map or plat thereof which is on file and record in the office of the Chancery Clerk of Hinds County at Jackson, Mississippi, in Plat Book 12 at Page 26 thereof, reference to which is made in aid of and as a part of this description. And being the same property described in Instrument recorded in Book 4584 at Page 507.

Said application was heard by the City Planning Board on Wednesday, October 25, 2023 with a recommendation to deny. The applicant has filed an Appeal of the recommendation of the Planning Board. The Case will be heard at the City Council's Zoning Meeting in the Council Chambers, First Floor, City Hall, 219 S. President Street in Jackson, Mississippi, at 2:30 p.m., on Monday, December 18, 2023.

WITNESS my signature this 21st day of November 2023.

/s/Ester L. Ainsworth
Zoning Administrator
City of Jackson, Mississippi

11/30/23, 12/14/23

LEGAL

Electronic Bidding
Advertisement for Bids
Bid 3253 ESSER Renovations for Murrah High School

Sealed, written formal bid proposals for the above bid will be received by the Board of Trustees of the Jackson Public School District, in the Business Office, 662 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi, until 10:00 A.M. (Local Prevailing Time) Tuesday, January 30, 2024, at which time and place they will be publicly opened and read aloud. A Pre-Bid Conference concerning the project for Murrah High School will be held at 1400 Murrah Drive, Jackson, MS 39202 on Thursday, January 18, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. Attendance at the pre-bid conference is not mandatory but strongly encouraged. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive informalities, and to withhold the acceptance of any bid if approved for forty-five calendar days from the date bids are opened.

Plan holders are required to register and order bid documents at www.jpdsmsprojects.com. A \$300.00 Non-refundable deposit shall be required on each set of bid specs/documents and must be purchased through the website. All plan holders are required to have a valid email address for registration. Questions regarding website registration and online orders, please contact Plan House Printing, 607 W. Main Street, Tupelo, MS 38804, (662) 407-0193. Questions regarding bid documents please contact Cody Farris at Duvall Decker. Phone:601-713-1128 or Email: cnf@duvalldecker.com.

Until further notice, all hand delivery proposals delivered between 9:00 a.m. until 9:59 a.m. (local prevailing time) the date the bid is scheduled to open, must be delivered to JPSD Board Room, 621 South State Street, Jackson, MS 39201. All bid openings will be recorded and uploaded to the JPSD web site at www.jackson.k12.ms.us at YouTube: /JPSITV for public viewing. Due to COVID 19, vendors will not be allowed to sit in on bids openings.

12/07/23, 12/14/23

LEGAL

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A REZONING
ZONING CASE NO. 4238

By virtue of and pursuant to the authority and direction of that Ordinance by the City Council of Jackson, Mississippi, appearing in Minute Book 3G at page 115 thereof, notice is hereby given to all persons interested in or in any way affected thereby, that OPAL Fuels has filed with the Planning Board for the City of Jackson, an application requesting a Rezoning from I-1 (Light) Industrial District to I-2 (Heavy) Industrial District to allow for the installation of a renewable natural gas CNG Station at the property located at 605 E. McDowell Rd. (Parcel 602-4) in the First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi, and being more particularly described as:

Tract 1: The following described land and property situated in the First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi, to-wit:

Part of Lot 3 of the Ellen L. Poindexter Survey in the East ½ of the NW ¼ of Section 21, Township 5 North, Range 1 East, First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi, and being more particularly described by metes and bounds as:

Commence at the NW corner of Lot 3 of the Ellen L. Poindexter Survey situated in Section 21, Township 5 North, Range 1 East, First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi, said point being on the centerline of the McDowell Road Right-Of-Way (being 80 feet in width) as is presently laid out and existing and proceed thence S 0 degrees 30 minutes W for 40 feet to a point on the South line of McDowell Road; thence S 89 degrees 24 minutes E along the South line of McDowell Road for 80 feet to the NW corner of the Bel Air Enterprises, Inc. property; thence S 0 degrees 30 minutes W along the West line of the Bel Air Enterprises, Inc. property for 976.0 feet; thence S 19 degrees 13 minutes E along the West line of the Bel Air Enterprises, Inc. property for 439.4 feet; thence S 86 degrees 31 minutes E along the South line of the Bel Air Enterprises, Inc. property for 142.8 feet to the SW corner and the point of beginning of the property herein described; continue thence S 86 degrees 31 minutes E along the South line of the Bel Air Enterprises, Inc. property for 961.3 feet to the SE corner of the Bel Air Enterprises, Inc. property; said point being on the East line of Lot 3, Ellen L. Poindexter Survey; thence N 0 degrees 30 minutes E along the East line of Lot 3 for 755.0 feet; thence North 89 degrees 30 minutes W for 960.0 feet; thence South 0 degrees 30 minutes W for 705 feet to the point of beginning of the property herein described.

Tract 2:
6.0035 Acres more or less in Lot 3 of the Ellen L. Poindexter Survey in the East Half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 21, Township 5 North, Range 1 East, First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi and being more particularly described by metes and bounds as follows:

Commence at the northwest corner of the said Lot 3 of the Ellen L. Poindexter Survey, said northwest corner being on the centerline of east McDowell Road right of way (being 80 feet in width), and run thence south 0 degrees 30 minutes west for a distance of 40.0 feet to a point on the south right of way line of East McDowell Road; run thence south 89 degrees 24 minutes east along said south right of way line of East McDowell Road for a distance of 970.0 feet to an Iron Pin which marks the POINT OF BEGINNING for the parcel herein described; continue thence along the said southerly right of way line of East McDowell Road for a distance of 158.39 feet to an Iron Pin; thence turn through an interior angle of 89 degrees 39 minutes and run southerly for a distance of 200.0 feet to an Iron Pin; thence turn through an interior angle of 270 degrees 21 minutes and run easterly for a distance of 200.0 feet to an Iron Pin; thence turn through an interior angle of 89 degrees 39 minutes and run southerly along the east line of the said Lot 3 of the Ellen L. Poindexter Survey for a distance of 492.45 feet to an Iron Pin; thence turn through an interior angle of 90 degrees 27 minutes and run westerly along the north line of Miss Jack property for a distance of 493.15 feet to an Iron Pin; thence turn through an interior angle of 90 degrees 01 minute and run northerly along the east line of A-1 Self Storage for a distance of 240.0 feet to an Iron Pin; thence turn through an interior angle of 179 degrees 53 minutes and run northerly along the east line of W. W. Grainger property for a distance of 153.3 feet to an Iron Pin; thence turn through an interior angle of 90 degrees 00 minutes and run easterly for a distance of 140.0 feet to an Iron Pin; thence turn through an interior angle of 270 degrees 06 minutes and run northerly along the east line of the Sandair Corp. property for a distance of 300.0 feet to the point of beginning.

Said application will be heard at the City Planning Board Hearing in the Andrew Jackson Conference Room, First Floor, Warren A. Hood Building, 200 S. President Street in Jackson, Mississippi, at 1:30 p.m., on Wednesday, December 20, 2023, at which time all parties interested in or affected thereby will be heard both pro and con on said question, after which a record will be established upon which the City Planning Board can make its recommendation to the City Council of Jackson. Any objection thereto may be made by any person owning property within the area, and if made in writing must be filed with the City Zoning Administrator before said time if a hearing thereof or consideration thereof is desired, or by counsel on said date. If a request is made to the Zoning Administrator at least 72 hours in advance, the City will take steps to accommodate citizens need for interpreters or auxiliary aids for the visually/hearing impaired.

DUE TO COVID-19 AND THE CONCERN FOR THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE, THE PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS AND THE APPLICANTS HAVE THE OPTION TO ATTEND THE MEETING VIA TELECONFERENCE/VIDEO OR IN PERSON WITH REGARDS TO THE WEARING OF MASKS AND THE SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND VIA TELECONFERENCE/VIDEO BY EMAILING EAINSWORTH@CITY.JACKSON.MS.US TO REGISTER PRIOR TO DECEMBER 13, 2023.

WITNESS my signature this 22nd day of November 2023.

/s/Ester L. Ainsworth
Zoning Administrator
City of Jackson, Mississippi

11/30/23, 12/14/23

LEGAL

ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI PROHIBITING THE PHYSICAL FOLLOWING OF JACKSON POLICE OFFICERS (OR THOSE WHO ENFORCE LAW IN THE CITY OF JACKSON).

WHEREAS, the public health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the City of Jackson shall be considered by this Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the recruitment, training and retention of law enforcement officers is a difficult acquisition; and

WHEREAS, just as the injustices committed against citizens by police, those who serve in the capacity of enforcing the law are endangered by the circumstances of the times; and

WHEREAS, the random act of physically following police officers imposes extra danger and a credible threat while at the same time possibly interfering with their enforcement of the law; and

WHEREAS, the MS Code Annotated 97-3-107(1) states that any person who purposefully engages in a course of conduct directed at a specific person, or who makes a credible threat and who knows or should know that the conduct would a cause a reasonable person to fear for his or her own safety, to fear for the safety of another person, or to fear damage or destruction of his or her property is guilty of "stalking"; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the citizens of the City of Jackson that an Ordinance be established, and our police officers' rights are guaranteed by the United States Constitution; and

WHEREAS, those who commit careless, physical, and intentional following of police officers shall be punishable by a fine up to \$500.00 and/or up to six months in jail.

NOW, BE IT ORDAINED that the Jackson City Council prohibits the physical following of Jackson Police officers in the attempt to intimidate or commit bodily harm.

Council Member Stokes moved adoption; Council Member Hartley seconded.

Yeas – Banks, Grizzell, Hartley, Lee, Lindsay and Stokes.
Nays – None.
Absent – Foote.

ATTEST:
Angela Harris
Municipal Clerk

I, Angela Harris, the duly appointed qualified Municipal Clerk and lawful custodian of records and seal of said City of Jackson, Mississippi, certify that the foregoing is a true and exact copy of an Order passed by the City Council at its Regular Council Meeting October 24, 2023 and recorded in Minute Book "6Y, Pgs. 271-272".

WITNESS my signature and official seal of office, this the 11th day of December, 2023.

SEAL Angela Harris, Municipal Clerk

12/14/23

LEGAL

REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS
JACKSON MUNICIPAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY
OUTSIDE LEGAL SERVICES
JMAA PROJECT NUMBER 010-24

The Jackson Municipal Airport Authority ("JMAA") is requesting Statement of Qualifications (each, a "Statement of Qualifications") to provide legal and related services (the "Services") to JMAA in connection with the Jackson Municipal Airport Authority Outside Legal Services at JMAA Project No. 010-24.

JMAA will receive sealed electronic or printed submissions only. All submissions of Statement of Qualifications to perform the Services will be accepted until Wednesday, March 6, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. Central Standard Time (CST) on (the "Deadline"). RFQ shall be accepted electronically, by mail, or by hand delivery as follows:

Electronically jmaabids.com

By mail or hand delivery
JMAA's Administrative Office, Suite 300
Main Terminal Building
Jackson-Medgar Wiley Evers
International Airport 100 International Drive,
Jackson, Mississippi 39208

Interested persons may obtain a copy of the Information for Respondents from JMAA via JMAA's website at: jmaabids.com.

After evaluation in accordance with the criteria set forth in the RFQ, JMAA will initiate negotiations with one or more Respondent(s) on the list. If such negotiations fail to produce an agreement, in form and content, satisfactory to JMAA, within a reasonable period of time, then JMAA may reject the ranked Respondent. In that event, JMAA will follow the same process with the other Respondents, in the order of their ranking, until a Respondent agrees to and enters into an agreement satisfactory to JMAA.

JMAA has established a DBE contract goal of 0% for the Services solicited by this RFQ

12/14/23 12/21/23

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12/14/23

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LEGAL

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

2013 Chevrolet Avalanche: 3GNTKGE76DG257212
Registered to: Christopher Robinson
Capital One, Lien Holder
Date of Sale: December 30, 2023
Place of Sale: Unlimited Cars and Accessories – 3522 Medgar Evers Blvd., Jackson, MS 39213

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

12/14/2023; 12/21/2023; 12/28/23



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5				7				
	7			4		9		3
		1	3					
	3			8	7			6
2			9		5			
8			4					9
7			6		2		5	
		2						1

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Sudoku Solution

5	2	3	8	7	9	1	6	4
6	7	8	5	4	1	9	2	3
4	9	1	3	2	6	7	8	5
1	3	5	2	8	7	4	9	6
9	8	7	1	6	4	5	3	2
2	6	4	9	3	5	8	1	7
8	1	6	4	5	3	2	7	9
7	4	9	6	1	2	3	5	8
3	5	2	7	9	8	6	4	1

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LEGAL

RESOLUTION DECLARING THE INTENTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI TO ENTER INTO A LOAN WITH THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT BANK IN AN AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF NOT TO EXCEED FORTY MILLION DOLLARS (\$40,000,000) TO RAISE MONEY FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE (A) REPAIR, MAINTENANCE AND/OR RECONSTRUCTION OF ROADS, STREETS AND BRIDGES BASED UPON AN EQUAL SHARE OF THE BOND PROCEEDS TO BE EVENLY DISTRIBUTED TO EACH OF THE SEVEN (7) WARDS THROUGHOUT THE CITY OR AS AGREED UPON BY THE GOVERNING BODY LESS THE COSTS OF ISSUANCE; (B) STORM WATER AND DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS BASED UPON AN EQUAL SHARE OF THE BOND PROCEEDS TO BE EVENLY DISTRIBUTED TO EACH OF THE SEVEN (7) WARDS THROUGHOUT THE CITY OR AS AGREED UPON BY THE GOVERNING BODY LESS THE COSTS OF ISSUANCE AS AUTHORIZED BY SECTIONS 27-67-31 THROUGH 27-67-35, AS AMENDED AND SUPPLEMENTED FROM TIME TO TIME AND SECTIONS 31-25-1 ET SEQ., MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, AS AMENDED AND SUPPLEMENTED FROM TIME TO TIME; (C) AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE BOND PROCEEDS FOR EMERGENCY PURPOSES AS AGREED UPON BY THE GOVERNING BODY FOR USES ALLOWED UNDER THE ACT; AND (D) FUNDING CAPITALIZED INTEREST AND A DEBT SERVICE RESERVE FUND, IF APPLICABLE, AND PAYING THE COSTS OF ISSUANCE FOR THE BONDS AND DIRECTING THE PUBLICATION OF A NOTICE OF SUCH INTENTION; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council of the City of Jackson, Mississippi (the "Governing Body"), acting for and on behalf of the City of Jackson, Mississippi (the "City"), is authorized under the provisions Sections 27-67-31 through 27-67-35 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended from time to time (the "Infrastructure Modernization Act") and Sections 31-25-1 et seq., Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended and supplemented from time to time (the "Bank Act," and together with the Infrastructure Modernization Act, the "Act") to enter into indebtedness of the City in such amounts as it may find necessary and proper and for the purposes set forth in the Act, including, but not limited to the (a) repair, maintenance and/or reconstruction of roads, streets and bridges based upon an equal share of the Bond proceeds to be evenly distributed to each of the seven (7) wards throughout the City or as agreed upon by the Governing Body the costs of issuance; (c) authorizing the of the Bond proceeds for emergency purposes as agreed upon by the Governing Body for uses as allowed under the Act and as approved by the Governing Body; and (d) funding capitalized interest and a debt service reserve fund, if applicable and paying the costs of issuance of the borrowing (the "Project"); and

WHEREAS, the Governing Body, acting for and on behalf of the City, is also authorized under the Act and other applicable laws of the State of Mississippi (the "State") to enter into a loan with the Mississippi Development Bank (the "Bank") to borrow money to finance the costs of the Project; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Body finds and determines that it is necessary and proper to finance the costs of the Project; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary for the health and wellbeing of the citizens of the City to provide funding for the costs of the Project by entering into a Loan with the Bank (the

"Loan") pursuant to the Act to borrow money from the Bank through the issuance of its Mississippi Development Bank Special Obligation Bonds, Series 2024 (City of Jackson, MS Modernization Revenue Bond Project) (the "Bonds") all in a total aggregate principal amount not to exceed Forty Million Dollars (\$40,000,000); and

WHEREAS, the Governing Body has caused an estimate to be made of the costs of the Project by the City from which estimate the Governing Body finds and determines that the contemplated costs thereof will not exceed Forty Million Dollars (\$40,000,000); and

WHEREAS, the Governing Body has determined that the Project and the costs thereof are economically feasible and would be in the best interests of the citizens of the City; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary and advisable and in the best interest of the City for the Governing Body, acting for and on behalf of the City, to provide funding for the costs of the Project by borrowing money by entering into the Loan with the Bank and the issuance of the Bonds by the Bank, all in accordance with the Act; and

WHEREAS, the City reasonably expects that it will incur expenditures in connection with the Project for which the City intends to reimburse itself with the proceeds of the Bonds. This declaration of official intent to reimburse expenditures made prior to the issuance of the Bonds in anticipation of the issuance of the Bonds is made pursuant to Department of Treasury Regulations Section 1.150-2 (the "Reimbursement Regulations"). The Project for which such expenditures are made is the same as described herein. The maximum principal amount of debt expected to be issued for the Project is the amount herein set forth.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY, ACTING FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE CITY, AS FOLLOWS:

The Governing Body, acting for and on behalf of the City, hereby declares its intention to enter into the Loan with the Bank all in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed Forty Million Dollars (\$40,000,000).

The Loan will be entered into for the purpose of financing the Project, as authorized by the Act.

The principal and interest on the Loan and the issuance of the Bonds through Bank shall be payable over a period not to exceed sixteen (16) years solely from those revenues (the "Use Tax Revenue") derived from those certain monies remitted from the State of Mississippi (the "State") to the City in January and July of each calendar year pursuant to the Infrastructure Modernization Act. The Loan and Bonds of the Bank shall not constitute an indebtedness of the City within the meaning of any statutory or charter restriction, limitation, or provision, and the taxing power of the City will not be pledged to the payment of the Loan or the Bonds, but the same, together with the interest thereon, shall be payable solely from the Use Tax Revenue allowed to be pledged for the payment of debt service pursuant to the Act.

Unless a protest in writing signed by fifteen percent (15%) of the qualified electors of the City or fifteen hundred (1,500) qualified electors of the City, whichever is lesser, objecting to and protesting against the issuance of the Bonds or entering into the Loan is filed with the City Clerk at City Hall located at 219 S. President Street, Jackson, Mississippi in the City on or before 10:00 o'clock a.m. on January 2, 2024, which date shall be not more than seven (7) days after the date of the last publication of this resolution, the Governing Body will authorize entering into the Loan at said time or at some meeting or meetings subsequent thereto. If such

sufficient protest and objection is filed on or before the date and hour hereinabove set forth, the question of the issuance of said Bonds or entering into said Loan shall be submitted to an election to as provided in the Bank Act.

This resolution shall be published once a week for at least three consecutive weeks in The Clarion Ledger and The Mississippi Link, both newspapers published in the City, and having general circulation therein and qualified under the provisions of the laws of the State, and the last publication of this resolution shall be not more than seven (7) days prior to the date hereinabove set forth as the deadline for the filing of objection or protest.

The City Clerk is hereby directed to procure from the publisher of the aforesaid newspaper the customary proof of publication of this resolution and have the same before the Governing Body on the day and hour hereinabove specified.

The City reasonably expects that it will incur expenditures prior to entering into the Loan and the issuance of the Bonds by the Bank, which it intends to reimburse with the proceeds of the Bonds upon the issuance thereof. This declaration of official intent to reimburse expenditures made prior to the issuance of the Bonds is made pursuant to Department of Treasury Regulations Section 1.150-2 (the reimbursement regulations). The Project for which such expenditures are made is the same as described herein above. The maximum principal amount of debt expected to be issued for the Project is the amount herein above set forth.

The Governing Body herein approves of and employs the law firm Butler Snow LLP, as Bond Counsel, and authorizes and directs the Mayor to execute and deliver an engagement letter with certain conditions and terms set forth therein concerning said employment.

If any one or more of the provisions of this resolution shall for any reason be held to be illegal or invalid, such illegality or invalidity shall not affect any of the other provisions of this resolution, but this resolution shall be construed and enforced as if such illegal or invalid provision or provisions had not been contained herein.

Councilperson Lee made the motion and Councilperson Hartley seconded the motion to adopt the foregoing resolution, and the question being put to a roll call vote, the result was as follows:

COUNCILPERSON	YEA	NAY
Ashby Foote	Yea	
Angelique C. Lee	Yea	
Kenneth I. Stokes	Yea	
Brian C. Grizzell	Yea	
Vernon Hartley	Yea	
Aaron Banks	Yea	
Virgi Lindsay	Yea	

The President of the Council then declared the resolution passes and adopted this the 21st day of November 2023.

APPROVED BY:
/s/ Aaron Banks
PRESIDENT OF THE CITY COUNCIL

/s/ Chokwe A. Lumumba
MAYOR
ATTEST:

/s/ Angela Harris

CITY CLERK

12/7/2023; 12/14/2023; 12/21/2023; 12/28/2023

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Week of December 10, 2023



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JSU Fall 2023 keynote Sophia Marshall encouraged graduates to be courageous and resilient

By Anthony Howard
JSU Public Relations Specialist

Over 600 graduates received degrees in their respective fields of study during the Jackson State University Fall 2023 Commencement Ceremony inside the Lee E. Williams Athletic & Assembly Center Friday, Dec. 8, 2023.

Award-winning global communications strategist Sophia Y. Marshall, senior vice president of communications for Comcast Central Division, keynoted the celebratory occasion.

“All of you inspire me with your resilience, brilliance, determination and your love for Jackson State,” JSU President Marcus L. Thompson, Ph.D., told the graduates. “May you always remember that you are braver than you believe, stronger than you look and smarter than you think.”

During her commencement speech, Marshall spoke heavily on determination and the importance of having strong supporters in your circle of friends. She began her keynote by sharing her struggle to find that “good job” after graduation.

“I had the best of intentions, backed by a ton of hard work,” said Marshall, an alumna of Albany State University. “Can you believe I received a ‘no’ from every single technology company on my list?”

As an honors graduate voted most intelligent by her peers, Marshall said she immediately refused to believe that the rejections reflected her abilities. She expanded her search to multiple Fortune 500 companies with a communication leadership program, including Chick-fil-A.

“I was convinced that my English degree, 18 years of Sunday school, and a passion for those good chicken sandwiches would make me a shoo-in,” she joked. “I applied to them several times, and the answer was still no.”

As her pile of rejected applications grew, the College Park, Georgia, native admitted that her unsuccessful job search was becoming worrisome and caused her to panic. She decided to speak with her advisor to seek inspiration.

“She didn’t solve any of my problems that day, but she encouraged me to consider work that truly excited me and to apply that passion with the focus of my degree,” Marshall shared.

Despite the challenges she had faced while attempting to launch her career, Marshall remembered that she was built for times like those and reflected on the successes throughout her family’s history.

Marshall said she thought about how her grandparents raised her parents in a rural and segregated South and how her



Keynote speaker Sophia Marshall share post graduate experience as motivation for the fall class of 2023. CHARLES A. SMITH/UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS



JSU President Marcus L. Thompson, Ph.D., gives opening remarks at his first commencement as president. ARON SMITH/UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

cousin Anthony was the first person on her mother’s side of the family to earn a college degree.

“I remembered my father’s lesson about confidence. A story he told a million times about looking in the mirror one time in eighth grade and decided that he was as good as he needed to look,” said Marshall, a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated.

Doubtful of the notion that he never looked in the mirror again, Marshall acknowledged that her father’s confidence and audacity to never doubt his abilities supported him, even during a career change at 40.

“In that moment, I began to master two of the most important skills in life and career, courage and resilience,” Marshall stated. “The ability to tap into an inner source, adapt, overcome obstacles, and recover from setbacks stronger than before.”

Marshall said she was motivated by the strength of her ancestors to continue her job search and began what is now a 22-year-long career building, trans-

forming and leading integrated communications programs for premiere B2B and consumer brands.

She concluded her address by leaving the Fall 2023 class with some valuable tips she “learned the hard way.”

“I want you to declare a destination for your dream,” suggested Marshall. “There is real truth in writing a vision and making it plain because you cannot create a road map to an unknown destination.”

Marshall assured the graduates that it was okay to change their destination. She then encouraged the graduates to become problem solvers.

“In any role that you take, make it your mission to understand the greatest challenges of your team, your leader, and of the business and align your work with a fix before they ask and watch your value increase by tenfold,” said Marshall.

The communication strategist urged the graduates to self-evaluate and remember to continue to raise the bar for themselves. She

warned them that there is always someone who may be coming for their position before quoting her favorite rapper, T.I., and said, “You better get on your job.”

Marshall’s next tip was for graduates to expand their circle, quoting deceased California rapper Nipsey Hussle, stating, “If you don’t look at the people in your circle and get inspired, you don’t have a circle, you have a cage.”

“I want you to find people who will demand better of you,” Marshall demanded.

Marshall’s final piece of advice was to “take the risk.” She told the graduates that their career is a set of experiences that will lead them to the destination of their choice.

“Take them early and take them often if you want to land the big win,” said Marshall. “We represent the greatest comeback story of all time, and I want you to declare you will do the work to honor every single person who stood in the gap for you and supported you to and through this moment.”

JPS Administration introduces a revised Optimization Plan to School Board



Superintendent Greene maintains a strong staff.



JPS Superindent Errick L. Greene

The Mississippi Link Newswire

On December 5, Superintendent Dr. Errick L. Greene presented an updated Optimization Plan to the Board of Trustees during their regularly scheduled meeting. This plan, initially introduced in October, addresses the need for strategic measures due to a significant decline in district enrollment, amounting to approximately 9,500 students lost between the 2015-16 and 2023-24 school years.

The revised plan includes a list of school buildings slated for closure or consolidation, reflecting the evolving needs of the district. Notable adjustments to the initial proposal involve the exclusion of Clausell Elementary School, Green Elementary School and Key Elementary School, following community feedback on local enrollment and specialized programming.

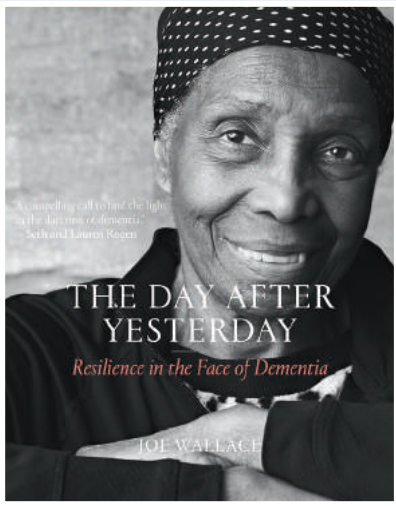
Additionally, Oak Forest Elementary School has been removed from the closure list,

replaced by Marshall Elementary School.

The consolidation of Obama IB Elementary and Wells APAC Elementary with their respective middle schools – Northwest IB and Bailey APAC will be postponed by one year. This delay allows for the completion of renovations at Bailey APAC Middle School.

A key feature of the revised plan is the establishment of a Facilities Repurposing Advisory Committee. This committee, overseen by a consultant, will make recommendations to the board for each closed building. The consultant will actively pursue private and public funding to support redevelopment efforts, categorizing closed school buildings into sale/lease, redevelopment or demolition.

The board is anticipated to vote on the revised Optimization Plan at its upcoming regular meeting on December 19, 2023.



BOOK REVIEW:

THE DAY AFTER YESTERDAY:
RESILIENCE IN THE FACE OF DEMENTIA

BY JOE WALLACE

C.2023, THE MIT PRESS

\$34.95 • 157 PAGES

By Terri Schlichenmeyer
Columnist

Sometimes, Mom talks a lot of nonsense. She talks in random syllables, half-jokes, thoughts that come out of her mouth backwards or mixed up. You try, she laughs, you laugh, pretending that you understand but you don't.

Mom has dementia and there's nothing that'll fix it, but you can read "The Day After Yesterday" by Joe Wallace and change the conversation.

Talk about your awkward encounters. Well into his twenties, Joe Wallace was asked to

sit with his "Granddaddy Joe" while Wallace's mother and grandmother ran errands. His grandfather was once a vibrant man, and he'd been Wallace's "hero" but Alzheimer's had put a curtain of sorts between them and Wallace was "so frightened to be left alone with him."

It didn't take long for him to realize that day that his grandfather was full of stories and it was "magical."

He applied the same kind of patience when his grandmother began to experience dementia, too, and this all spurred Wallace to tell a story of his own with

his camera.

The portraits he captured eventually became an exhibit, and this book.

"In the United States," Wallace says, "one in three seniors suffers with Alzheimer's or another dementia at the time of their death." Nearly \$700 billion dollars annually is spent caring for people with dementia. Alzheimer's, as one of Wallace's subjects points out, affects black seniors more often than it does whites. For that matter, people with dementia need not be seniors: early-onset Alzheimer's can affect some-

one in their early 20s.

Listen, Wallace's subjects almost always say, and don't hide a diagnosis of dementia. There's no shame in it.

Reach out to others who've received the diagnosis. Ask for help. Watch for suicidal thoughts and depression. Ask for stories, before they're lost, and be honest about what's going on. You can't change the diagnosis, but you can change your attitude toward it.

It's called The Long Goodbye for reason – and yet, your loved one with dementia is still on this side of the sod and you

know there's still some there. In "The Day After Yesterday," you'll get a new point-of-view, for both of you.

In his introduction interview, author Joe Wallace explains how he came to understand that "we could all do so much better" for those with cognitive disabilities including Alzheimer's, and why eliminating fear and awkwardness is essential.



Readers will be quite taken by the then-and-now pictures, and by the conversations Wallace captured.

But beware: this isn't a book on caregiving or advice-giving.

It's a delightful, heartbreaking, tearful, surprising collection of profiles of everyday people in their own words, people who go with the flow and deal with tomorrow when it comes. Yes, you'll find advice here but it pales in comparison to the presence that Wallace's subjects and their families exhibit.

This powerful book is great for someone with a new dementia diagnosis; it proves that life's not over yet. It's likewise great for a caregiver, gently ushering them toward grace.

Get "The Day After Yesterday." It's time for a talk.



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Hinds County Circuit Clerk

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- Absentee Voting begins 45 days before the Election

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 - o Proof of age must be provided in the form of Driver's License, Birth Certificate or other legal document which contains name and date of birth.

Website: www.hindscountymys.com
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Angel Reese poised to make return to LSU basketball amidst speculation

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent

The basketball world is abuzz as LSU’s standout forward, Angel Reese, a local luminary from the District area, prepares for a highly anticipated return to the court in the faceoff against ninth-ranked Virginia Tech on Thursday night.

Reese’s reemergence comes after a puzzling absence from four crucial games, fueling speculation and intensifying the spotlight on her comeback. The enigmatic circumstances surrounding Reese’s hiatus, vaguely attributed to “locker-room issues” by LSU coach Kim Mulkey, have left fans eagerly awaiting answers.

A cryptic social media post featuring Reese inside the iconic Pete Maravich Assembly Center added an extra

layer of mystery to her return.

Despite Reese’s absence, the LSU Tigers showcased their mettle with triumphant victories in the Cayman Islands Classic against formidable opponents like Niagara and Virginia. Yet, the undeniable anticipation for Reese’s return underscores the impact of the player who led the SEC in both scoring and rebounding. “It’s a boost having her back, period, not just because we’re playing Virginia Tech, it’s just for our team. She’s a tremendous player,” Mulkey said. “One of the best players in the country. She gives us a good matchup with [senior forward Elizabeth] Kitley. I expect Angel to just be Angel. She’s been really good in practice.”

Reese’s on-court exploits throughout the season have been extraordinary, with records shattered and mile-

stones achieved. From a historic debut to multiple 30-point games and a jaw-dropping 28-rebound performance, her absence left a void that only intensified the speculation surrounding her return.

As the LSU Tigers prepare to face Virginia Tech, Reese’s comeback injects a palpable sense of drama into the narrative. The undisclosed “locker-room issues” loom as a subplot, heightening the intrigue surrounding this pivotal moment in the season. Moments like the “Shoe Block” against Arkansas and the viral “Tik Tok Dance” have solidified Reese’s status as a captivating force on the court.

Fans and basketball enthusiasts are looking forward to the upcoming matchup against Virginia Tech because it is more than just a game.



Angel Reese

Battle over creating new court centers on equality in Jackson

By Emily Wagster Pettus
Associated Press

The constitutional right of equal treatment under the law is at the center of a months-long legal fight over a state-run court in part of Mississippi’s majority-black capital city of Jackson.

A federal judge is set to hear arguments Dec. 19 over the Capitol Complex Improvement District Court, which is scheduled to be created Jan. 1.

The new court would be led by a state-appointed judge and prosecutors, and it would be the equivalent of a municipal court, handling misdemeanor cases. Municipal judges and prosecutors in Mississippi are typically appointed by local elected officials, but legislators who created the CCID Court said it was part of a package to fight crime.

The Justice Department says the new court would continue Mississippi’s long history of trying to suppress Black people’s right to participate in government.

“Just like many past efforts to undermine black political power, (the law) singles out the majority-black City of Jackson for loss of local control of its judicial system and ability to self-govern and enforce its own municipal laws,” wrote Kristen Clarke, assistant attorney general for the department’s Civil Rights Division, and Todd Gee, the U.S. attorney for south Mississippi, in a Dec. 5 federal court filing.

The state’s Republican attorney general disagrees, saying in a separate filing Thursday that the NAACP and Jackson residents who are suing the state have failed to prove they would be harmed.

Mississippi Attorney General Lynn Fitch and Rex Shannon, a special assistant state attorney general, wrote on behalf of Fitch, Mississippi Public Safety Commissioner Sean Tindell and Capitol Police Chief Bo Luckey that blocking creation of the new court would cause irreparable harm.

“The Legislature established the CCID Court to address Jackson’s clearly-recognized, ongoing public-safety and criminal-justice emergencies,” Fitch and Shannon wrote. “Those emergencies gravely affect not just those living in Jackson, but all Mississippians.”

Plaintiffs are asking U.S. District Judge Henry Wingate to block cre-



Civil Rights Activist Frank Figgers, opposes a Mississippi Law that would create a court in part of Jackson with a judge & prosecutors that would be appointed rather than elected. MAY 20, 2023, AP PHOTO/ROGELIO V. SOLIS/FILE

ation of the new court in the district that includes state government buildings downtown and some residential and business areas, including predominantly white neighborhoods.

The court would consider misdemeanor cases, with a judge appointed by the state Supreme Court chief justice and prosecutors appointed by the state attorney general – both of whom are white and politically conservative.

Opponents say the new court would affect not only people who live or work in the district but also those who are ticketed for speeding or other misdemeanor violations there.

Mississippi legislators voted during the spring to expand the territory for the state-run Capitol Police to patrol inside Jackson. They also voted to authorize the chief justice to appoint four judges to serve alongside the four elected circuit court judges in Hinds County, where Jackson is located, and to create the Capitol Complex Improvement District Court.

Opponents of the changes said Republican Gov. Tate Reeves and the Republican-controlled and majority-white Legislature were usurping local autonomy in Jackson and Hinds County, which are both majority-Black and governed by Democrats.

Justice Department officials wrote that creating a new municipal-level court with a state-appointed judge and prosecutors unconstitutionally treats Jackson residents differently from other Mississippi residents.

Frank Figgers, a lifelong Jackson resident who is black and describes

himself as a community activist and NAACP member, wrote in a Nov. 13 court filing that the chief justice and the attorney general “are not accountable to me as a voter.”

Chief Justice Mike Randolph is elected from a district that does not include Jackson. Fitch won a second term during the Nov. 7 statewide election, but she trailed her Democratic challenger in Hinds County.

“In light of the long history of racism in Mississippi, my vote is the best means I have to ensure that public officials will treat me and my community fairly and equally,” Figgers wrote, adding that Fitch and Randolph “don’t need my vote, and as far as I can tell, they have made no attempt to understand my community.”

Mark Nelson, an attorney representing Randolph, responded in a Nov. 16 filing, asking Wingate to strike “disgraceful” statements by Figgers and other NAACP members from court records.

“Accusations of racism unsupported by facts or evidence are harassment and scandalous,” Nelson wrote.

In September, the state Supreme Court struck down the part of the same law dealing with appointed circuit court judges to handle felony cases and civil lawsuits. Justices noted that Mississippi law allows the chief justice to appoint judges for specific reasons, such as dealing with a backlog of cases. But they wrote that they saw “nothing special or unique” about the four appointed circuit judges in the law this year. Randolph recused himself from that case.

Voting rights groups push for answers from Mississippi election officials about ballot shortages

By Michael Goldberg
Associated Press/Report for America

One month after Mississippi’s November statewide election, voting rights groups say election officials in the state’s largest county have failed to provide enough information about the problems that led to polling precincts running out of ballots.

The coalition of statewide and national civil rights organizations has requested meetings and more details about why Hinds County Election Commissioners ordered the wrong ballots, leading to shortages at several polling locations on the day the state was deciding a competitive governor’s race and a full slate of down-ballot races. Those queries have largely been met with silence, the groups said at a joint news conference Thursday.

“While we recognize and respect the commissioners have taken responsibility for the ballot shortages, Hinds County voters still have questions,” said Amir Badat, an attorney with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund.

The five Hinds County Election Commissioners did not immediately respond to emailed questions Thursday.

In Mississippi’s Nov. 7 general election, up to nine voting precincts ran out of ballots in Hinds County, home to Jackson. People waited up to two hours to vote as election officials made frantic trips to office supply stores so they could print ballots and deliver them to polling places. Voting groups and political parties filed legal papers that aimed to keep polls open later or prevent them from staying open. Multiple court orders and disputes over how to interpret them added to the confusion.

Hinds County is majority-black and is a Democratic stronghold. It’s unclear how many people left without voting and the political affiliations of the most affected voters. Precincts in Clinton, a neighboring city home to Mississippi’s outgoing Republican House speaker, were among those affected.

The Election Day debacle has led to bipartisan backlash. Rep. Bryan Steil, a Republican from Wisconsin who chairs the congressional committee with oversight of U.S. federal elections, sent a

letter obtained Wednesday by The Associated Press to the five-member Hinds County Election Commission, all Democrats. He demanded information on what steps local officials will take to prevent polling precincts from running out of ballots in future elections.

The Mississippi Center for Justice, a nonprofit legal group, submitted a public records request to the election commission and the Hinds Circuit Clerk asking for documents they said could reveal more about what caused the ballot shortages and how officials responded. The Circuit Clerk responded to the request. The Election Commission hadn’t yet done so Thursday, the group said, even though the legal deadline for a response had passed.

“We need to make sure that they fulfilled their legal obligations to those voters,” said Harya Tarekegn, the legal group’s policy director. “If not, we will use our legal tools to hold them accountable.”

The election commissioners have said they used the wrong voter data to order ballots. As a result, they did not account for the changes that went into effect after the latest round of legislative redistricting.

The voting groups’ request for a meeting with the commissioners was denied, but they urged residents to attend the commission’s monthly meeting on Dec. 12.

“Our election officials failed us in ensuring that every eligible voter had an equal and fair opportunity to cast their ballot,” said Arekia Bennett-Scott, the executive director of Mississippi Votes. “We must demand that every eligible voter has clear, unimpeded access to the very thing our belief in democracy is grounded in: the opportunity to be heard and counted.”

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 under-covered issues. Follow him at @miker-goldberg.

