



AMR ‘Earn While you Learn’ program hires and presents certificates to 13 newly trained EMTs at graduation



Posing with 12 of the 13 graduates (pictured center) are: 1st row left, Malcolm Robinson, course instructor; Kolandra Rucker, AMR Central MS clinical education specialist; Teresa Windham, director of the MS Bureau of EMS (part of MS Dept. of Health); back row (left) Ryan Wilson, operations manager. PHOTOS BY KEVIN BRADLEY

By Jackie Hampton
Publisher

Ambulance services nationwide, including the state of Mississippi, are grappling with a severe shortage of Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT’s) and paramedics. American Medical Response, (AMR) serving Hinds County had a graduation ceremony Tuesday, July 1, for thirteen new student employees that had completed paid training as EMTs.

Known as the “Earn While You Learn (EWYL) program, AMR hires strong applicants and pays them to take a three-month course. After completing the course, the students are eligible to take a national exam leading to a State Health Department certificate as an EMT. After certification, AMR hires the students full time as EMTs at \$18 per hour, which is more than \$41,000 per year.

“Our Earn While You Learn program is a win-win-win for our local economy, our company and most importantly, our patients,” said Ryan Wilson, operations manager of AMR Central Mississippi. “Our students who become EMT’s on our ambulances enter a rewarding, good-paying job that will last for decades.”

The graduation was held at the AMR building located at 600 Melvin Bender Drive in Jackson at 10 a.m.

After the processional of students, Course Instructor Malcolm Robinson gave a call to order and welcomed guests. He thanked those present for coming to witness the accomplish-

ments of the students. He said, “Ten weeks prior, these students set out on an adventure that would prove to be challenging and rewarding.”

He stated they began classes on April 22 with 16 students and finished with 13. At the beginning of class he told the students, “If you will give me 10 weeks of your life, I will give you a rewarding career that will last for many years to come.”

Byram Mayor Richard White attended the graduation and gave brief comments. Later he told *The Mississippi Link* “Having been an EMT for 22 years, everything was great. I think these graduates will hit the ground running and be able to help people

in distress and that’s the best part of it. They can be a policeman, work for AMS or become a fireman. It is whatever they desire.”

Wilson later told *The Mississippi Link*, “We are so incredibly excited to have the opportunity to celebrate these folks. It’s a great day for Hinds County and we are so happy to see them begin their careers.”

Three graduates spoke briefly to *The Mississippi Link* after receiving their certificates.

Holding flowers presented to her by her mom and grandmother, Tiffany Darnell said, “My goal is to work on the ambulance for a year then go to paramedic school and eventually work on a helicopter as a flight medic with AMR.”

Keaumie Truss stated he plans to attend paramedic school in the next 6 months. He said, “I want to gain as much experience as I can as an EMT and pursue even more with AMR.”

John Ready, who works as a volunteer fireman in MaGee stated, “I plan on furthering my career with AMR and then next step, a paramedic.”

AMR will start its next EWYL EMT course August 12, 2024.

To learn more contact the operation’s EMT instructor at Malcolm.robinson@gmr.net or call 601-919-7860. To apply, visit www.amr.net/careers.

(See more photos, page 3.)

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L-R: John Ready, Tiffany Darnell and Keaumie Truss see futures as paramedics.

Experience versus democracy-threatening chaos – it’s our choice

Debate showcases Trump as a serial liar and President Biden as struggling mightily with format



L-R: President Joseph R. Biden, former President Donald J. Trump. [WWW.EDITION.CNN.COM](http://www.EDITION.CNN.COM)

By Christopher Young
Contributing Writer

It’s been less than a week since the presidential debate on CNN, and hundreds of hours of airtime and gallons of ink have been used to tell the world how it turned out. As reported by USA Today, CNN claims that 51.27 million viewed the debate. In the 2020 General Election, www.worldpopulationreview reports that of the 231 million eligible to vote, 168 million registered, and 154 million cast a ballot. Perhaps we could say, one-third of the country watched the debate live. There are many options available for folks to view or listen after the 90-minute live debate, as well.

If you missed the debate entirely, there is a strong chance you didn’t miss much. Without any fact-checking by the two CNN moderators, Dana Bash and Jake Tapper, and without a teleprompter or prepared notes, President Biden struggled mightily. Several of his responses to questions seemed to trail off undiscernibly and other times he seemed to be confused – like when you try to combine more information than was called for by the question, and it comes out as gobbledygook. In many ways the president seemed tired and out of his element, despite the fact he had sought the debate and the restrictive format for the debate.

Much is being published in the media about President Biden being too old, at 81, and that the debate revealed evidence of that, many calling him feeble and not up to the job. The editorial boards of the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *Atlanta Journal Constitution* have all called for him to drop out of the presidential race following his debate performance, when none had done so previously.

Sometimes we tend to have short memories. Ronald

Reagan flopped in his first debate with Walter Mondale in 1984. Remember his line, “Are you better off than you were 4 years before?” At their second debate he unloaded a well-rehearsed zinger: “I will not make age an issue in this campaign. I will not exploit, for political purposes, my opponent’s youth and inexperience,” per www.slate.com. Reagan dropped seven percentage points following the first debate, then went on to win re-election by a landslide.

In 2012, Mitt Romney dominated Barack Obama in the first debate, most sources saying by 3-1. President Obama had entered the debate with a three percent lead in the polls. With one poor debate performance, Obama’s lead evaporated, per www.pewresearch.com. He bounced back in the second debate and was easily re-elected. In those debates the candidates had notes and there was audience interaction, unlike the first debate between President Biden and Trump on June 27, 2024.

No one seems to claim anything other than that President Biden had a poor debate, dreadful might be a better word. Yet a poor debate performance and a poor presidency are two very different things. We witnessed a poor debate by President Biden. We witnessed a poor presidency by former President Trump, and he was not re-elected to a second term.

At the debate, former President Trump never deviated from the lie that he was cheated out of re-election, and even after three attempts by Dana Bash, he would not answer if he would accept the results on the coming election. He railed against immigrants, spouting false crime statistics. He claimed that Democrats want doctors to be able to abort babies after birth. He claimed that Presi-

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Simone Biles headlines a U.S. women’s gymnastics team

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Shady Grove Baptist Church held 1st Annual Medgar Evers Birthday Celebration

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PHOTOS BY JAY JOHNSON

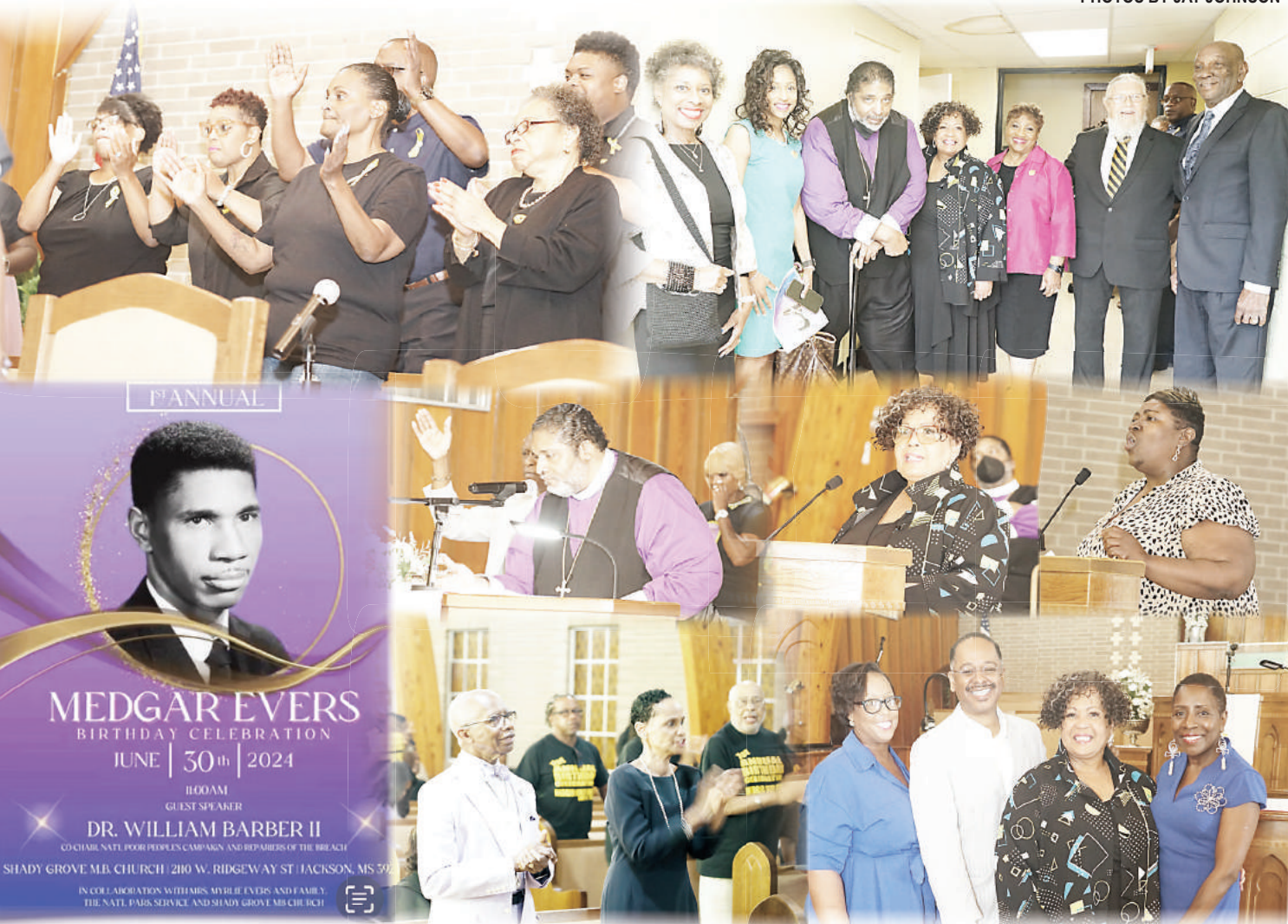


PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Shirley Bee Johnson displays retirement plaque and certificate.

The Mississippi Link staff congratulates and wishes Shirley Bee Johnson much happiness in her retirement. Shirley told The Mississippi Link, "Over the years I've had the opportunity to work with countless wonderful people in public service to include The Hinds County Sheriff's Office, The City of Jackson, Office of the Mayor and the MS State Dept of Transportation. I'm truly blessed."

Johnson said, "Life's journey brings ups and downs but this is truly a milestone that because we are blessed and God let us see it." Johnson went on to say that she is truly grateful to all the wonderful people who helped mold her throughout her career. When asked what now she responded, "My goal is to exercise more, eat healthier and spend as much time as possible loving on my beautiful grands, great grands, family and friends."

The Mississippi Link has enjoyed the understanding attitude that Shirley Johnson has exemplified over the years when this staff has called her husband, photographer Jay Johnson, early mornings and late evenings for photos by press deadline.

Congratulations Shirley Bee!

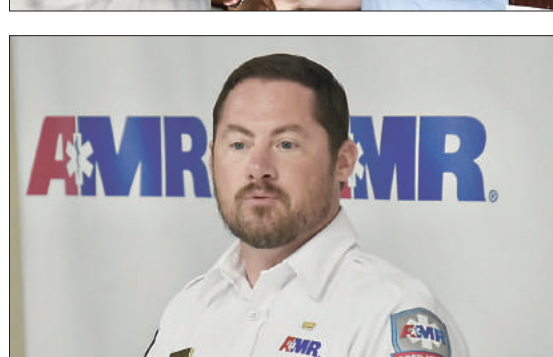
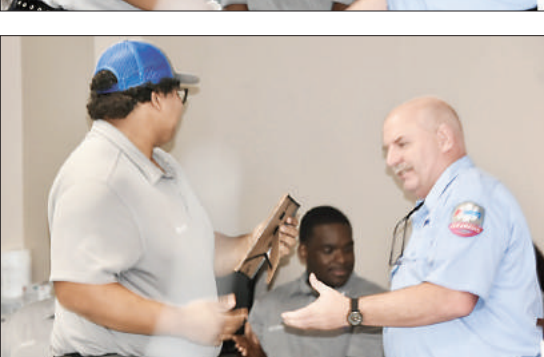
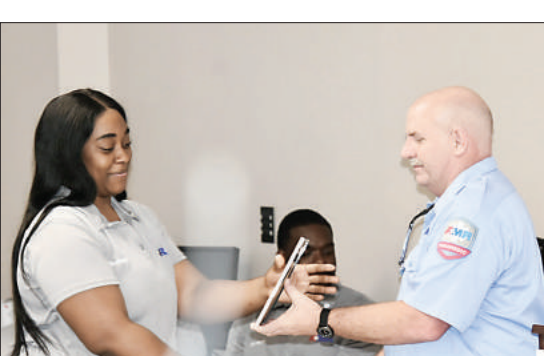


Less worrying and more living.



AMR

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dent Biden allowed millions of people to come in here from prisons, jails and mental institutions, to which www.PolitiFact.com referred to as a Pants on Fire lie. He claimed that his administration had the safest border in the history of our country – again, labeled by experts as mostly false. And the list goes on.

President Biden stated presidential historians “voted who was the worst president in American history. From best to worst. They said (Trump) was the worst in all of American history.” WWW.PolitiFact.com labeled the statement as true, sharing, “the 2024 Presidential Greatness Project Expert Survey, released in February, collected responses from 154 presidential historians, which included current and recent members of the American Political Science Association. The survey ranked Biden as the 14th best president in U.S. history and put Trump last.”

We discovered at the debate that there are Black jobs. Who knew? President Biden was responding to a question about Black unemployment, a measure that Trump did fairly well with, but Biden has done better. Next thing you know Trump was talking about Black jobs and Hispanic jobs. On June 29, 2024, The Associated Press said, “Donald Trump warned during his debate with Joe Biden and again at a Friday rally that migrants were taking “Black jobs” and “Hispanic jobs” from Americans, angering critics who called it a racist and insulting attempt to expand his appeal beyond his white conservative base.”

A second debate is scheduled for September 10 at 9 p.m. (EST) hosted by ABC News. It is not yet clear if running mates will have a debate.

Most major news organizations indicate that Trump has a short-list of three white men (Senator Rubio of Florida, Senator Vance of Ohio and Governor Burgum of North Dakota) as possible running mates.

One truth that is hopefully not lost on the majority of Americans despite all the lies, bombast and division – former President Trump has not and does not respect the will of the people. Nothing is more fundamental to democracy, and that makes him a threat.

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Helping Families, Strengthening Communities



Helping Families, Strengthening Communities

IAMH hosts the second Black Men's Health Equity Conference

Yusef Salaam of the Exonerated 'Central Park Five' was the featured headliner

By Gail H. M. Brown, Ph.D.
Contributing Writer

Using the theme, "Black Men Matter: Uplifting, Educating and Healing Black Men in Mississippi," the Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health held its second annual Black Men's Health Equity Conference Saturday, Jan. 29, at the Hilton Jackson Hotel, 1001 E. County Line Road.

The 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. event featured New York City Councilman Yusef Salaam as the morning keynote speaker. Salaam, an activist and member of the Exonerated "Central Park Five," delivered a powerful message to the men focusing on the intersection of justice, health and equity.

Using his testimony of being wrongfully incarcerated and his advocacy work since his exoneration, Salaam highlighted the importance of addressing systemic inequalities in mass incarceration, healthcare and social justice. "Justice, health and equity are intertwined, and we must work together to dismantle the barriers that hinder our progress," Salaam said.

Salaam's message was filled with nuggets of enlightenment and wisdom based on his experiences. Asked by conference moderator and on-air personality Christiana William: "How do you continue to believe in the system after being wrongly accused by that very system, that same system that we're trying to save our [young boys] from, how do we save them?" Below is an excerpt of his response:

"This is a beautiful question. This is the crux of the matter when you've been run over by the spike wheels of justice like me and some of you maybe in this room. Some of you may actually feel the same way. You don't want to participate in any civic engagement. As a matter of fact, we are the very people that have created the word 'poli-tricks.' They promise you the moon, but deliver the mud. We only see them when it's time to vote, and we never see them throughout... Those who have been close to the pain and those who have been in pain should have a seat at the table. Nonparticipation is participation. I don't want you to ever forget that nonparticipation is participation. There's never been 100% participation in the voting process. ...we tend to not want to participate in that kind of system. But there's no other system that's running right alongside.

"We are in America and so our challenge is to become the light. Our challenge is to, like I said earlier, fight spiritual wickedness in high and low places. When you are given the power, what will you do? Those who have been close to the pain, and in fact in pain, who have their minds intact have the answers. And So what I say is we need to groom ourselves. What I say is that we need to stand up for ourselves...your moral compass will tell you what's right and wrong. The creator said that we've been gifted with the ability to know. We ain't free until all of us are free. Thank you. Thank you."

Salaam said the only way to become a diamond is through the pressure. "I came home from prison in 1997," he said. He realized that he "was hiding in plain sight." "I had to learn



Attorney Ed Blackmon luncheon keynote speaker delivers an eye-opening address.



Imam Dr. Ameen Abdur Rashied presents Dr. Salaam a gift from the Masjid Muhammad Islamic Complex at reception held at Johnny T's.



Dr. Yusef Salaam delivers an impassioned address during the Black Men's Health Equity Conference.



New York City Councilman Yusef Salaam addressing luncheon attendees.



Dr. Sandra Melvin, Marilyn W. Reed, Christiana Williams



Dr. Sandra Melvin addressing crowd at reception held at Johnny T's. PHOTOS BY JAY JOHNSON



Charles Taylor, Rev. Reginald Buckley, Atty. Edward Blackmon, James Jerrelle Thornton, Orlando Truss, Jr., and Markyel Pittman received recognition for their impact in the Metro Jackson community.

to to live my life without fear... God is good all the time."

During Salaam's visit, he received a proclamation from the Mississippi House of Representatives presented during an invitation-only reception the evening before the conference by Rep. Tamara Butler Washington. He also received gifts from the International Museum of Muslim Cultures and Masjid Muhammad Islamic Complex.

Attorney Edward Blackmon Jr., who served as the luncheon keynote, also delivered what has been described as "an eye-

opening" keynote message. Blackmon, who served 41 years in the Mississippi Legislature, emphasized the issues facing Black men in Mississippi today. He reflected on his encounters with Mississippi racism as well as its racism experienced by one of his sons.

Blackmon enlightened many in the audience when he shared with them that motorists can be ticketed by law enforcement for having blown car tag lights. Some audience members were amazed; others had experienced being ticketed.

In its aim to tackle health disparities that disproportionately affect Black men, the conference held sessions covering topics such as heart and prostate health, business equity, tobacco cessation and mental wellness. Attendees included healthcare professionals, community leaders, policymakers, and advocates committed to improving health outcomes for Black men.

Speaking of policymakers, State Senator Hillman Frazier (District 27) was in attendance throughout the conference. "Knowledge is power, and it is

very important to share information," said Sen. Frazier. "I learned this morning that prostate testing should start at age 40 and not at age 45 because early detection is key to recovery."

Dr. Sandra Melvin, CEO and founding president of the Institute, highlighted the success of the conference in providing a forum for Black men to discuss the issues most important to them. "The conference was successful in providing a clear call to action for Black men in Mississippi to take charge

of their health and to be active participants in reducing health disparities that result in poor health outcomes for them in this state," Melvin said.

She shared that the greatest outcome from these conferences has been raising awareness about the importance of health to Black men. "Health equity means ensuring that every person has the opportunity to achieve their best health," Melvin added. She emphasized the need to reduce, challenge, or overcome obstacles such as racial and ethnic discrimination, lack of access to quality education, income and wealth gaps, inadequate housing, and unsafe environments to achieve health equity.

Premier Platinum Sponsor of the conference was the NAACP-MS. Gold Sponsor was Delta Radio, and Silver Sponsors were On Voice, ACLU-MS, Kency Medical Services, PLLC and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. Rho Xi Lambda Chapter; HeartPLUS/Masjid Muhammad/IMMAC. Bronze Sponsors included AARP-Mississippi, MenTALK Growth, Inc., H.E.A.L. Mississippi and The VIP Experience with international DJ BIGG V.

Sponsored by the Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health, the Black Men's Health Equity Council and the Mississippi State Conference of the NAACP, the conference is held annually.

For more information about the Black Men's Health Equity Conference, visit www.minority-institute.org

THE CAPITAL CITY WELCOMES DR. YUSEF SALAM

By James Hampton, III
Contributing Writer

Dr. Yusef Salaam received a brotherly and honorable welcome into the capital city's open arms where he was to be the keynote speaker for the Black Men's Health Equity Conference the following day. The reception took place at the stylish Johnny T's Renaissance Room upstairs of Johnny T's Bistro in the Historic Farish Street District.

Dr. Salaam is a renowned New York City councilman. And he is also a member of the Central Park 'Exonerated' Five, one of four other Black and Latino youth falsely arrested, falsely accused, and falsely convicted in the 1989 New York Central Park Jogger case.

Now an exonerated public servant Dr. Salaam received gifts and welcome from LaKitha Hughes

International Secretary of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, before being honorably received by Dr. Marcus Chaney and other members of the Phi Beta Sigma local chapter.

Dr. Salaam having joined that fraternal organization at some point during his fascinating life journey. "I had the opportunity to see him come into our fraternity in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, so definitely this is a pleasure to see this brother again," Dr. Chaney said at the well-catered reception.

Dr. Salaam was also received by his brothers and sisters in faith. Imam Dr. Ameen Abdur Rashied of the Masjid Muhammad of Jackson, MS gave a warm reception, as well as Sababu Rashid, co-founder of the International Museum of Muslim Culture here in Jackson. The welcome was opened by MS

House of Representative member, Honorable Chris Bell. Chris Bell is also board chairman of the Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health, the organization who, along with the Black Men's Health Equity Council, put on the event and the entire conference. A proclamation was presented to Dr. Salaam by Representative Butler Washington.

In gracious reception of the warm welcome Dr. Salaam spoke and after many thanks he quickly became inspirational, "We have the awesome opportunity to really be shining examples in our community so that every single person knows that when you go through something you have to grow through." The words were just a preview to the keynote address he delivered the next day.



Dr. Yusef Salaam and LaKitha Hughes, International Secretary of Zeta Phi Sorority PHOTO BY JAY JOHNSON

MS sets new laws on Medicaid during pregnancy, school funding, inheritance and sale of alcohol

By Emily Wagster Pettus
Associated Press

Mississippi is enacting several new laws, including one that says sign language courses may replace foreign language courses for students to earn credit toward high school graduation.

A look at some of the other new laws taking effect on July 1:

Medicaid during pregnancy

Mississippi will allow earlier Medicaid coverage during pregnancy to try to improve health outcomes for mothers and babies in a poor state with the worst rate of infant mortality in the U.S. The “presumptive eligibility” law says Medicaid will pay for a pregnant woman’s outpatient medical care up to 60 days while her application for the government-funded insurance program is being considered. Processing Medicaid applications can take weeks, and health professionals say early prenatal care is vital.

School funding

A new law changes the way Mississippi pays for public schools. The Mississippi Stu-



Mississippi state Rep. Robert Johnson, D-Natchez, left, speaks with House Education Committee Chairman Rob Roberson, R-Starkville, second from left, Rep. Daryl Porter, D-Summit, second from right, and House Education Committee Vice Chairman Kent McCarty, right, about school funding, March 7, 2024, in the House chamber at the state Capitol in Jackson, Miss. A new Mississippi law that takes effect Monday, July 1, revises the way the state pays for public schools. AP PHOTO/ROGELIO V. SOLIS, FILE

dent Funding Formula replaces the Mississippi Adequate Education Program, which has been fully funded for only two years since it was enacted in 1997. The new formula is designed to give districts a boost for students who

can be more expensive to educate. For example, extra money would be calculated for students who live in poverty, those with special needs, those in gifted programs, those with dyslexia or those who are learning English

as a second language.

Inheritance rights

A child born from a pregnancy that begins after a parent’s death will have inheritance rights, even if the embryo is not yet implanted when the parent dies. The new law says there must be clear indication that a parent intended to use his or her genetic material for “assisted reproductive technology” such as in vitro fertilization, that implantation of the embryo must happen no more than three years after the parent’s death, and the child must live at least five days after birth.

Alcohol

A new law allows any town or city, regardless of its size, to hold an election on whether to allow the sale of alcohol, even if that municipality is in a dry county. The previous law had population thresholds of at least 5,000 for any municipality that is entirely within one county or 6,000 for any municipality in two different counties.

Elections

Mississippi is mostly banning ranked-choice voting in state-wide, county, city and school district elections, but the method will remain available for military members and U.S. citizens overseas who use absentee ballots to vote in Mississippi elections. Voters rank candidates in order of preference. Even if a voter’s top choice doesn’t win, the ranking of other candidates helps determine the winner. Two states use ranked-choice voting: Maine for state primaries and for federal elections, and Alaska for state and federal general elections. Some cities also use it, including New York, San Francisco and Minneapolis.

Shoplifting

Mississippi is expanding its law against shoplifting to specify that aiding, abetting or encouraging people to steal at least \$1,000 worth of goods is a felony. The punishments are the same as for the previously existing punishments for grand larceny: up to five years for stolen items totaling \$1,000 to

\$5,000; up to 10 years for items totaling \$5,000 to \$25,000; up to 20 years for items totaling more than \$25,000.

Other laws

A law that took effect when Republican Gov. Tate Reeves signed it in May regulates transgender people’s use of bathrooms, locker rooms and dormitories in public education buildings. Mississippi became at least the 12th state to restrict transgender students from using facilities that align with their gender identity. The law requires all public education institutions to equip their buildings with single-sex bathrooms, changing areas and dormitories, as well as at least one gender-neutral bathroom and changing room.

If no candidate wins a majority in a primary or general election for a federal, state or local office, a runoff between the top two candidates will take place four weeks later. Current law sets the runoff three weeks later. This law will take effect Jan. 1.

Governor not using his abilities to help uplift Mississippians

Even lemon trees and meditation gardens aren’t helping him govern for all Mississippians

By Christopher Young
Contributing Writer

The Mississippi Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is conducted annually to monitor the prevalence of behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of morbidity and mortality among adults in our state. The 2020 Mississippi BRFSS was completed by 6,479 Mississippians aged 18 years or older.

This screening system focuses on six main areas of disability: hearing, vision, cognition, mobility, self-care and independent living. It is safe to say that each of us either has or knows someone with a disability. We have empathy and understanding, and many of us pray for these individuals whose disability makes their way in this life a much harder one.

By population size, Mississippi is ranked 35th in the nation, with a population of 2,940,452. Over the last three years our population has declined overall, per www.worldpopulationreview.com. So, there are fifteen states



Governor Reeves FROM [HTTPS://GOVERNORREEVES.MS.GOV](https://governorreeves.ms.gov)

COMMENTARY

that have less population than the Hospitality State. Yet over 1 in 3 adults in Mississippi, 34.5%, have a disability, per Mississippi Department of Health (https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/%5C_static/resources/19389.pdf). On the national level, Mississippi ranks 2nd highest in share of population with a disability, per www.statista.com, just behind West Virginia, and just ahead of

Kentucky.

The World Health Organization states that “many people with disabilities die up to 20 years earlier than those without disabilities. People with disabilities have twice the risk of developing conditions such as depression, asthma, diabetes, stroke, obesity, or poor oral health.

Persons with disabilities face many health inequities. People with disabilities report poorer general health and higher levels of psychological distress than people without disability. Persons with disabilities find inaccessible and unaffordable transportation 15 times more difficult than for those without disabilities. Health inequities arise from unfair conditions faced by persons with disabilities, including stigma, discrimination, poverty, exclusion from education and employment, and barriers faced in the health system itself.”

As if it’s not hard enough for those with disabilities in Mississippi, there are so many other issues that compound the struggles

for our people. We have the highest poverty rate in the nation, per capita. Our economy is ranked 37th in the nation by USAFacts.org. The Commonwealth Fund, a foundation dedicated to affordable quality health care for everyone, says that using data from 2022, Mississippi is ranked 51st in the nation.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says in 2023 that we have the highest infant mortality in the nation and the highest maternal mortality in the nation. Per the Prison Policy Initiative, Mississippi incarcerates more than anywhere else in the nation, actually more than anywhere else in the world. Our list of struggles in Mississippi is bottomless.

Our governor, Jonathan Reeves, a Make America Great Again (MAGA) republican, has a phenomenal amount of power that he could use to help all Mississippians, just as he promised to do when he was elected – but no – we get the same ole same ole. His litany is rife with inequality,

inequity, dog whistles and division. Some would argue, but as governor, he is not disabled like so many Mississippians – he is overflowing with ability.

Our ability-laden governor is now term-limited, so barring anything unforeseen, he still has three and half years of time to help lift our state and our people. By doing so, he can shift his legacy from that of a died in the wool confederate-minded divider, to a true agent of real change for all; an authentic leader.

He can use his influence to nudge our Republican-weighted legislature to use the millions siphoned in federal funds each year – more than nearly any other state in the nation – to create equity for all Mississippians. He can make the health care of our state a #1 priority. He can do an about-face on his discrimination of minorities and minority contracting. He can let loose embracing the confederate mindset that is the foundational source of our continued suffering.

He can go to church with his

family on Sunday and listen to what’s being said and carry it in his heart and mind into the office on Monday.

He claims to be a Christian, so he must be praying. What could the Governor’s prayers possibly sound like though in view of the divisive behavior and statements that he showers us with on a day-to-day basis? Does he pray for the poor, the infirmed, the destitute, or the imprisoned? Could he possibly be praying that Jesus “lift every voice?”

Even though, as much as we might like to do otherwise, we know who we are, and what we must do. We also know that some estimate Mississippi to be the most church-attending state in the entire nation. When viewing our conditions on the ground each day here, that just defies logic.

Nonetheless, we know we must pray. We must pray for Governor Jonathan Tate Reeves. We must pray without ceasing. What a gift it is to know who you are and what it is that you must do.

The Mississippi Link™

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Graphics.....Marcus Johnson
Photographers.....Kevin Bradley & Jay Johnson

Member:



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The strange history of white journalists ‘becoming’ Black

By Alisha Gaines
Florida State University

A peculiar desire seems to still haunt some white people: “I wish I knew what it was like to be Black.” This wish is different from wanting to cosplay the coolness of Blackness – mimicking style, aping music and parroting vernacular. This is a presumptive, racially imaginative desire, one that covets not just the rhythm of Black life, but also its blues.

While he doesn’t want to admit it, Canadian-American journalist Sam Forster is one of those white people.

Three years after hearing George Floyd cry “Mama” so desperately that it brought a country out of quarantine, Forster donned a synthetic Afro wig and brown contacts, tinted his eyebrows and smeared his face with CVS-bought Maybelline liquid foundation in the shade of “Mocha.” Though Forster did not achieve a “movie-grade” transformation, he became, in his words, “Believable Black.”

He went on to attempt a racial experiment no one asked for, one that he wrote about in his recently published memoir, “Seven Shoulders: Taxonomizing Racism in Modern America.”

For two weeks in September 2023, Forster pretended to hitchhike on the shoulder of a highway in seven different U.S. cities: Nashville, Atlanta, Birmingham, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Chicago and Detroit.

On the first day in town, he would stand on the side of the road as his white self, seeing who, if anyone, would stop and offer him a ride. On the second day, he stuck out his thumb on the same shoulder, but this time in what I’d describe as “mocha-face.”

Since September is hot, he set a two-hour limit for his experiments. During his seven white days, he was offered, but did not take, seven rides. On seven subsequent Black days, he was



Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Ray Sprigle documented dilapidated sharecropper’s cabins, segregated schools and women widowed by lynching. His disguise consisted of deep suntan and work clothes.

offered, but did not take, one ride. He speculated that day was a fluke.

Forster is not the first white person to center themselves in the discussion of American racism by pretending to be Black.

His wish mirrors that of the white people featured in my 2017 book, “Black for a Day: White Fantasies of Race and Empathy.” The book tells the history of what I call “empathetic racial impersonation,” in which white people indulge in their fantasies of being Black under the guise of empathizing with the Black experience.

To me, these endeavors are futile. They end up reinforcing stereotypes and failing to address systemic racism, while conferring a false sense of racial authority.

The genealogy begins in the late 1940s with Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Ray Sprigle. Sprigle, a white reporter at the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, decided he wanted to experience postwar racism by “becoming” a Black man. After unsuccessfully trying to darken his skin beyond a tan, Sprigle shaved his head, put on giant glasses and traded his signature, 10-gallon hat for an unassuming cap. For

four weeks beginning in May 1948, Sprigle navigated the Jim Crow South as a light-skinned Black man named James Rayel Crawford.

Sprigle documented dilapidated sharecropper’s cabins, segregated schools and women widowed by lynching. What he witnessed – but did not experience – informed his 21-part series of front-page articles for the *Post-Gazette*. He followed up the series by publishing a widely panned 1949 memoir, “In the Land of Jim Crow.”

Sprigle never won that second Pulitzer.

Cosplaying as Black

Sprigle’s more famous successor, John Howard Griffin, published his memoir, “Black Like Me,” in 1961.

Like Sprigle, Griffin explored the South as a temporary Black man, darkening his skin with pills intended to treat vitiligo, a skin disease that causes splotchy losses of pigmentation. He also used stains to even his skin tone and spent time under a tanning lamp.

During his weeks as “Joseph Franklin,” Griffin encountered racism on a number of occasions: White thugs chased him, bus drivers refused to let him

disembark to pee, store managers denied him work, closeted gay white men aggressively hit on him, and otherwise nice-seeming white people grilled him with what Griffin called the “hate stare.”

Once Griffin resumed being white and news broke about his racial experiment, his white neighbors from his hometown in Mansfield, Texas, hanged him in effigy.

For his work, Griffin was lauded as an icon in empathy. Since, unlike Sprigle, he experienced racist incidents himself, Griffin showed skeptical white readers what they refused to believe: Racism was real. The book became a bestseller and a movie, and is still included in school curricula – at the expense, I might add, of African-American literature.

Griffin’s importance to this genealogy extends beyond middle-schoolers reading “Black Like Me,” to his successor and mentee, Grace Halsell.

Halsell, a freelance journalist and former staff writer for Lyndon B. Johnson’s administration, decided to “become” a Black woman – first in Harlem in New York City, and then in Mississippi.

Without consulting any Black woman before baking herself caramel in tropical suns and using Griffin’s doctors to administer vitiligo-corrective medication, Halsell initially planned to “be” Black for a year. But after alleging someone attempted to sexually assault her while she was working as a Black domestic worker, Halsell ended her stint as a Black woman early.

Although her experiment only lasted six months, she still claimed to be someone who could authentically represent her “darker sisters” in her 1969 memoir, “Soul Sister.”

Turn-of-the-Century ‘Race Switching’

Forster writes that his 2024 memoir is the “fourth act” – after Sprigle, Griffin and Halsell – of what he calls “journalistic blackface.” However, he is not, as he claims, “the first person to earnestly cross the color barrier in over half a century.”

In a 174-page book self-described as “gonzo” with only 17 citations, Forster failed to finish his homework.

In 1994, Joshua Solomon, a white college student, medically dyed his skin to “become” a Black man after reading “Black Like Me.” His originally planned, monthlong experiment in Georgia only lasted a few days. But he nonetheless detailed his experiences in an article for *The Washington Post* and netted an appearance on “The Oprah Winfrey Show.”

Then, in 2006, FX released, “Black. White.,” a six-part reality television series advertised as the “ultimate racial experiment.”

Two families – one white, the other Black – “switched” their races to perform versions of each-otherness while living together in Los Angeles. While the makeup team won a Primetime Emmy Award, the families said goodbye seething with resentment instead of understanding.

A Masterclass of White Arrogance

Believing it would distract from the findings of his experiment, Forster refuses to show readers his mochaface.

Even after confronting evidence forcing him to question his project’s appropriateness, like the multiple articles condemning “wearing makeup to imitate the appearance of a Black person,” he insists his insights into American racism justify his methods and are different from the harmful legacies of blackface.

As he stands on the side of the road, sun and sweat compromising whatever care he took to paint his face, Forster concludes that racism can be divided into two broad taxonomies: institutional and interpersonal.

The former, he believes, “is effectively dead,” and the latter is most often experienced as “shoulder,” like the subtle refusal to pick up a mocha-faced hitchhiker.

Forster’s Amazon book description touts “Seven Shoulders” as “the most important book on American race relations that has ever been written.”

Indeed, it is a masterclass – but one on the arrogance of white assumptions about Blackness. To believe that the richness of Black identity can be understood through a temporary costume trivializes the lifelong trauma of racism. It turns the complexity of Black life into a stunt.

Whether it’s Forster’s premise that Black people are ill-equipped to testify about their own experiences, his sketchy citations, the hubris of his caricature, or the venom with which he speaks about the Black Lives Matter movement, Forster offers an important reminder that liberation can’t be bought at the drugstore.

Alisha Gaines is associate professor of English, Florida State University.

Michael Jackson’s legacy: fifteen years after his death, his influence continues

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

In what may have been his greatest triumph, a very frail and emotionally tested Michael Jackson walked out of a Santa Maria, Calif., courthouse on a sunny June day in 2005, having beaten 13 charges related to allegedly molesting a young cancer patient. As he slowly walked toward a waiting caravan of black SUVs, the King of Pop appeared almost unfazed, even dazed, by what had just occurred.

He was exonerated but still drawn with a nearly puzzled look as many cheering fans stood by, one having released white doves signifying innocence. Joseph Jackson, the patriarch of the world-famous Jackson family, appeared to nudge his son’s arm upwards, helping him acknowledge the loyal fans from everywhere.

A reporter asked this journalist, “Where do you see Michael Jackson in five years?” The response was “Dead.” Unfortunately, almost four years to the date, that prognostication came true. Jackson had died of an overdose of the sedative propofol. He was 50, and a stunned world couldn’t conceive that it had lost the biggest pop music entertainer ever to grace the planet.

At the time of his death, he was rehearsing for a series of London concerts aimed at reviving a career shattered by allegations, wild spending habits and strange bedfellows. A Los Angeles court sentenced Dr. Conrad Murray, who was Michael Jackson’s personal doctor at the time of the singer’s death



Jackson

in 2009, to four years in prison for involuntary manslaughter in 2011.

Triumphs and Trials: A Complex Life

Michael Jackson’s rise to fame began early. He was the seventh of nine children. Born on August 29, 1958, in Gary, Indiana, Jackson joined his brothers Jackie, Tito, Jermaine and Marlon to form The Jackson Five, a group that quickly rose to stardom.

Jackson’s solo career, launched in the 1970s, reached unprecedented heights with the release of “Thriller” in 1982. The album became the best-selling of all time, with over 21 million copies sold in the United States and at least 27 million worldwide, cementing Jackson’s place as a global icon.

However, Jackson’s life was not with-

out its challenges. His eccentricities, including his high-pitched voice, numerous plastic surgeries, friendships with children, and a pet chimpanzee, earned him the nickname “Wacko Jacko.” In 1993, he faced his first public child molestation allegations, which he vehemently denied. Although a jury acquitted him of all charges in a high-profile 2005 trial, the allegations severely damaged his reputation.

A U.S. tax court judge noted in 2021 that Jackson had “earned not a penny from his image and likeness in 2006, 2007 or 2008,” highlighting the lasting impact of these allegations. Despite this, Jackson’s popularity has surged in the digital era.

According to Billboard, global consumption of his music grew from 4.7 billion to 6.5 billion on-demand streams between 2021 and 2023, a 38.3% increase. In February, the BBC reported that Sony Music Group confirmed it would acquire half of Jackson’s catalog in a deal valuing his music assets at more than \$1.2 billion.

The Enduring Appeal of Jackson’s Artistry

Jackson’s artistry continues to captivate audiences. “MJ The Musical,” a jukebox show featuring his music, has enjoyed successful runs on Broadway and in London’s West End. Next year will see the release of the Antoine Fuqua-directed biopic “Michael,” starring Jackson’s nephew Jaafar Jackson. However, the musical and biopic have faced criticism for not addressing the abuse allegations in detail.

The New York Times noted that “no

one’s looking at the man in the mirror” in its review of MJ The Musical, while the *San Francisco Chronicle* remarked that the show is “pop perfection” but has “an allegation-shaped hole.” This selective representation is part of a broader effort to rehabilitate Jackson’s image, which has been ongoing for decades.

A Legacy Beyond Controversy

Despite the controversies, Jackson’s impact on music and culture remains profound. British journalist Laura Lee Davies recalled the surreal publicity stunt for Jackson’s 1995 album “HIStory,” which included floating a 30-foot statue of Jackson down the River Thames. This spectacle was part of Jackson’s attempt to restore his image and remind the world of his extraordinary talent.

Jackson’s influence extends far beyond his lifetime. His music, characterized by innovative videos, groundbreaking dance moves and genre-defying sounds, continues to inspire artists across the globe. His humanitarian efforts and vision of healing the world are integral to his legacy.

In 2018, the National Portrait Gallery in London hosted a major exhibition of Michael Jackson-inspired art featuring works by Keith Haring, Andy Warhol and Faith Ringgold. The exhibition’s assistant curator, Lucy Dahlsen, explained to the BBC that the display aimed to be objective, celebrating Jackson’s achievements while acknowledging the more challenging aspects of his life.

The Dual Legacies of Michael Jackson

In her book “On Michael Jackson,” Pulitzer Prize-winning author Margo Jefferson explores the complexities of Jackson’s legacy. She notes that Jackson’s music and dance have influenced countless artists and sparked discussions on cultural identities and non-binary styles. Jefferson believes there are at least two legacies of Jackson: one for fans who appreciate his talent despite the allegations, and another for those who view him as a martyr and innocent victim.

Jefferson’s perspective on Jackson’s legacy might have shifted with present-day knowledge, especially in light of the 2019 documentary “Leaving Neverland,” which brought new abuse allegations. However, Jefferson argues that Jackson’s music and influence would have likely endured regardless.

Michael Jackson’s Influence Today

Today, Michael Jackson’s influence is seen in the work of numerous artists, from Bruno Mars to Beyoncé. His innovative approach to music and performance continues to inspire new generations. While the controversies surrounding his life may never fully dissipate, the BBC notes that Jackson’s contributions to music and culture remain a significant part of his legacy.

As fans mark the fifteenth anniversary of his death, Jackson’s star continues to shine brightly. His music, moves and overall talent resonate more than ever, proving that the King of Pop’s legacy is enduring and evolving.

As Jackson himself once said, “I’m just like anyone. I cut, and I bleed. And I embarrass easily.”

How to keep feet and ankles in tip top shape this summer

StatePoint

Summer fun and chores alike come with potential hazards to feet. According to the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons, here's how to protect feet and ankles from the most common seasonal hazards:

Be DIY Safe

DIY projects like power washing, roofing and decking require ramped up safety measures. Always wear closed-toed shoes with traction to prevent injuries, splinters, puncture wounds and falls. Mowing can be particularly hazardous. The U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission estimates more than 37,000 Americans suffer a power mower-related injury annually.

"Lawnmower blades whirl at 3,000 revolutions per minute. Yet we see patients who've been hurt operating a mower barefoot," said Matthew Dairman, DPM, FACFAS, a board-certified foot and ankle surgeon and a Fellow Member of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (ACFAS). "Foot injuries range from dirty, infection-prone lacerations to severed tendons to amputated toes. People need to take lawn mowing safety seriously because the injuries can, indeed, be very serious."

To avoid becoming a statistic, follow these sensible guidelines:

- Don't mow a wet lawn. Losing control from slipping on rain-soaked grass is the leading cause of foot injuries caused by power mowers.
- Wear heavy shoes or work boots – no sneakers or sandals.
- Never pull a running mower backward.
- Keep the clip bag attached during operation to



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prevent projectile injuries.

- Use a mower with a release mechanism that automatically shuts it off when hands let go.
- Always keep children away during mowing.
- If an accident occurs, even a minor one, consult a foot and ankle surgeon right away.

Wear Sunscreen

Many people skip their feet when applying sunscreen, but did you know that the skin on your feet is highly susceptible to melanoma? In fact, it's the most diagnosed and fatal site of this form of skin cancer. Other types of skin cancer can also be found on the foot, including squamous cell and basal cell carcinoma.

To keep your feet safe this summer:

- Lather up with sunscreen from head to toe – literally.
- Check your feet and toes regularly for abnormal looking moles or freckles, even under toenails and on your soles. Promptly schedule an

appointment with your foot and ankle surgeon to have suspicious marks examined.

- Schedule routine exams so your foot and ankle surgeon can track suspicious, changing marks. Early detection is key.

Limit Flimsy Footwear

While it's nice to let feet breathe in flip flops and they're a great choice for locker rooms and pools to avoid fungus and athlete's foot, they shouldn't be your main footwear of choice all summer. Flip flops lack arch support and stability, so wearing them too often can cause stress on the plantar fascia – the band of tissue extending from the heel to the base of the toes. This can result in plantar fasciitis, causing heel pain upon getting up in the morning and after inactivity.

To avoid developing issues, which can take a long time to treat and subside, consider wearing structured sandals with proper shock absorption and arch support. If you

can't live without flip flops, wear them sparingly to keep your feet in good shape. And if you'll be traveling, pack tennis shoes for sightseeing, hikes and other weight-bearing activities.

Be Mindful of Diabetes

People living with diabetes should never go barefoot, because their nervous system may not "feel" an injury and their circulatory system will struggle to heal breaks in the skin.

"Most patients living with diabetes know they shouldn't walk barefoot but can be more inclined to disregard this precaution in summer. However third-degree burns on the soles of feet can occur in a matter of minutes," says Dr. Dairman.

This summer, be smart. Take care of your feet so they take care of you.

If you suffer a foot and ankle injury this summer, visit FootHealthFacts.org for valuable foot and ankle health information and to find a physician near you.

Delta innovator search seeking new ideas to improve health, economy in region

StatePoint

Entrepreneurs, scientists, agricultural leaders and other innovators with ideas for advancing the health and economy of the Mississippi Delta region of Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana are encouraged to enter the inaugural Delta Innovator Search.

The Rural Innovation Alliance, a multistate initiative committed to transforming the Delta region into a thriving, diversified and integrated economic driver, will accept applications for the search through July 30 at ruralinnovationalliance.org

The search, part of a planning process launched in May 2023 and funded by the National Science Foundation's Regional Innovation Engines program, will identify new solutions that have the potential to advance the region's economy and contribute to better health outcomes for Delta residents.

Solutions could include new goods or products, scientific or technical innovations, services, business models, financial strategies or other projects that help build the necessary infrastructure for resilient economic growth in the Delta.

Projects should align with at least one of three target categories:

- Scientific or Technical Innovations – New approaches that address the Delta's unique needs and opportunities, ranging from non-traditional rural health delivery to agricultural innovations such as specialty crop developments or resilient farming practices.

- Economic or Financial Innovations – New business models or financial strategies designed to strengthen the region's economic base by engaging and empowering Delta residents and communities.

- Community Impact 2040 – Strategies thoroughly grounded within and committed to making a long-term, positive impact on local Delta communities, including advancements in economic resiliency and improvements in rural health outcomes.

"Our alliance believes that with dedicated support, it is possible to seed, incubate and translate these innovations into tangible outcomes that will have a positive economic

and societal impact on the region," said Dr. Joe Thompson, president and CEO of the Arkansas Center for Health Improvement, one of the leading partners in the alliance. "This search is an integral next step in our planning process to outline a strategy that leads to the development of new businesses, innovative technologies, creative workforce development programs and inclusive wealth creation in the Delta."

Applicants selected as finalists will present their proposals to the Rural Innovation Alliance and its partners at a showcase and awards banquet in September. At the showcase, innovators will be selected to receive awards of \$20,000, \$10,000 and \$5,000 to support their initiative, in addition to gaining access to networking support and additional funding opportunities – including a pathway to participate in the upcoming \$160 million second-phase NSF Regional Innovation Engines grant application process.

Both individual and organization applications are welcome. Applicants must be at least 18 years old and residents of Arkansas, Mississippi or Louisiana or demonstrate authentic partnership with an organization from the area that serves residents.

"Rural health care access, sources of quality food and other challenges the Delta faces are intertwined with economic resiliency," said Charity Hallman, senior vice president, Hope Enterprise Corporation. "This collaboration represents an opportunity to foster new ideas and innovative leaders from within our own communities with the clear understanding that their success makes the entire region stronger."

The Delta Innovator Search is part of the National Science Foundation's Regional Innovation Engines program, Advancing Equitable Access to Food and Health Technologies in the Delta (AR, LA, MS).

The program seeks to develop a plan to harness the region's strengths to address key disparities and lay the foundation in the region's communities for future innovation that will advance the local economies and improve health outcomes for residents.

Questions and Answers

By Vince Faust
Tips to Be Fit

"Does salt water fish contain more sodium than fresh water fish?" – Nate, Boston, MS

The answer is no. Just as your body doesn't absorb salt from swimming in the ocean, fish don't absorb it from their surroundings. A three-ounce piece of fresh water bass contains almost as much sodium as three ounces Pacific cod.

Fish are an excellent source of protein, polyunsaturated fatty acid and minerals. Fish contain the highest sources of iodine and potassium. Most fish are also low in saturated fat. Each of the categories differs slightly in nutritional value. Freshwater fish provides magnesium, phosphorus, iron and copper. Saltwater fish and shellfish are rich in iodine, fluorine and cobalt.

The fat content of fish varies not only with the size and type of fish, but with the time of year. Fatty fish, which include halibut, mackerel and salmon are higher in fat but contain more vitamin A and D. Shell-

fish are low in fat but are higher in cholesterol than most other fish.

"Are my socks as important as the shoes I wear in the gym?" –Tina, Dallas, TX

The right sock is just as important as your shoes. Active feet sweat and sweat soaked socks produce unpleasant odors, increasing your chances of blisters, infection and risk of injury by slippage. Here are some tips to keep in mind when you're buying sport socks.

Buy synthetics like Orlon for softness and speedy drying, nylon for endurance and propylene for quick drying. 100% cotton and wool are not good sport socks because they absorb sweat but don't dry quickly. Cotton-synthetics blends are a good choice if you like the comfort of the natural fibers. The only exception to this is wet or cold hiking. 100% wool is the only fiber that stays warm even when soaked.

"What can I eat before I workout?" – Paula, Wilmington, DE

Your rate of digestion is af-

ected by many factors. Foods high in fat stay in your stomach longer. If you eat French fries at 4:00 they'll still be in your stomach at 6:30. Try vegetables or pasta without sauce before your exercise class. A cool soft meal, such as a salad will digest faster than a hot fatty meal. When you go to class get there early enough so you don't feel rushed during the warm-up. Make sure you breathe properly during class and don't tense your body and mind while you're working out. Let your body work but learn to relax with the workout. So eat before class but make it a light meal.

"I'm 27 years old. I've just gotten back into exercise and I want to know if I need to eat meat to get in the iron I need? I'm getting a lot of opinions. Do I need to eat beef if I exercise?" – Diane, Cherry Hill, NJ

Females who exercise do have a greater demand for the mineral iron. Does this mean you have to eat beef? Dietary facts suggest that we should include red meat in our diets. The

mineral iron is found in vegetables, fruits and other meats. The iron from vegetables is a nonheme form of iron. This iron can be used by the body, but not as easily as the iron found in beef and other meats.

When a group of female exercisers who ate beef were compared to a similar group of non-beef eaters, they found that the non-beef eaters had problems with low iron levels. Good usable iron is also found in chicken and fish but beef still provides the most easily used iron. Before you go out and buy a side of beef, check with someone who can measure your iron level. Then find out the amount of iron that's found in your diet. And remember only 8 ounces of lean beef will give the iron you need not a 16 oz. steak.

"I don't have much time to exercise. What can I do to tone up my body?" – Harry, Jersey City, NJ

Try an early morning workout. Set aside some time before work, before school or before your other family members wake. As with any new pro-

gram you should gradually get into working out early. If you've never exercised and you want get started, start with a ten-minute walk. In two weeks add 10 minutes of calisthenics. Add five minutes each week to your walk until you are getting in 30 minutes. Add more calisthenics until you've added everything to your workout. Remember you have time if you make time.

"My family loves to eat out a lot. Is there anyway I can eat out and not feel guilty about eating out?" – Ann, Eugene, OR

Most of us love good conversation over a tasty meal that we don't have to prepare or clean up after the meal. But, dining out can sabotage your plans to be healthy and shed a few pounds. Try these tips to help keep your diner dates happy and healthy:

- Be the first at your table to order so you won't be tempted to indulge in rich high calorie foods.
- If you don't know how the food on the menu is prepared,

ask. Don't be shy about making special request such as hold the butter and rich sauces. Let your waiter know you want to skip the salt and you want broiled or baked instead of fried.

- Ask for your dressing on the side or use it sparingly. Try dipping your fork in the dressing then take a fork full of salad.
- Avoid salads loaded with lunchmeat and highly processed cheese.
- If you must have dessert share it or take it home for later.
- If you drink alcohol do so in moderation and have a spritzer or light drink instead of exotic mixed drinks.
- Don't just talk about your diet, do the right thing and eat like you really do care about your health.

Before starting any health or fitness program consult your physician.

I want to hear what you think about this article.

If you have a fitness question or concern you would like addressed, email tipstobefit@gmail.com

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF
LARRY COLEMAN, DECEASED CAUSE NO. P24-244 H/3

NOTICE TO UNKNOWN CREDITORS

Letters Testamentary having been granted by the Chancery Court of Hinds County, Mississippi to the undersigned Executor upon the Estate of Larry Coleman, Deceased, notice is hereby given to all persons having claims against said estate to present the same to the Clerk of this Court for probate 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 14th day of June, 2024.

Jeanette Coleman
Jeanette Coleman

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
COUNTY OF HINDS

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

Ann James

NOTARY

MY COMMISSION EXPIRES

6/27/2024, 7/4/2024

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



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
COUNTY OF HINDS

PERSONALLY, came and appeared before me, this the undersigned authority in and for said County and State, the within named Jeanette Coleman who having been by me first duly sworn, stated on her oath that the matters, facts and averments set forth in the above and foregoing PETITION are true and correct as therein stated.

Jeanette Coleman
Jeanette Coleman

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED before me this the 14th day of June, 2024.

Ann James

Notary Public



MY COMMISSION EXPIRES:

6/20/2024, 6/27/2024, 7/4/2024

LEGAL

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A SPECIAL EXCEPTION

ZONING CASE NO. 4257

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 Tracy T. Willis has filed with the Planning Board for the City of Jackson, an application requesting a Special Exception to allow for a private kennel for up to five (5) dogs within a R-1A (Single-Family) Residential District on property located at 301 Sewanee Dr. (Parcel: 119-105-1), in the First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi, and being more particularly described as:

Lot 11, Block H, North Sunnyside Additions, a subdivision according to a map or plat thereof on file and of record in the office of the Chancery Court of Hinds County at Jackson, Mississippi, in Plat Book #1, page 69 reference to which is hereby made in aid of and as a part of this description.

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, July 24, 2024, 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 JULY 17, 2024.

WITNESS my signature this 27TH day of June 2024.

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

7/4/2024, 7/18/2024

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Advertisement for
RFQ 2024-01

Project Management and Communications Contractor to Support the
JPS-Hinds Early Learning Collaborative

Electronic RFP proposals for the above RFP will be received by the Board of Trustees of the Jackson Public School District, in the Business Office, 662 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi, until 10:00 A.M. (Local Prevailing Time), Friday, July 12, 2024, at which time and place they will be publicly opened and read aloud. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject all RFPs, waive informalities, and withhold the acceptance of any RFP if approved forty-five calendar days from the date RFPs are opened.

There are two (2) options in which RFP proposals may be obtained. Download from Central Bidding website at www.centralbidding.com for a small fee of \$49.99 or visit JPSD website at www.jackson.k12.ms.us and download. Vendors must be registered with Central Bidding in order to electronically upload RFPs proposals at no cost. For any questions concerning the process, or how to register, please contact Central Bidding at 225-810-4814.

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.

Also, until further notice, all opening will be recorded and uploaded to the JPSD web site at https://www.youtube.com/jpsitv for public viewing due to covid 19. Vendors will not be allowed to sit in on the bid openings.

LEGAL

ORDINANCE GRANTING KHALEEL WHITE A REZONING FROM R-1 (SINGLE-FAMILY) RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT TO NMU-1 (NEIGHBORHOOD) MIXED-USE DISTRICT, PEDESTRIAN ORIENTED FOR THE PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 4232, 4240 & 4246 W. CAPITOL ST. (PARCELS #118-25, 118-26 & 118-27) TO ALLOW FOR A MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT THAT INCLUDES RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES. CASE NO. 4250.

WHEREAS, Khaleel White has filed a petition to rezone the properties located at 4232, 4240 & 4246 W. Capitol St. (Parcels #118-25, 118-26 & 118-27), in the City of Jackson, First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi from R-1 (Single-Family) Residential District to NMU-1 (Neighborhood) Mixed-Use District, Pedestrian Oriented to allow for a mixed-use development that includes residential and commercial opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the Jackson City Planning Board, after holding the required public hearing, has offered the recommendation to rezone the properties from R-1 (Single-Family) Residential District to NMU-1 (Neighborhood) Mixed-Use District, Pedestrian Oriented to allow for a mixed-use development that includes residential and commercial opportunities; and

WHEREAS, notice was duly and legally given to property owners and interested citizens that a meeting of the Council would be held at the City Hall at 2:30 p.m., Monday, April 15, 2024 to consider said change based upon the record of the case as developed before the Jackson City Planning Board; and

WHEREAS, it appeared to the satisfaction of the Jackson City Council that notice of said petition had been published in the Mississippi Link on March 7, 2024 and March 21, 2024 that a hearing had been held by the Jackson City Planning Board on March 27, 2024, all as provided for by ordinances of the City of Jackson and the laws of the State of Mississippi, and that the Jackson City Planning Board has offered the recommendation to rezone the above described properties from R-1 (Single-Family) Residential District to NMU-1 (Neighborhood) Mixed-Use District, Pedestrian Oriented to allow for a mixed use development that includes residential and commercial opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the Jackson City Council after having considered the matter, is of the opinion that such changes would be in keeping with sound land use practice and to the best interest of the City and that there has been a substantial change in the land use character of the surrounding area that justifies rezoning the properties and there is a public need for additional property in that area zoned in accordance with the request in said application since any previous Jackson City Council action.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI:

SECTION 1. That the properties located in the City of Jackson, First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi, more particularly described as follows:

Parcel 118-25
LOT 6 BLK 2 BELLA VISTA SUBN

Parcel 118-26
LOT 7 BLK 2 JOHNSON HGTS SUBN

Parcel 118-27
LOT 8 BLK 2 JOHNSON HGTS SUBN is hereby modified so as to approve the rezoning of the of the properties located at 4232, 4240 & 4246 W. Capitol St. (Parcels #118-25, 118-26 & 118-27) from R-1 (Single-Family) Residential District to NMU-1 (Neighborhood) Mixed-Use District, Pedestrian Oriented to allow for a mixed-use development that includes residential and commercial opportunities. However, that before for any structure is erected or use thereof on the said properties, the applicant must meet the requirements established through the Site Plan Review process. The Zoning Administrator is ordered to note such change on the Official Zoning Map to the City of Jackson, Mississippi.

SECTION 2. That the cost of publication of this Ordinance shall be borne by the petitioner.

SECTION 3. That this Ordinance shall be effective thirty (30) days after its passage and after publication of same by the petitioner. President Banks moved adoption; Council Member Stokes seconded.

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

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 Zoning Council Meeting April 15, 2024 and recorded in Minute Book "6Z, Pgs. 98-100".

WITNESS my signature and official seal of office, this 30th day of May, 2024.

Angela Harris, Municipal Clerk

7/4/2024, 7/18/2024

LEGAL

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A USE PERMIT

ZONING CASE NO. 4258

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 Capitol Magnolia, LLC has filed with the Planning Board for the City of Jackson, an application requesting a Use Permit to allow for the conversion of an office building into multifamily apartments of up to twenty (20) units within a C-2 (Limited) Commercial District on property located at 2625-2639 Ridgewood Rd (Parcel: 542-230), in the First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi, and being more particularly described as:

BEGINNING AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF LELIA STREET AND SOUTHERLAND STREET IN JACKSON, HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI, RUN THENCE SOUTH 88 DEGREES 59 MINUTES EAST 478.0 FEET ALONG THE SOUTHERLY MARGIN OF LELIA STREET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING OF THE PARCEL HEREIN DESCRIBED; THENCE CONTINUE ALONG THE SOUTHERLY MARGIN OF LELIA STREET SOUTH 88 DEGREES 59 MINUTES EAST 29.85 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 12 MINUTES WEST 298.48 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 35 MINUTES WEST 134.17 FEET; THENCE NORTH 01 DEGREES 01 MINUTES EAST 201.81 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 88 DEGREES 59 MINUTES EAST 100.0 FEET; THENCE NORTH 01 DEGREES 01 MINUTES EAST 100.0 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

THE ABOVE DESCRIBED PARCEL CONTAINS 0.68 ACRES, MORE OR LESS, ALL OF WHICH IS LOCATED IN THE SE 1/4 OF SECTION 25, TOWNSHIP 6 NORTH, RANGE 1 EAST, FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI.

LESS AND EXCEPT THE FOLLOWING PROPERTY:

BEGINNING AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF LELIA STREET AND SOUTHERLAND STREET IN JACKSON, HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI, RUN THENCE SOUTH 88 DEGREES 59 MINUTES EAST A DISTANCE OF 478.00 FEET ALONG THE SOUTHERLY MARGIN OF LELIA STREET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING OF THE PARCEL HEREIN DESCRIBED; THENCE CONTINUE ALONG THE SOUTHERLY MARGIN OF LELIA STREET SOUTH 88 DEGREES 59 MINUTES EAST A DISTANCE OF 29.85 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 0 DEGREES 12 MINUTES WEST A DISTANCE OF 100.00 FEET; THENCE NORTH 88 DEGREES 59 MINUTES WEST A DISTANCE OF 31.3 FEET TO THE SOUTHEASTERN CORNER OF THAT CERTAIN PARCEL 1 AS DESCRIBED IN WARRANTY DEED RECORDED IN BOOK 6890 AT PAGE 61; THENCE NORTH 01 DEGREES 01 MINUTES EAST A DISTANCE OF 100.00 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

THE ABOVE DESCRIBED PARCEL CONTAINS 0.07 ACRES, MORE OR LESS BEING LOCATED IN THE SE 1/4 OF SECTION 25, TOWNSHIP 6 NORTH, RANGE 1 EAST, FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI.

BEGINNING AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF LELIA STREET AND SOUTHERLAND STREET IN JACKSON, HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI, RUN THENCE SOUTH 88 DEGREES 59 MINUTES EAST A DISTANCE OF 478.00 FEET ALONG THE SOUTHERLY MARGIN OF LELIA STREET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING OF THE PARCEL HEREIN DESCRIBED; THENCE CONTINUE ALONG THE SOUTHERLY MARGIN OF LELIA STREET SOUTH 88 DEGREES 59 MINUTES EAST A DISTANCE OF 29.85 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 0 DEGREES 12 MINUTES WEST A DISTANCE OF 100.00 FEET; THENCE NORTH 88 DEGREES 59 MINUTES WEST A DISTANCE OF 31.3 FEET TO THE SOUTHEASTERN CORNER OF THAT CERTAIN PARCEL 1 AS DESCRIBED IN WARRANTY DEED RECORDED IN BOOK 6890 AT PAGE 61; THENCE NORTH 01 DEGREES 01 MINUTES EAST A DISTANCE OF 100.00 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

THE ABOVE DESCRIBED PARCEL CONTAINS 0.07 ACRES, MORE OR LESS BEING LOCATED IN THE SE 1/4 OF SECTION 25, TOWNSHIP 6 NORTH, RANGE 1 EAST, FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF 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, July 24, 2024, 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 JULY 17, 2024.

WITNESS my signature this 28TH day of June 2024.

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

7/4/2024, 7/18/2024

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NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A USE PERMIT
ZONING CASE NO. 4259

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 Raad Mudhis Gobah has filed with the Planning Board for the City of Jackson, an application requesting a Use Permit to allow for a Tobacco Paraphernalia Store within a C-3 (General) Commercial District on property located at 4886 Highway 18 West (Parcel: 831-101), in the First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi, and being more particularly described as:

Being all of Lots 1 and 2 of the 903 Subdivision as platted and recorded in the Office of the Chancery Clerk, Hinds County, Mississippi, and being more particularly described as follows, to-wit:

Commencing at an iron pin at the Northwest corner of Lot 1 of the 903 Subdivision as platted and recorded in the Office of the Chancery Clerk, Hinds County, Mississippi and use as the POINT OF BEGINNING, said Northwest corner also being on the South Right-of-Way of Mississippi Highway No. 18. From said POINT OF BEGINNING run North 41 degrees 08 minutes 04 seconds East along the said South Right-of-Way for a distance of 87.55 feet, to an iron pin; thence South 41 degrees 48 minutes 00 seconds East along the said South Right-of-Way for a distance of 2.15 feet to an iron pin; thence North 42 degrees 33 minutes 10 seconds East along the said South Right-of-Way for a distance of 80.79 feet, to an iron pin; thence North 36 degrees 42 minutes 59 seconds East along the said South Right-of-Way for a distance of 51.50 feet, to an iron pin at the Northwest corner of Lot 2 of the said 903 Subdivision; thence South 47 degrees 03 minutes 07 seconds East for a distance of 41.36 feet, to an iron pin; thence North 42 degrees 54 minutes 33 seconds East for a distance of 16.05 feet, to an iron pin; thence South 47 degrees 08 minutes 37 seconds East for a distance of 32.00 feet, to an iron pin; thence South 68 degrees 20 minutes 00 seconds East for a distance of 68.13 feet to an iron pin; thence East for a distance of 50.51 feet, to an iron pin at the Northeast corner of Lot 2 of the said 903 Subdivision; thence South 00 degrees 05 minutes 39 seconds West for a distance of 140.81 feet, to an iron pin at the beginning of a curve to the right, said curve having a radius of 100.00 feet and a chord bearing South 09 degrees 33 minutes 40 seconds West for a distance of 33.73 feet; thence along said curve to the right for an arc length of 33.90 feet, to an iron pin; thence South 19 degrees 29 minutes 03 seconds West for a distance of 98.37 feet, to an iron pin at the Northeast corner of Lot 1 of the said 903 Subdivision; thence South 19 degrees 27 minutes 36 seconds West for a distance of 141.36 feet, to an iron pin at the Southeast corner of Lot 1 of the said 903 subdivision, said Southeast corner also being on the North Right-of-Way of Chadwick Drive; thence North 70 degrees 33 minutes 41 seconds West along the said North Right-of-Way for a distance of 388.57 feet, to an iron pin; thence North 30 degrees 29 minutes 55 seconds West along the said North Right-of-Way for a distance of 43.81 feet, to an iron pin at the Southwest corner of Lot 1 of the said 903 Subdivision, said Southwest corner also being on the South Right-of-Way of Mississippi Highway No. 18; thence North 44 degrees 47 minutes 47 seconds East along the said South Right-of-Way for a distance of 16.99 feet to an iron pin; thence North 50 degrees 12 minutes 39 seconds East for a distance of 115.82 feet, to an iron pin; thence South 47 degrees 23 minutes 03 seconds East along the said South Right-of-Way for a distance of 1.99 feet, to an iron pin; thence North 50 degrees 12 minutes 57 seconds East along the said South Right-of-Way for a distance of 35.60 feet, to an iron pin; thence North 42 degrees 30 minutes 22 seconds East along the said South Right-of-Way for a distance of 32.04 feet to the POINT OF BEGINNING. Said parcel being all of Lots 1 and 2 of the 903 Subdivision as platted and recorded in the Office of the Chancery Clerk, Hinds County, Mississippi, and contains 2.92 acres.

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, July 24, 2024, 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 JULY 17, 2024.

WITNESS my signature this 28TH day of June 2024.

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

7/4/2024, 7/18/2024

LEGAL

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A USE PERMIT
ZONING CASE NO. 4260

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 DeAngealo Barrett has filed with the Planning Board for the City of Jackson, an application requesting a Use Permit to allow for the placement of a manufactured house within a R-2 (Single & Two-Family) Residential District on property located at 0 Rand St. (Parcel: 707-107), in the First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi, and being more particularly described as:

270.5 ft x 122 FT N & S IN NE COR LOT 19 SCHROEDERS 3RD SUBN LESS TO INDIVIDUALS LESS TO ST

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, July 24, 2024, 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 JULY 17, 2024.

WITNESS my signature this 27TH day of June 2024.

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

7/4/2024, 7/18/2024

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Advertisement for
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Electronic RFP proposals for the above RFP will be received by the Board of Trustees of the Jackson Public School District, in the Business Office, 662 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi, until 10:00 A.M. (Local Prevaling Time), Thursday, July 18, 2024, at which time and place they will be publicly opened and read aloud. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject all RFPs, waive informalities, and withhold the acceptance of any RFP if approved forty-five calendar days from the date RFPs are opened.

There are two (2) options in which RFP proposals may be obtained. Download from Central Bidding website at www.centralbidding.com for a small fee of \$49.99 or visit JPSD website at www.jackson.k12.ms.us and download. Vendors must be registered with Central Bidding in order to electronically upload RFPs proposals at no cost. For any questions concerning the process, or how to register, please contact Central Bidding at 225-810-4814.

All hand-delivered proposals must be delivered before the opening time (local prevailing time) and the date the bid is scheduled to open. These deliveries are to be made to the Business Services Office at 662 South President Street, Jackson, MS 39201.

7/4/2024, 7/11/2024

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PUBLIC NOTICE

CITY OF JACKSON, MS
PUBLIC REVIEW MEETING NOTICE
2024 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

PUBLICATION DATE: WEDNESDAY, JULY 3, 2024
PUBLIC COMMENTS DUE BY: FRIDAY, AUGUST 2, 2024 – 4:00 P.M.

The City of Jackson will hold a Public Review Meeting to solicit comments on the 2024 Action Plan at 10:00 AM on Tuesday, July 9, 2024 at City Hall located at 218 S. President Street, Jackson, MS 39201.

The City will accept comments on the commencing Wednesday, June 26, 2024 and ending on Friday, July 26, 2024, which represents the City's 30-day 2024 Action Plan public comment period. The City is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to annually submit an Action Plan to identify its annual goals, objectives, and projects for the year. This draft plan outlines the annual allocation of funding by the City for the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program, Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), and Housing Opportunities for People With AIDS (HOPWA). The purpose of this notice is to make the draft Action Plan available to the public for comments prior to its submittal to HUD.

Draft copies of the 2024 Action Plan will be available for examination and comment by the public at the City of Jackson's Office of Housing and Community Development located at 218 S. President St. Jackson, MS 39201 and on the City's website at https://www.jacksonms.gov/housing-community-development/.

The required public review ends Friday, August 2, 2024. The City will receive written comments until 4:00 P.M. on Friday, August 2, 2024.

The City will receive \$1,784,212 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds; \$813,109 in Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) funds; \$153,452 in Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds; and \$1,613,530 in Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) funds for a total of \$4,364,303 in federal entitlement funds. Upon award of these funds, the City proposes to undertake eligible activities to address housing and community development needs. Funding allocations for the City's 2024 allocations are posted on the City's website at https://www.jacksonms.gov/housing-community-development/.

No displacement will occur as a result of the activities described herein. Should displacement occur, the City of Jackson will implement the provisions as required by CFR 570.606 (Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance). The City of Jackson does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission of, access to, or treatment of, or employment, the programs and activities described herein. An interpreter is available upon request to assist persons with limited English proficiency. Any requests for reasonable accommodation required by an individual to fully participate in any open meetings, programs, or activities of the City of Jackson's Office of Housing and Community Development should be directed to: Mr. Reginald Jefferson, Deputy Director, (601) 960-4238 or rjefferson@jacksonms.gov.

7/4/2024

P R E S E R V E D

Our needs and God's timing

By Shewanda Riley
Columnist



"I got hungry...you think I may have overdid it?" was the caption of a photo a friend texted me in August a few years ago. In the picture there were 6 pans overflowing with barbecued ribs, grilled salmon, smoked sausage, grilled pork chops and grilled cornish hen. Even though I'm not a big meat eater, I couldn't pass up the chance to eat some fresh barbecue. So, I gladly accepted his offer to come and get as much meat as I wanted. I was so thankful that I could enjoy some great barbecue and I didn't have to worry about cooking meat for a few days. I ate as much as I could for a few days and then put the leftovers in my freezer.

As I added more food to my freezer, I soon forgot that they were there.

Fast forward to a few months later in October when I had a taste for grilled salmon but didn't feel like cooking. Just by chance, I started digging in the freezer and what did I find? One perfectly frozen grilled lemon pepper salmon steak. How awesome for me. I had salmon for my dinner, and I didn't have to cook.

After I finished eating, I also thought about how God had, even in what could be considered a small thing, showed me, once again, that he was able to meet my needs not just in the present but also in the future. God knew that I would want salmon in October, and he'd provided for it back in August.

It was just a small piece of salmon but a big reminder that

God provides for my needs even before I realize that I have them. Honestly, I sometimes struggle with feeling like God has forgotten about me and some of my prayer requests. I didn't know that I'd need lemon pepper salmon steak in October but God, not being bound by time, knew, and had already provided for that need.

That is one of the awesome things I love about God: He is still the God of Isaiah 46:10 that says "Only I can tell you the future before it even happens. Everything I plan will happen, for I do whatever I wish." Whether its food, healing for our bodies, or financial needs, God has already taken care of the need. With such an emphasis on "where has the time gone?" at this time of the year, we Christians have to continue to trust God's timing.

At this point in the year, so many of my friends are reflecting on how quickly 2024 seems to be moving along. For some, it was the year of unexpected loss as friends and loved ones passed away. For others, it was the year of victory as answers to long awaited prayers arrived. For me, it has been the year of becoming more at peace with God's timing as I am learning how, with examples like the lemon pepper salmon steak, to better accept and understand the timing as well as the movement of God

Shewanda Riley 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.



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The presidential debate is over however the issues are still the same in America

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



The publicity surrounding the presidential debate between Mr. Biden and Mr. Trump was enormous. It was built like an Ali-Frazier fight or a Yankees and Red Sox baseball game.

The ink wasn't dry before another column was written about this purportedly once in a lifetime test of personalities and wills. You had to be on another planet with no internet not to know about it.

It is truly amazing how the media can call attention to an event. The host, CNN, was in a debate frenzy leading up to Thursday, June 27th. They had every perspective and angle covered. According to reports, over 47 million people watched it.

The question at the podium is why did we tune in to watch it? I suspect the most plausible answer is that we watched for different reasons. So that I am out front, the debate didn't change my mind.

I wasn't undecided before the debate and the results didn't sway me one scintilla. If anything, it only reaffirmed my choice of President Joe Biden. Know that

I am voting completely and fully for him. I am all in and leaned in, too.

America, we are faced with a distinct choice. Do not let this debate fool you. On one side, you have Joe Biden, a man of integrity and on the other side you have Donald Trump, a person of convenience. President Biden is a man of principles and Mr. Trump is a person of privilege.

In Raleigh, NC on Friday President Biden said, "Folks, I don't walk as easy as I used to. I don't speak as smoothly as I used to. I don't debate as well as I used to, but I know how to tell the truth. I know right from wrong, and I know how to do this job."

We know the debate wasn't one of the President's best nights. Former President Barack Obama said on a post on X, "Bad debate nights happen. Trust me, I know. But this election is still a choice between someone who has fought for ordinary folks his entire life and someone who only cares about himself. Last night didn't change that, and it's why so much is at stake in November."

One of my childhood friends asked, Would you rather have a president with advanced age or a president who is an unmitigated liar? That choice should be easy for all of us.

The dust will settle on this de-

bate yet the challenges that we face as a nation remain. Who are you going to trust?

It is my opinion Mr. Trump has not endeared himself to women. If you are one of the few women who consider him your choice, you should reconsider before it's too late. He has already abrogated many of your rights.

If you are an independent voter, depend upon President Biden to deliver. He wants to improve the quality of our living. Don't get caught up in Mr. Trump and his friends who are simply talking loudly and saying nothing. He doesn't have one policy of substance that he can talk about and convince us. He is empty

when it comes to talking about policies and positions. Our allies know that too.

If you are Black like me or Brown, wake up everybody, it's time for thinking ahead. Joe Biden has a plan. Donald Trump has a plan for himself. Don't let your family and friends steer you in the wrong direction. If so, you'll be on a detour headed for a dead end.

Our vote is a vote for our ancestors who couldn't vote because of the color of their skin. You and I stand on their shoulders. If not for them, where would we be?

Vote for President Joe Biden and keep democracy safe.

The tragedy of mainstream media coverage of the presidential debate

By Dr. John Warren
Publisher, San Diego Voice & Viewpoint Newspaper



First let it be said that the Black Press of America believes in our democratic process, and believes that the record of President Joe Biden is greater than a bad debate night with Donald Trump. Second, the bigger tragedy was mainstream media's effort to make their coverage of the debate a matter of who did the better "sound bites" and not the substance of the issues put before the American people watching the debate.

As the Black Press of America let it be said that we are appalled at the editorial and news broadcast calling for the president to step down. It's the media's job to report the news and not initiate an orchestrated campaign to remove the president. Where is the media discussion about the issues and who said what about them? Where was the major fact checking of all the lies Trump told? The burden didn't shift to Biden just because he chose not to respond to the issues the media had decided he should have addressed.

It was not the job of the media to take the issue of the president's age or push the issue of whether or not

he should withdraw from the November 2024 election. But time and time again, on Fox News and Face The Nation as well as the editorial positions of *The New York Times*, and *Atlanta Constitution*, just to name a few, there was the pushing of the idea that the president was too old and should step down. Then there was the generating of polling questions to support the withdrawal of the president which was not the job of the media.

Once again, it is the Black Press that emerges as the true "Trusted Messenger" not manipulating the news for ratings. "We the People" must not allow our silence to give consent to such media coverage.

The good news in 2024: Poor people are the new swing vote

By William J. Barber, II
President, Repairers of the Breach



If you're an ordinary American who goes to work to pay the bills or takes care of a loved one most days, it's easy to feel down when you see the headlines about the 2024 election.

Donald J. Trump has been convicted of 34 felonies for falsifying business records to cover up hush money he paid to bury an alleged affair with a porn star during the 2016 campaign, and the Republican Party continues to think he's their best candidate. At the same time, President Biden is struggling to hold together this Democratic base as images of devastation in Gaza continue to dominate the news. Stories of good news in politics seem few and far between.

But as a preacher, I learned a long time ago that you don't get to the good news by looking away from problems; the good news is most often found right amid trouble. Yes, politics is a mess in 2024. But, at the same time, several popular movements of everyday people struggling for economic justice have emerged that have the potential to reshape our politics.

Against the backdrop of decades of rising inequality, low-wage worker movements have made huge strides since the pandemic, insisting that living wages are a moral issue for "essential workers" and seeing the largest increase in real wages in decades. Young people who've watched education and healthcare costs soar have come together to form effective coalitions for debt relief and won billions in loan forgiveness. Leveraging worker power, unions have waged effective strikes and negotiated new contracts while expanding to include new workers, especially in the South. Though they're rarely in the headlines, these movements made up of

millions of low-income workers have the potential to re-frame political debates for people who are weary of the status quo. The good news in 2024 is that poor and working people are the new swing vote in US politics.

A report from Lake Research Partners demonstrates just how powerful this untapped coalition of low-income voters could be. Looking back at the past three presidential elections, they found that in the seven states that will likely decide the 2024 election - Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, North Carolina, Nevada and Pennsylvania - low-income voter participation was an average of 12 percentage points lower than that of their higher-income voters. Using past averages to project 2024 turnout, this study measured the difference between the margin of victory in the last Trump/Biden matchup and the number of eligible low-income voters who are likely not to vote.

In Georgia, for example, Biden won by almost 12,000 votes in 2020. In North Carolina, he lost by 74,000. But in both states, more than a million eligible low-income voters will likely not vote in 2024 if past trends continue. That's a huge potential swing vote, and the proportions are similar across the seven swing states in the study.

Since the 2024 presidential race will likely be a rematch of 2020, this study used exit poll data from 2020 to ask who unlikely low-income voters would vote for if they did turn out in 2024. Of the 1.3 million likely nonvoters in Georgia, 746,000 would likely be Biden voters. Of the 1.1 million in North Carolina, some 594,000 would likely go for Biden. In short, Biden and other Democrats have a huge advantage among this demographic when they are able and willing to vote.

The overwhelming takeaway of this study is that a relatively small increase in low-income voter turnout in any of these seven states

would dramatically increase Biden's chances of winning a second term in the White House. The millions of low-income people who've risen as leaders in movements for economic justice over the past few years have the power to decide the outcome of the 2024 election.

Celinda Lake and her research partners are consultants for the Biden campaign, and there is a focus on the potential for his candidacy in 2024, but the potential power of this swing vote is much larger than one election or even one political party. Both Democrats and Republicans have ignored low-income voters for decades precisely because they are unlikely voters. But when the non-partisan Poor People's Campaign, which I serve as a co-chair, surveyed poor people to ask why they don't vote, the number one reason they gave was, "No one speaks to us."

This is why our campaign has committed to holding a Mass Poor People's and Low-Wage Worker's Assembly in Washington, DC, on June 29th. We are bringing the everyday people who've demanded better wages from their bosses to Washington and insist that Republicans, Democrats and Independents make clear what they will do to address the needs of 135 million Americans who are living on the edge in the richest nation in the history of the world. And we are committing to go home to our communities and reach 15 million of the unlikely low-income voters with the message that they have power in 2024. If they show up, especially in seven key states, their votes will decide the outcome in 2024. When they do, they will be able to help shape the reconstruction of an American democracy that works for all of us.

William J. Barber, II is president of Repairers of the Breach and author of the new White Poverty: How Exposing Myths About Race and Class Can Reconstruct American Democracy.

You must talk about it

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



Are you happy in your marriage? Do you seem to have everything going for you, but it still feels like something is missing in marriage? You have the success - you've achieved the American Dream - have the beautiful home, two cars, perfect children, sustainable bank accounts, looks, and so much more, but when it boils down to it - you are still unhappy.

Let me ask you this - do you and your spouse communicate with each other? How often do you communicate with your spouse? Is effective communication missing in your marriage? I know we constantly hear how important communication is in marriage until it seems cliché and duh - we already know that. Nonetheless, many law firms agree that the lack of communication is one of the common leading causes of divorces in America. Believe it or not, implementing effective communication in your marriage can promote happiness and lessen your chance of divorcing. In other words, you must talk about it.

What is communication? How should you communicate?

C - Connection - be connected in giving eye contact, positive body language - put away phones, etc.

O - Open - be willing to hear your spouse out - try to free your mind of preconceived negative ideas, etc.

M - Merciful - be graceful in listening and in your conversing with spouse

M - Meek - Proverbs states: Proverbs 15:1 state: "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."

U - Understanding - be empathetic - patient - listen to understand before jumping to conclusions

N - Non-Judgmental - if your spouse is willing to talk - don't be judgmental

I - Intentional - plan to converse with each other - it's an investment in your marriage

C - Compassion - show care, love, empathy, be kind in talking and listening

A - Available - prioritize - make the time to talk to each other

T - Talk - talk about the good and the bad

I - Insight - offer genuine feedback - sometimes it's not the actual feedback that causes offense, it's the delivery of it - so be careful in how you share your thoughts.

O - Optimism - may not be easy but try to be positive - even if your spouse is making a complaint about you

N - Non-Toxic - try to create a safe, non-threatening, comfortable environment - try to avoid gas lighting, name calling, etc. Don't get me wrong - you can be angry - Ephesians 4:26 states: "In your anger, do not sin."

How often should spouses communicate in marriage?

There is no set time - talk as often as possible...even if it's 3 a.m. in the morning - you must talk about it.

What should spouses communicate about in marriage?

Religious beliefs/faith

Dreams/goals

Tithing - people please tithe - nothing will go right until you get this right - this may require another article

Finances

Childhood traumas

Unresolved offenses/hurts/disappointments in the marriage

Children

Sex

Extended family

Temptations - this will depend on how mature both spouses are - some couples are strong enough to pray for each other while others aren't

Triggers

Fears

Health/life insurance/death

What are the benefits of talking to each other?

James 5: 16 states: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Communication equals healing - pray for each other because praying will promote healing and change in your marriage.

Communication builds trust.

Communication creates stronger bonds.

Less questioning and more clarity increases respect and understanding.

Have an overall better feel for each other.

Communication improves intimacy.

Grow as one.

In conclusion, I know all the above seems impossible, but I promise it's not. My husband and I struggled in effectively communicating with each other but thank God it has improved and is improving. My advice is, ask God to give you the time, day and location of where a meeting should be, especially for the difficult conversation regarding finances. Then, one or both of you should pray before the meeting starts. (I'm sorry - I can't help but call it a meeting - our children are acclimated to what I refer to as family meetings).

Also, try to avoid saying, "you," "I don't like," etc. Start off with your loves and likes. Maybe you all should utilize a categorical list: category one - what I love about being married to you; category two - what can be stopped, and category three - areas for improvement, etc. Example: Sex, I love when you... okay, I think you get my point...just trying to help you out.

To help promote a happy and healthy marriage and reduce and eliminate separating and divorcing - you must talk about it - **period.**

Contact Dr. LaShunda Calvert for speaking engagements (motivational, ministering, marriage counseling, marriage workshops, marriage seminars, marriage conferences, etc.) on Instagram: [letsstay2gether4ever](#) (Dr. LaShunda Calvert) Facebook: [Dr. LaShunda Calvert](#) Email: letsstaytogether4eva@gmail.com or call 601 596-2528.

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Institute provides free testing during National HIV Testing Day



Institute staffer Yolanda Raymond administered HIV tests on June 27, 2024, during National HIV Testing Day in Cleveland, MS

The Mississippi Link Newswire

The Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health implemented a successful National HIV Day campaign. National HIV Testing events included social media posts, media interviews, radio advertisements and outreach activities in the Mississippi Delta.

On Thursday, June 27, 2024, staff provided free HIV testing to 108 individuals at Walgreens in Cleveland, MS.

“The Cleveland (MS) community’s response to our National HIV Testing Day event was phenomenal,” said Tiffany Givens, Infectious Disease program manager with the Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health. “The strong participation demonstrates the community’s commitment to health and awareness.”

If you missed National HIV Testing Day, the Institute offers free at-home HIV self-test kits.

For more information or to receive a kit, contact tgivens@advancingminorityhealth.org



Tiffany Givens, Infectious Diseases program manager and Yolanda Raymond, HIV tester/counselor prepare to test residents in Cleveland, MS at Walgreens.

Mississippi Food Network appoints Donnell Lewis as new board chair

Special to The Mississippi Link

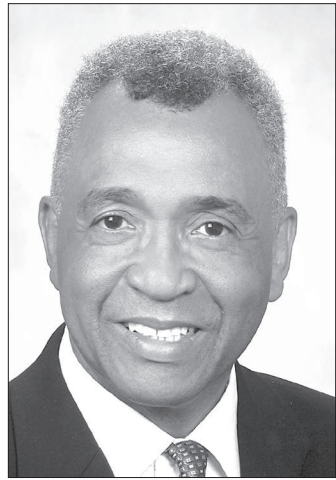
Mississippi Food Network, the leading hunger relief organization serving communities across the state, recently announced the appointment of Donnell Lewis as the new chair of its Board of Directors.

Lewis brings a wealth of board governance expertise, having served on the Mississippi Food Network Board of Directors since January 1, 2019. At Mississippi Food Network, he held leadership roles including secretary, treasurer for two years, and vice chair. Currently, he chairs the board’s Investment Committee.

A longtime resident of Jackson, Lewis has been actively involved in numerous community organizations. He has served as the president of 100 Black Men of Jackson, Inc., an organization he has been a member of since 1992.

Lewis’ community engagement extends to roles such as chair of the Jackson Public Schools Partners in Education Advisory Board, board chair with Directions Youth Outreach Ministry and Jackson Youth for Christ Urban Ministry.

A seasoned leader, Lewis has served as president for numerous organizations throughout his career, including the Downtown YMCA Board of Managers, the Leadership Jackson Alumni Association and the Association for the Improvement of Minorities – MS Chapter.



Lewis

Additionally, he is an active Rotarian and holds the president’s role at the West Jackson Rotary Club, further underscoring his commitment to community service and leadership.

A certified public accountant, Lewis has spent over four decades with the U.S. Department of Treasury.

About Mississippi Food Network

Mississippi Food Network (MFN) changes lives by fighting hunger today and feeding hope for a healthier tomorrow. MFN has been feeding Mississippians since 1984. MFN distributes more than 1.5 million pounds of food and feeds more than 150,000 every month – or a total of 1.8 million people per year.

MFN takes donations from multiple sources, and distributes food and goods through 430 member agencies. They, in turn, distribute to recipients in their respective communities.

Broadway Jr. Camp presents Sister Act, JR., a divine musical comedy

The Mississippi Link Newswire

Based on the hit 1992 film and Tony-nominated Broadway musical Sister Act, JR, the feel-good musical comedy will have audiences jumping to their feet. It features original music by Alan Menken (Newsies, Beauty and the Beast, Little Shop of Horrors).

When disco diva Deloris Van Cartier witnesses a murder, she is put in protective custody in the one place the cops are sure she won’t be found: a convent. Disguised as a nun, she finds herself at odds with both the rigid lifestyle and uptight Mother Superior.

Using her unique disco moves and singing talent to inspire the choir, Deloris breathes new life into the church and community but, in doing so, blows her cover. Soon, the gang is giving chase, only to find themselves up against Deloris and the power of her newly found sisterhood.

Filled with powerful gospel music, outrageous dancing,



and a truly moving story, Sister Act, JR. will leave audiences breathless. A sparkling tribute to the universal power of friendship, Sister Act, JR. is a reason to rejoice.

Two different youth casts will perform on alternated show dates:

Thursday, July 11 at 7:00
Friday, July 12 at 7:00
Saturday, July 13 at 2:00

Sunday, July 14 at 2:00
New Stage is located at 1100 Carlisle Street in Jackson.

Visit newstagetheatre.com for ticket information or call 601-948-3533.

Taylor named Employee of the Month at MS State Hospital

Special to The Mississippi Link

Mona Taylor of Pearl has been named Mississippi State Hospital’s June Employee of the Month for Support Services.

Taylor serves as a housekeeper in Environmental Services and has been employed at MSH since 2011.

The MSH Employee of the Month award recognizes employees who have made outstanding contributions to the hospital through their work. The program is sponsored by Friends of Mississippi State Hospital Inc.

MSH, a program of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, was founded in 1855 and helps the individuals it serves achieve men-



Taylor

tal wellness by encouraging hope, promoting safety and supporting recovery.

The hospital is accredited by the Joint Commission.

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Celebrating 20 years of service in the Greater Jackson Area.

JPS officer dubbed 2024 'Top Cop' by MS Center for Police & Sheriffs, Central MS Crime Stoppers

The JPS Newswire

The Mississippi Center for Police and Sheriffs and Central Mississippi Crime Stoppers has awarded Jackson Public School Deputy Chief Corliss L. Harris "Top Cop." The award, issued in May 2024 during the Police Memorial Day and TOP COP luncheon, is a prestigious honor set aside for the best in law enforcement.

The certificate, which included the seal of Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves, read: "Your dedication and service to the community and to the great State of Mississippi are hereby commended, and I, along with the citizens of our great state, salute your contributions to serve and protect."

The assistant chief currently serves as deputy chief of Patrol, Training and Special Events for the District and works tirelessly to ensure the safety of all scholars and employees while fostering healthy relationships.

Harris is an eight-year veteran of the Marines and has spent over 20 years in law enforcement, having worked with the Jackson Police Department as a narcotics detective



Deputy Chief Corliss L. Harris

and instructor of JPD's Law Enforcement Training Academy; Hinds County Sheriff's Department Warrants Division, SWAT; and interim chief of police of Jackson Municipal Airport Authority Police Department.

Harris began his career with JPS in 2018 and worked his way up the ranks from patrol

officer and sergeant to his current position.

According to JPS Chief Charles McInnis, the Bailey Magnet High School alum has been diligent in rebranding the department by ensuring training is prioritized.

"As our senior law enforcement training instructor, Assistant Chief Harris has implemented many of our law enforcement training programs which include school resource officers, investigations and patrol operations to ensure that our department has the most up-to-date training available for not only our sworn police officers, but also our non-sworn school safety officers," said McInnis. "He is truly a credit to JPS and his profession."

With 30 years in law enforcement and the military, Harris could retire, but says he remains simply because it's not a job for him.

"I love what I do. I love the work and the people, and it's an honor for that to be noticed," said Harris. "I truly enjoy helping our team believe in themselves and their abilities with the confidence of knowing they have all they need to be successful."

JPS names director of EL and Special Populations



Patrice W. Razor, Ed. S

The JPS Newswire

Jackson Public Schools is excited to announce Patrice W. Razor, Ed. S, as director of English Learners (EL) and Special Populations.

With over 21 years of experience in education, Razor has had the privilege of working in both public and private sectors, dedicating her career to enhancing student outcomes and educational equity. Her journey has seen her undertake diverse roles, each contributing uniquely to her expertise and passion for education.

She began her career as a second-grade teacher before becoming an interventionist and academic strategist, focusing on tailored support for students needing additional academic assistance. This role allowed her to understand the critical nuances of student learning and the importance of individualized instruction.

Her expertise expanded as she took on the role of state assessment coordinator for Mississippi Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (MKAS) and the 3rd Grade Reading Summative assessments. This position underscored the importance of data-driven instruction and the need for accurate assessments in shaping educational strategies.

As a literacy coach for the Mississippi Department of Education, she championed literacy development, working closely with educators to implement best practices in reading instruction. Her commitment to literacy further deepened as she became the research coordinator for a multi-state project, leading the implementation of a Tier 2 reading intervention in middle schools across Mississippi, Baltimore, New York and Washington, DC. This role required a deep understanding of research methodologies and the ability to translate findings into practical, effective interventions.

Razor's academic background is equally robust, with a Bachelor of Science in Education, a Master of Education, and a Master of Reading Literacy from Belhaven University. Additionally, she holds a Specialist in Education Administration from William Carey University, equipping her with the leadership skills necessary for administrative excellence.

In her new role as director of EL and Special Populations, she is excited to align with JPS's core value of equity in education. She views this position as an opportunity to bridge the gap between English-language acquisition and English proficiency, ensuring an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment for all scholars. Her goal is to create educational experiences that honor and leverage the diverse backgrounds of the students, facilitating their success and integration within the broader academic community.

Through her extensive experience and unwavering commitment to educational equity, Razor is dedicated to fostering environments where every student can thrive.

In her spare time, she enjoys baking, cake decorating, interior design and spending time with her family.

Mississippi Flagship, Jackson State Partner on Accelerated Law Degree

JSU first lady's initiative to help students succeed in law school

By Clara Turnage

The Mississippi Link newswire

Jackson State University students who want to attend the University of Mississippi School of Law will soon be able to accelerate their progress, thanks to a partnership signed this week between the institutions.

Representatives of both universities met in Jackson Thursday (June 27) to finalize the Pathway to Law School program, which will allow undergraduate students at Jackson State University to begin taking law school courses as early as their senior year, trimming a year off the time required.

"As the flagship university, we want to educate our Mississippi students at Ole Miss and hope they continue to give back to communities in Mississippi," said Joshua Tucker, the law school's assistant dean for diversity, equity and inclusion. "It's our commitment to provide access to the legal profession."

"It is our responsibility to provide educational opportunities like this so individuals underrepresented in the legal profession can one day become legal advocates and champions of justice."

Redd Thompson, wife of JSU President Marcus Thompson, made the Pathway to Law School program her 2024 initiative, Tucker said.

"As a lawyer and proud alumna of the University of Mississippi School of Law, the partnership between Jackson State's pre-law program and my alma mater holds a special place in my heart," Thompson said. "I am embracing this opportunity to help Jackson State students enter the legal field, which I am deeply passionate about, through the very institution that shaped my own career."

"I am grateful to President Thompson, Chancellor Boyce and others for supporting this initiative, and I'm optimistic about the positive impact this program will have on our students."



Representatives of Ole Miss and Jackson State University met to finalize the Pathway to Law School program for HBCU students in Jackson, June 27.

said Joshua, the law school's assistant dean for diversity, equity and inclusion.

Aside from inclusion in the university's 3+3 Accelerated Law Program, Redd Thompson's initiative will consist of a lecture series that will bring Ole Miss professors to Jackson to speak with JSU undergraduates, waive the application fee for JSU students applying to the UM law school and continue to support students participating in the Law School's Historically Black Colleges and Universities Law Preview Day.

"This historic partnership provides Jackson State University students the opportunity to engage in legal topics and the law school application process through the lecture series we will offer and to better prepare themselves for the academic rigors of law school," said Fred Slabach, dean of the School of Law.

"Their preparation will, in turn, benefit the University of Mississippi School of Law by making sure our admitted students are equipped to develop the critical thinking, legal reasoning and creative problem-solving skills necessary to be successful members of the legal profession and provide access to justice for all."

The program will offer undergraduates at HBCUs the opportunity to meet students and professors in the law school and ask questions, Tucker said.

"Essentially, this gives students a chance to come to the school and immerse themselves in what it's like being at the law school," he said. "To me, the lecture series offers some of the greatest benefits."

"We know not every student will come to the University of Mississippi School of Law, but we still want to prepare Mississippi students for law school wherever they go. It is my responsibility to remove any unnecessary barriers so they can go to law school."

Ole Miss has six other institution or department partners in its accelerated law program, including the university's School of Engineering, School of Journalism and New Media, College of Liberal Arts, School of Business Administration and Department of Legal Studies, as well as Tougaloo College. Jackson State, however, is the first public HBCU invited to the program.

Students may begin applying for the 3+3 Accelerated Law Program this fall.



BOOK REVIEW: BOOKS FOR KIDS FOR SUMMERTIME READING

BY VARIOUS AUTHORS AND ILLUSTRATORS
C.2024, VARIOUS PUBLISHERS
\$18.99 - \$24.99 • VARIOUS PAGE COUNTS

By Terri Schlichenmeyer
Columnist

You've played every game in the house – twice – and made up a few, too.

You've ridden your bike all over, gone to the pool just about every day, and you've finished all your chores ahead of time. So now what do you do?

How about a great new book to spend time with this summer?

Why not dream? In "Willis Watson Is a Wannabe" by Carmen Bogan, illustrated by Charlyl "Ras" Tuesday (\$18.99 Simon & Schuster), Willis wants

to be a superhero because his grandpa says he can be whatever he wants to be. When the neighborhood boys tell Willis that there's no such thing as a superhero, well, isn't that a challenge? Your four-to-six-year-old will find it to be so, with inspiration inside this book.

Why not fall in love with a new pet? In "Not My Cat" by Stacey Patton, illustrated by Acamy Schleikorn (\$18.99, Simon & Schuster), Stacey pants finds something she'd rather not have: a cat. Cats are messy and

they scratch things. Stacey pants does not like cats one bit. You might ask, but this cat is not hers. Or is it? Based on a true story, kids ages five-to-seven will love finding out – especially if they're cat lovers.

Why not pick up a new hobby? In "All the Rocks We Love" by Lisa Varchol Perron and Taylor Perron, art by David Scheirer (\$18.99, Penguin Workshop, out 7/16), you'll read about something you probably barely notice: rocks! "Rocks are everywhere we look," say the authors, and they're all very

different. Some are cool and smooth. Some sparkle and some even float. Bring some home with you on vacation this year and, if you're ages four-to-ten-years-old, you can decorate your room.

Why not learn about a new heroine? In "Go Wilma, Go!" by Amira Rose Davis and Michael G. Long, illustrated by Charnelle Pinkney Barlow (\$18.99, Bloomsbury, out 7/16), you'll read about Wilma Rudolph, who was an athlete in the 1960 Olympics. It's a great honor, until she learns that her hometown

has planned a Wilma Rudolph Day and she's shocked. Wilma is Black and the celebration isn't open to people with Black skin. What happens when she "digs in" is a great story kids ages six-to-ten will love.

And finally, for the older (12-and-up) reader why not check out "Stamped from the Beginning" by Ibram X. Kendi, adapted and illustrated by Joel Christian Gill (\$24.99, Penguin Random House)? It's a long, detailed look at racism in America that takes young readers from the 1600s to modern-

day racism, with full stops for important historical events and heroism along the way. This is the kind of book you give your teen, but don't be embarrassed to borrow it back for yourself this summer.

And if these books aren't enough to keep your young reader occupied and happy, be sure to check with your favorite bookstore or librarian for more. They've got lots of summertime books for kids of any age, and adults, too. They might even have games to play, once or twice.

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Simone Biles headlines a U.S. women's gymnastics team eyeing redemption at the Paris Olympics

By Will Graves
Contributing Writer

They all had a reason to come back. Every single one of them:

Simone Biles to move past those wrenching two weeks in Japan three years ago, when the gymnastics superstar prioritized her mental health and safety over glory, a decision that inspired some and maddened others.

Suni Lee to prove – perhaps to herself most of all – that the all-around gold medal she earned while Biles watched from the stands wasn't a fluke.

Jordan Chiles to turn the team silver she helped secure at the 2020 Games into gold.

Jade Carey to be an official member of the five-woman Olympic squad after earning her way to Tokyo as an individual qualifier, a pathway not available to the U.S. this time around and frankly, one she had no interest in exploring again anyway.

They're all stepping back into the unique spotlight – oh, and 16-year-old newcomer Hezly Rivera, too – only the sport's biggest stage can provide.

Their reasons are deeply personal. Their motivation, however, is not.

"This is definitely our re-



(L-R) Joscelyn Roberson, Suni Lee, Hezly Rivera, Jade Carey, Simone Biles, Jordan Chiles and Leanne Wong smile after they were named to the 2024 Olympic team at the United States Gymnastics Olympic Trials Sunday, June 30th, in Minneapolis. AP PHOTO/CHARLIE RIEDEL

demption tour," Biles said after sewing up a third trip to the Olympics by winning the U.S. trials Sunday night. "I feel like we all have more to give."

Perhaps no one more than Biles, who at 27 is the oldest American woman to make an

Olympic gymnastics team since the 1950s. She never expected to still be doing this nearly a decade after becoming a crossover sensation at the 2016 Games in Rio de Janeiro.

And here she is. Still working. Still pushing. Not to shut

up the critics who still flood her mentions on social media wondering if she'll "quit" again, but because she remains determined to extract everything she can out of her remarkable talent.

"Nobody's forcing me to do it," said Biles, who posted a two-day total of 117.225 to claim the all-around by nearly six points over Lee. "I wake up every day and choose to grind in the gym and come out here and perform for myself. Just to remind myself that I can still do it."

And do it at a level that no one else in her sport – and when she's at her best, maybe sports in general – can match.

A trip to France has never really been in doubt since Biles returned from a two-year break last summer. All she's done over the last 12 months is win a sixth world all-around title and capture her eighth and ninth national championships – both records – while doing the hardest gymnastics of her life.

She will be a prohibitive favorite when she steps onto the Bercy Arena floor though there is plenty to work on before women's qualifying on July 28. There are things to clean up over the next four weeks.

Biles backpedaled after landing her Yurchenko double pike vault, a testament to both the vault's difficulty and the immense power she generates during a skill few male gymnasts try and even fewer land as cleanly.

She hopped off the beam af-

ter failing to land her side aerial, though she wasn't quite as frustrated as she was during a sloppy performance Friday that left her uttering an expletive for all the world to see.

Biles finished with a flourish on floor exercise, her signature event. Though there was a small step out of bounds, there was also the unmatched world-class tumbling that recently drew a shoutout from pop star Taylor Swift, whose song "Ready For It" opens Biles' routine.

She stepped off the podium to a standing ovation, then sat down atop the steps to take in the moment in what could be her last competitive round on American soil for quite a while, maybe ever.

Biles sidestepped questions about what lies ahead. That can wait. It's been a long, winding road back to this moment. She's intent on trying to enjoy it even while being part of a team that will have "a lot of weight on our shoulders."

She believes she and her teammates are in a better position to handle it.

"It's really nice that Tokyo gave us that opportunity to open up that stage for that talk," Biles said. "And so I think now athletes are a little bit more in tune and we just trust what our gut is saying."

And Biles' gut told her that if she wanted to come back, she needed to do it on her terms. That meant taking intentional steps to make sure her life is no

longer defined by her gymnastics.

She married Chicago Bears safety Jonathan Owens in the spring of 2023 and the two are building a house in the northern Houston suburbs they hope to move into shortly after Biles returns from Paris.

Biles heads to France as perhaps the face of the U.S. Olympic movement, though she's well aware that more than a few of the millions that will tune in to watch next month will be checking to see if the demons that derailed her in Tokyo resurface.

And while there are still moments of anxiety – including at last year's world championships – she has put safeguards in place to protect herself. She meets with a therapist weekly, even during competition season, something she didn't do in preparation for the 2020 Games.

The Americans will take their oldest women's team ever to the Games, as Biles' unrivaled longevity – she hasn't lost a meet she's started and finished since 2013 – and the easing of rules around name, image and likeness rules at the NCAA level allowed Carey (24), Chiles (23) and Lee (21) to continue to compete while cashing in on their newfound fame at the same time.

They have relied on that experience during a sometimes harrowing meet that saw leading contenders Shilese Jones, Skye Blakely and Kayla DiCello exit with leg injuries that took them out of the mix weeks before the potential realization of a lifelong dream.

Watching good friends leave the arena in tears offered a reminder of how thin the line between making it and not making it can be. Biles has been on the right side of that line longer than she ever anticipated. She's going to try and enjoy it, pressure and all.

She may have gotten ahead of herself in 2021. She's intent on not letting that happen this time around.

"I feel like success is just what I make it," she said. "I feel like right now I've been successful at competing at Olympic trials and making the Paris Olympic team. So then we'll see from there on out."

Will Graves is a national writer for *The Associated Press*, based in Pittsburgh. He covers the NFL, MLB, NHL, the Olympics and major college sports.

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Simone Biles competes on the uneven bars at the United States Gymnastics Olympic Trials Sunday, June 30, 2024, in Minneapolis. AP PHOTO/ABBIE PARR

Hinds County School District Weekly Update

ENGAGING-EMPOWERING-ENSURING-EXCELLENCE

PHOTOS BY JANICE K. NEAL-VINCENT

HINDS COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD AWARDS CEREMONY

The Hinds County School Board hosted an awards ceremony for the students of Hinds County to recognize their excellency in academic, sports and performing arts. Parents and students gathered in the Performance Arts Center at Raymond High School to celebrate these achievements Friday, May 3, 2024.

