

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Four PHS soccer stars sign with - HCC - pg. 6

M-Braves to host job fair - pg. 7

The Pearl News

Good News
You Can Use

Vol. 5, No. 2 | February 2020

The Pearl News is a subsidiary of **SWRANKIN NEWS**

Hunter chosen as PHS head football coach

Special to The Pearl News

On Friday, January 31, 2020, Pearl Public School District (PPSD) held a press conference to announce the appointment of Justin Hunter as the new Pearl High School Head Football Coach and PPSD Assistant Athletic Director. This follows the announcement of the retirement of Coach John Perry after serving as head coach and assistant athletic director for the past twelve years.

Hunter has been the offensive coordinator since 2014 and has also served as the boys powerlifting coach. Before coming to Pearl, Hunter served as athletic director and head football coach coached at Noxapater High School from 2009-2013, winning the 1A state championship in 2011. He was also on the coaching staff at Louisville High School where they won back to back

state championships in 2007 and 2008.

Hunter is a 2005 high school graduate of Sebastopol High School. He earned his bachelor's degree in Kinesiology at Mississippi State University in 2009 and later earned his master's degree in Educational Leadership from Arkansas State University. He married



Special to The Pearl News

Pictured is Pearl High School's new head football Coach Justin Hunter.

his wife, Casey, in 2011, and they have two children, Marlee and Cooper.

What makes Pearl so special to Coach Hunter? He says, "First, both of my children were born here and are currently being raised as Pirates. Second, I have had the privilege of coaching some amazing young men, as well as forming many friendships with teachers, coaches, and members in the community. Then, there is the Undeclared 16-0 State Championship Season! Overall, Pearl has become 'HOME.'"

Coach Hunter's career highlights: 2007 State Champions at Louisville High School 2008; State Champions at Louisville High School; 2011 State Champions at Noxapater High School; 2016 South State Champions at Pearl High School; 2017 State Champions at Pearl High School; numerous region championships and 18-7 as a head coach.

Pearl's WPBP-FM broadcasts local fan favorite

By Alexa Haik

Pearl's local radio station, *The Pirate* WPBP 104.5 FM, is making a big splash, in large part to a local radio personality duo, Darrell Arnold and Melissa Kirksey. Also known as Dirty "D" and Melissa K. of the "House of Rock," they host a weekly show that airs each Friday, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Arnold describes the show's focus as the "best of eighties and early nineties hair bands." In addition to developing a solid local fan-base, a growing national audience has begun through syndication, via 'Rock Rage Radio' - a popular broadcast and media production company out of Ohio.

In the two years since the show's inception, it has already received local recognition for being a stand-out production, first by being selected as "Best Radio Personality" in 2019 *Clarion Ledger's* annual "Best of the Best" competition and, in 2020, "House of Rock" also claimed second place for "Best Radio

Personality or Team" in the annual *Jackson Free Press* "Best of Jackson" contest.

Historically, the radio program is Arnold's brain child. "I was wanting to do a radio show, and somebody said Pearl's got a real nice broadcast setup...They have a studio there and you can rent it, and I was like 'it's worth a shot.'" Arnold ended up pitching the idea to the mayor of Pearl, Jake Windham, himself. The mayor's response was quick and to the point - 'sounds like a good idea' - and the rest is history.

They attribute their growing popularity to the type of music they play as well as the unstructured format. As Arnold explains it, "we are very active with the listeners, we [also] talk a lot about if this band is out on tour or what that band we are playing is doing now or where did they go for all of these years." They believe that another reason the show continues to gain in popularity is because of, as Kirksey explains, "the friendship and

the love that we have for each other and the love that we have for the music, truly." When in their presence, the chemis-



Special to The Pearl News

Pictured (l to r) are: Melissa Kirksey and Darrell Arnold.

try between the two is undeniable.

The main purpose of the show, and what Arnold wants listeners to know, is that fundamentally, "House of Rock" is a curated journey into the past. The intent is nostalgic, to conjure warm memo-

ries so that at the end of each three-hour broadcast no one leaves without having relived a happy memory from their youth.

When asked what their plans for the future are, they speak of further developing syndication, as Kirksey describes it, "we've only been syndicated for eight to nine months. Darrell reached out and we found a fit with 'Rock Rage Radio,' so that [is] part of the plan, part of [the] something bigger."

Kirksey also owns and operates a local live music venue, BBs live, and Arnold is currently a member of local band Charade Unplugged.

To join the growing fan base, search for "House of Rock Dirty "D" and Melissa" on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Download the TuneIn and iTunes apps to catch the duo in action, or to listen in locally, the "House of Rock" streams live online at <http://www.cityofpearl.com/wpbp-1045-fm>.

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Richland's Miller signs with Meridian - pg. 4

M-Braves to host job fair - pg. 7

THE NEWS RICHLAND

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RHS safety officer provides extra layer of protection

By Alexa Haik

A visitor to Richland High School might not even notice his presence, but safety officer Lieutenant Dave Williams likes it that way. "I am a floating presence, primarily providing safety to faculty and students."

Williams describes his daily routine as being decidedly not routine: "I go where I want to go on campus, so when the bells ring I go to different parts of the school to be seen by the kids. I try not to get into a routine, I am in and out of the cafeteria during lunchtime when they are serving lunch so they really don't know when I am going to show up. I pretty much have free reign of the campus, but I do not leave the campus."

He wants to be clear – His is more of a "presence." The school faculty and staff remain responsible for any disciplinary actions, and his purpose, in contrast, is

to be a "show of force" as well as a "police presence." Essentially, if a stranger were to enter campus grounds, or someone on campus tried to hurt someone else, it is his job to respond to it.

Williams has a fifteen year background in law enforcement. Beginning as a reserve in 2003, he became a full time employee in 2004. Originally designated as a patrolman, his role has evolved from sergeant on patrol, to a lieutenant on patrol.

"I was a patrol supervisor, and when [the safety officer] position came open, I thought about it - it was a Monday through Friday job, no nights, no weekends, no holidays, so I applied for it." Initially Williams worked the job as an overtime position, as he explains that in the beginning "we would come by the school periodically through the day and walk around the school, [to get] an idea



Special to The Richland News

Pictured (l to r) are: Assistant Principal Corey Yates, Williams and Principal Dr. Scott Rimes.

of what the job would entail." Eventually the extra detail evolved into a full-time position. After speaking with his wife, and praying about it, he decided it was something he wanted to try.

As of today, it is his full time duty, Monday through Friday, for eight hours a day. He also remains the SWAT com-

mander for the city of Richland, which includes training once a month.

Reflecting on the primary challenge of being a school safety officer, Lt. Williams claims it is not the weighty responsibility of serving day-in and day-out as protection against potential threats to the school, it is the balancing act between "being an authority and being approachable for the kids. I want them to be able to have confidence in me enough to come to me and talk to me or tell me things that they feel like they need to, but I also still want to be an authority figure."

Williams parting thoughts were these, "I never thought this type of law enforcement would be something I would want to do, instead of being out on the road on patrol, but it is rewarding to know that every day you go home, everyday I come to work I have a specific purpose and that is to try to keep the [students, faculty and staff] safe."

Richland's "Friends of the Library" needs volunteers

Special to The Richland News

The Friends of the Richland Library, an organization originally established almost thirty-three years ago, is in the midst of a revitalization. What remains of the group is reorganizing and looking for volunteers to hold officer positions.

Friends of the Richland Library was born on March 30, 1987, with the inaugural meeting of twelve charter members: librarian Maurine Beggerly, book-mobile drivers Hazel Diffeient and Virginia Wilson, president Francis Delmas, vice-president Beth Woodmansee, and treasurer Pat Scarbrough. The first project the new Friends of the Richland Library group undertook was to hold an open house for what was then the newest library location, at the corner of Old Highway 49 South and Scarbrough Drive. The event was held primarily as an introduction of the fledgling group to the community at large, as well as an opportunity to enlist

new members. Forty-seven visitors attended that day, including the then Mayor, Lester Spell, who spoke to commemorate the occasion.

The purpose of the group, according to its established constitution, is: to maintain an association of persons interested in libraries; to focus attention on the library; to stimulate the use of the library's resources and services; to receive and encourage gifts, endowments and bequest to the library; to support and cooperate with the library in developing library services and facilities for the community; to support the freedom to read as expressed in the American Library Association Bill of Rights and assist in raising funds for library needs.

In the past, the group had two main

programs each year: a "Christmas Open House" and a "Hearts for the Library Breakfast." The "Christmas Open House" coincided with the annual Richland Christmas Parade and would serve cookies and warm cider to attendees just



Special to The Richland News

prior to the start of the parade. Unfortunately, 2019 was the first year the organization was unable to host a Christmas open house, due to the lack of membership. The "Hearts for the Library" program, originally designed to begin in February as a fundraiser, and a way to thank the locate businesses for donating to the group, is no longer active. The funds that were collected from the program were used to: pay for craft supplies for children and adult library programs as well as to pay performers for the library

summer reading programs.

Presently, most original members have passed away, leaving a total of five active members and approximately fifteen non-active members. At this time, there are no regularly scheduled meetings. The hope for the future is for the group to begin holding meetings on the third Thursday of each month at 11:30 a.m. Richland Library's branch manager, Dewayne Heliums, says there is only one requirement for service, "to love, and have the desire to help, the Richland library and community."

Currently, annual dues are: \$2 for student participants, \$10 per individual members and \$15 for family memberships. Interested parties may pick up membership forms at the circulation desk of the Richland Library.

For more information, contact the Richland Public Library, located at 370 Scarbrough Street, Richland, 601-932-1846.



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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

HCC awards Emeritus status to Florence resident - pg. 5

M-Braves to host job fair - pg. 7

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Tigers for L.I.F.E. trains students for success

Special to The Florence News

Tigers for L.I.F.E. (Learning Independence and Furthering our Education) was established in 2018 at McLaurin High School. Its primary purpose is to prepare and support special education (SPED) students for post-secondary programs available through the school district as well as for potential employment. Those eligible to participate are students working towards a high school Certificate of Achievement or an Alternate Diploma in lieu of a traditional high-school diploma. This includes students from grades seven through twelve with various disabilities.

The unique program is headed up by SPED Teacher, Nicole Wimberly, a thirty year veteran of special education, and is supported by Teacher's Assistant Tonya Sims, Principal Tammy Crosetti and Assistant Principal Katie Nelson. Other valuable contributors include: RCSD Special Education Director Amy Bullocks; SPED Coordinators Dr. Joycelyn Whipps and Shatteria Warren and Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services (MDRS) Representative Sheena Dorsey.

The classroom is located in an old



Special to The Florence News

Pictured (l to r) are: Karell Washington, Dylan Morgan, Irby "Dillon" Tait, Teacher Nicole Wimberly, Superintendent of RCSD Dr. Sue Townsend, Teacher Assistant Tonya Sims, Antonio Carey, Logan Crane, Kaylee Barr, Principal of McLaurin High School Tammy Crosetti.

home-ec room with a kitchen and laundry area where the students receive valuable real-life exposure and practice with living skills. The kitchen area is set up to educate the students in cooking skills, which also reinforces their reading, math, measuring and life skills. There are also workstations set up to augment daily living skill education in: the value and proper use of

money, operating a cash register, small mechanics, telling time, paying bills, self-advocacy, assembling items, laundry, folding clothes, general business skills, auto detailing, retailing, child care, pet care, table service, food service, et. al.

As part of a transition program, the students receive what is called "community based instruction" (CBI)

which allows them real-life training for potential post-school employment. Currently, CBI locations include the following local businesses: Gathering Grounds Coffee and Art Shop, Kenwood Stables, TJ Maxx, Rameys, Spinners, McAllisters, Rivers Garden and Greenhouse. The students are also offered volunteer opportunities at the the local veteran's center and seasonally for "Toy's for Tots."

So far, in the two-year time-span of it's existence, the Tigers for L.I.F.E. program has already seen positive results: one student who participated in Project SEARCH at University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC) exited the program in October with full-time employment; one student remains in the Project SEARCH program and will more than likely receive a job offer from UMMC at the end of the 2019-20 school year and one student has been accepted into RCSD's "Phase 2 Program" and is currently employed part-time in Northwest Rankin's library.

For more information about the Tigers for L.I.F.E program, as well as for updates on the progress of its participants, visit their Facebook page @mclaurintigersforlife.

Florence businessman recognized for outstanding community service

Special to The Florence News

Henry Cooper Jr., the owner of Florence's Country Meat Packers, is being honored by the community for his numerous charitable donations and special efforts to support the growth and development of local sports - including school and community athletics. These gestures of support have been ongoing for over a decade, which underscores Cooper's commitment to the growth of local sports programs.

For these enormous efforts, the City of Florence wants to express "gratitude

for your tireless efforts and unconditional commitment to the Florence community. You have made a difference in more lives than you can possibly imagine. Your God given heart and love for our community does not go unnoticed, and we are forever thankful for you and your family, and the impact you have made for many people."

A resident of Brandon, Cooper is married to Julyn Hollingsworth Cooper.



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Pictured (l to r) are: Mayor Billy Bob Morris, Henry Cooper Jr., Joey Saik and Jerry Quinnelly.



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Valentine's Day events scheduled in Pearl



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This year, the City's of Pearl and Richland will host a joint senior Valentine's party - "Desserts & Dancing." The event will be held Thursday, February 13, at the Pearl Senior Center and will run from 6:30 p.m. until 9 p.m. Entertainment will be provided by local talent - *Xtremez Band*. The event is \$5 per person, and tickets went on sale Thursday, February 6, beginning at 9 a.m.

On Friday, February 14, Pearl Chamber of Commerce (PCC) will host a blood drive from noon until 4 p.m. at the Mississippi Blood Services (MBS) donor coach. Donors will receive a special edition Marshall Ramsey long sleeve

t-shirt, and the Chamber will draw for door prizes at 4 p.m. Those interested in participating must supply identification. MBS recommends that all donors eat at least four hours within giving blood and drink plenty of fluids prior to and after making a donation.

For more information about the Pearl and Richland senior Valentine's day event, contact Terri Wood at the Richland Community Center at 601-420-3400, or Angela Jones or Keisha Love with Pearl Senior Services at 601-863-3229.

For further information about the PCC blood drive, contact the Pearl Chamber of Commerce at 601-939-3338 or contact Mississippi Blood Services at 888-90-BLOOD or www.msblood.com.

Richland High School receives \$500 grant



Special to SW Rankin News

The Exxon Mobil Corporation and their local affiliate, Sayle Oil Company, recently presented a \$500 grant to Richland High School (RHS). Pictured (l to r) are: Ashley Havens and RHS Principal Dr. Scott Rimes.

SWRANKIN NEWS

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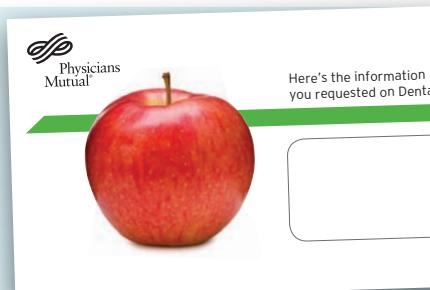


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Florentine Club donates to "Soles 4 Souls"



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General Federation Women's Club / Mississippi Federation Women's Club (GFWC/MFVC) Florentine Club recently held their monthly meeting at the Florence Community Center. Jeannie Pittman and Mary Tanner were co-hostesses. The club members brought new or gently worn shoes to be donated to "Soles 4 Souls." Pictured (l to r) are, front row: guest speaker Theresa Berryhill, MFVC Conservation Chairman Mary Alice Hydrick, Jeannie Pittman, Debi Gibson, Hope Nicholson, Carolyn Mason and Jessie Buckley; and back row: Mary Tanner, Judy Webb, C.J. Applewhite, Dee Payne and Dianne Roberts.

Old Truths for Today

By J.T. Morgan



DO YOU BELIEVE IN MIRACLES?

Do You Believe In Miracles? Processes of nature are miraculous, meaning they cannot be duplicated by man. The Bible begins with a process of miracles as God begins the creation. All believe in miracles of this type. Since the beginning of the world nature's works have been in progress, and will continue until time is no more. God, however, has performed works contrary to the processes of nature. These have astounded men and caused them to wonder. In fact, the word "miracle" means a cause of wonder or amazement. In the scriptures they are referred to as "signs and wonders, and...miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit." (Heb. 2:4). These miracles were used to convince people of the presence and power of God and to confirm the words taught by the apostles.

God worked miracles through men by the power of the Holy Spirit. (1 Cor. 12:6-11). From earliest times God manifested His power through supernatural intervention in the lives of men, including turning water into blood in Egypt, water into wine at Cana, healing the sick and raising the dead. Through these men God performed miracles pertaining to all men and nature. None could doubt that the power of God had brought these things to pass.

"Wonders and signs", wrought by God through the apostles proved them to be His spokesmen. Men spoke "...as they were moved by the Holy Spirit". (2 Pet. 1:21). God confirmed their message by the miracles they performed. (Mk. 16:20; Heb. 2:1-4). We now have the completely revealed will of God, fully confirmed by miracles and signs. This written revelation, the Bible, is given in order that we may believe and be saved. (Jhn. 20:30-31).

Having given us His complete will, (2 Pet. 1:3; 2 Tim. 3:17- 17), and having confirmed it with miraculous signs, God has accomplished His purpose and these signs are no longer needed. Paul stressed that when the church should have passed through its infant stage, spiritual signs were to cease (1 Cor. 13:8-10). So, contrary to the sincere belief of many, God no longer performs miracles through men. Men are no longer able to speak in tongues (languages), heal the sick, raise the dead through miraculous means. God has once for all time confirmed His will and miracles performed today would be without divine approval or purpose.

Let us fully believe in the miracles recorded in the Bible, and in the Bible which they confirm. If we believe God we will not ask for additional signs, but will be content to rest in Christ and trust His promises. We do believe in miracles! Do You?

Florence Church of Christ, P.O. Box 277, 220 White Street, Florence, Ms 39073

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Mississippi Soccer Association's winners honored recently



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Pictured (l to r) are: Millie Cook, Chris Bridges and Virginia McGowan Miller.

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Richland Futbol Club's (RFC) Mississippi Soccer Association's (MSA) State and District winners were recently announced at an awards luncheon held at the Hilton in Jackson. During the event, RFC was recognized for making the 100% Club, and former RFC player, Joely Miller, was selected as the \$500

Lane Smith Scholarship recipient; Millie Cook was selected as Central District Girls' Rec. Coach of the Year; Virginia McGowan Miller was selected as Central District Boys' Competitive Coach of the Year; Parrish Patrick was selected as Central District Boys' Rec. Coach of the Year and Chris Bridges was selected as State Rec. Coach of the Year and Central District Administrator of the Year.

Richland's Miller signs with Meridian



Special to SW Rankin News

Joely Miller signed her letter of intent to play for Meridian Community College in 2020. Miller is a four year starter for the Lady Rangers soccer team and was selected as a captain for her senior season. Pictured (l to r) are, front row: brother Jameson Miller, dad Joseph Miller, Joely Miller and mom Virginia Miller; and back row: Assistant Coach Kasey Dees, Athletic Director Russell Marsalis, Principal Dr. Scott Rimes, Assistant Principal Corey Yates and Head Coach Trey Banks.

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Obituaries

NAME	AGE	CITY	DOD	Funeral Home
Rhonda Cloninger	55	Florence, MS	01/29/20	Chancellor Funeral Home
Judy Ginn	67	Florence, MS	01/17/20	Chancellor Funeral Home
William A. "Bill" Hilton	87	Richardson, TX	01/04/20	Chancellor Funeral Home
Ricky Lack	64	Crystal Springs, MS	01/30/20	Chancellor Funeral Home
A.C. Lewis	80	Harrisville, MS	01/26/20	Chancellor Funeral Home
Ann Lusk	60	Pearl, MS	01/21/20	Chancellor Funeral Home
Infant, A'narya McIntee	2 Hrs.	Jackson, MS	01/28/20	Chancellor Funeral Home
Grace Downard Peoples	56	Florence, MS	01/25/20	Chancellor Funeral Home
Acey Roberts	88	Florence, MS	01/21/20	Chancellor Funeral Home
Jonathan Sutton	46	St. Joseph, MO	01/11/20	Chancellor Funeral Home
Theresa Thomas	61	Pearl, MS	01/01/20	Chancellor Funeral Home
Richard "Dick" Quinnelly	91	Flowood, MS	01/20/20	Chancellor Funeral Home
Henry "Norman" Wilkinson	71	Florence, MS	01/04/20	Chancellor Funeral Home
Edward "Eddie" Williams	81	Florence, MS	01/03/20	Chancellor Funeral Home

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HCC awards Emeritus status to Florence resident



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Pictured (l to r) are: Hinds Board of Trustees president Paul Breazeale, Angela Griffin, Dr. Libby Mahaffey, Dr. Shirley Hopkins-Davis, Dr. Mae Cathryn Jackson, Hinds President Dr. Clyde Muse and Hinds Foundation executive director Jackie Granberry.

Special to SW Rankin News

Hinds Community College recently awarded emeritus status to four retirees at spring convocation, bringing the total number of those selected by the college to forty.

Dr. Shirley Hopkins-Davis, Angela Griffin and Dr. Libby Mahaffey were awarded Dean Emeritus status. Dr. Mae Cathryne Jackson was awarded Professor Emeritus of Mathematics.

Mahaffey, of Florence, retired in 2018 after thirty-seven years as dean of Nursing and Allied Health and director of Health Sciences. Prior to her 2019 retirement, she was named a Hinds Hero, presented with the 3E Award, inducted into the inaugural class and named a fellow of Academy of Associate Degree Nursing by the Organization for Associate Degree Nursing, was given the inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award by the

Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing and was named to the Mississippi Nurses' Association Hall of Fame.

Selected by a Hinds committee, emeritus status is conferred on retirees who have dedicated their lives to the college. A photo recognizing their status is showcased in the Emeritus Room at Fountain Hall on the Raymond Campus.

As Mississippi's largest community

college, Hinds Community College is a comprehensive institution offering quality, affordable educational opportunities with academic programs of study leading to seamless university transfer and career and technical programs teaching job-ready skills. With six locations in central Mississippi, Hinds enrolls about 12,000 students each fall semester. To learn more, visit www.hindscc.edu or call 1.800.HindsCC.

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Four PHS soccer stars sign with HCC

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Pearl High School (PHS) seniors Anna Grace McCool, Kristen Manning, Au-

drey Ivy and Macey Peacock recently signed to play soccer at Hinds Community College in Raymond, Mississippi.



Pictured (l to r) are, front row: mother Jill McCool, Anna Grace McCool and father Mark McCool; and back row: Pearl Athletic Director Richard Smithhart, PHS Assistant Principal John Craven, PHS Head Soccer Coach Kathryn Welch, grandmother Nelda McCool, grandfather Keith Stevens, grandmother Debbie Stevens, PHS Assistant Soccer Coach Suzie Channell and PHS Principal Chris Chism.



Pictured (l to r) are, front row: father Ty Ivy, Audrey Ivey, and mother Jenny Ivy; and back row: Pearl Athletic Director Richard Smithhart, PHS Assistant Principal John Craven, PHS Head Soccer Coach Kathryn Welch, grandmother Trudy Ivy, grandmother Sandra Robinson, PHS Assistant Soccer Coach Suzie Channell and PHS Principal Chris Chism.



Pictured (l to r) are, front row: mother Nickie McGinty, Kristen Manning and step-dad Terry Rogers; and back row: Pearl Athletic Director Richard Smithhart, PHS Assistant Principal John Craven, PHS Head Soccer Coach Kathryn Welch, PHS Assistant Soccer Coach Suzie Channell and PHS Principal Chris Chism.



Pictured (l to r) are, front row: father DeWayne Peacock, Macey Peacock and mother Darrah Peacock; and back row: Pearl Athletic Director Richard Smithhart, PHS Assistant Principal John Craven, PHS Head Soccer Coach Kathryn Welch, grandmother Debbie Oxner, aunt Dana Grissom, PHS Assistant Soccer Coach Suzie Channell and PHS Principal Chris Chism.

Photos special to SW Rankin News



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M-Braves to host job fair



Special to SW Rankin News

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Visit Trustmark Park's Farm Bureau Grill, Saturday, February 15, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the Mississippi Braves' (M-Braves') 2020 Job Fair. M-Braves staff members will conduct open interviews on a first-come, first-serve basis for seasonal, part-time positions. Applicants should be energetic, friendly, dependable and ready to contribute to the family atmosphere of Trustmark Park.

"We pride ourselves on providing the best guest experience in all of Minor League Baseball," said Mississippi Braves vice president and general manager Pete Laven. "These interviews provide individuals an opportunity to join the M-Braves family, help us serve our fans, and make some additional money during the summer months."

Attendees will have the chance to interview for a variety of positions, including: food & beverage: bartender, catering food prep, concession stand attendant, concession stand, cook, dishwasher, host/hostesses, kitchen prep staff, line cooks, restaurant wait

staff, suite attendants; stadium operations: bat boy, clean up / custodial, fun zone attendants, grounds crew, merchandise store attendant, money audit staff, parking attendant and usher; ticket operations: ticket seller and ticket taker; production & promotions: camera operator, mascot, promotions team, PA announcer, video board operators and video production crew and press box; pitch clock/trackman operators.

These jobs are all paid and include the opportunity to work many of the team's seventy home games and other special events between March and September. All applicants are required to attend the M-Braves Job Fair, all applicants must be at least sixteen years of age and able to work nights, weekends and some holidays.

Based in Pearl, MS since 2005, the Mississippi Braves are the Double-A Southern League affiliate of the Atlanta Braves. The M-Braves are owned and operated by the Atlanta Braves, the longest continuously operated franchise in Major League Baseball.

Follow the M-Braves at mississippibraves.com, [facebook.com/mbraves](https://www.facebook.com/mbraves), and twitter.com/mbraves.

RHS announces "Leadership Award" recipients



Special to SW Rankin News

Each month, Richland High School recognizes two students for exemplary performance in academics, leadership and service. The December 2019 awards winners are eighth-graders William Guevara and Cloe Elkins. Pictured (l to r) are: William Guevara, Principal Dr. Scott Rimes and Cloe Elkins.

Bridges named semi-finalist in scholars program



Special to SW Rankin News

Kenning Bridges, a student at McLaurin High School, has been named a semi-finalist for the 2020 Class of the "Coca-Cola Scholars Program." 1,928 high school seniors were selected as semi-finalists from a pool of 93,075 submitted applications from across the country based on their academic excellence, leadership and service demonstrated in school and community activities.

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Spring tour of historic Columbus, Mississippi hosted by PSS

Special to SW Rankin News

Pearl Senior Services will host a spring tour of historic and beautiful Columbus, Mississippi for their annual "Spring Pilgrimage." The departure day and time from the parking lot of Pearl Senior Services is Tuesday, March 31, at 7:30 a.m.

Upon arrival, the tour will begin at the Columbus Welcome Center – the beautifully restored first home of Tennessee Williams - one of America's leading playwrights. Seniors will be treated with a drive through historic downtown Columbus, a visit to the campus of University for Women and each will also receive a special gift bag.

Next, the group will have the opportunity to select a local restaurant for their lunchtime meal. Options will include Huck's Place, Café on Main, The Grill at Jackson Square, or Harvey's.

After lunch, seniors will participate in a guided tour of the National Register Historic District. The first destination will be Whitehall Mansion. Built in 1843, this pillared mansion is located on a property which extends over an entire city block, and includes gardens, stables and servants quarters. During the Civil War, it served as a hospital for Confederate soldiers. Following the Whitehall Mansion, the tour continues



Tennessee Williams Home & Welcome Center

Courtesy of www.visitcolumbusms.org/

to Temple Heights. This beautiful home is considered one of the finest examples of period restoration. The home features classically designed Federal and Greek architecture. Finally, the group will tour "Friendship Cemetery." Founded in 1849, this cemetery has national significance as it was the site of the first Memorial Day, honoring fallen soldiers

from the war. This was later recognized in Washington and is now celebrated as a national holiday. Two state governors and over 1,000 Confederate soldiers are buried here.

After the guided tour, there is extra time scheduled to explore and shop in the downtown area. After a final stop and restroom break, everyone will de-

part Columbus for the return trip to Pearl, arriving by 6:45 p.m.

The registration cost for the tour is \$110 per person, based on thirty paying passengers, and final payment is due by Friday, March 6.

For more information, please contact Angela Jones or Keisha Love with Pearl Senior Services at 601-863-3229.

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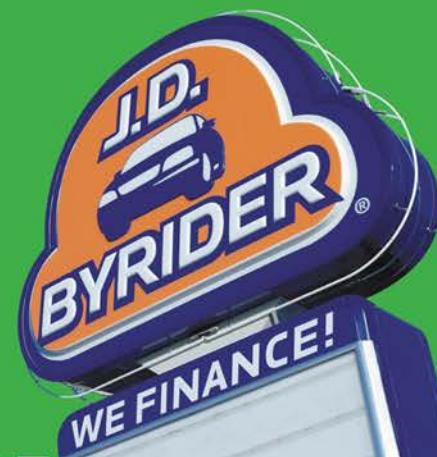
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Garden club receives visit from bird expert



Pictured (l to r) are, front row: Marie Phillips, Doris Davis, Marcie Lockett, Glenda Scoggins and Susie Gullede; and back row: Susan Harrison, Beverly Hemphill, Rowan Craft, Sandy Ashley, Doris McBride, Shirley Wilson, Scottie Boyanton, Teenie Boone, Carol Azzone and Debbie Knight.



Photos special to SW Rankin News

Pictured is Marcie Lockett from Wild Birds Unlimited.

Special to SW Rankin News

Recently, the Richland-Florence Garden Club held their monthly meet-

ing at the Richland Community Center. Hostesses for the brunch were Shirley Wilson, Rowan Craft, Debbie Knight and Doris McBride. Marcie

Lockett from Wild Birds Unlimited visited with the group to talk about the behavior and habitat of bluebirds.

The Richland-Florence Garden Club

is federated with the Garden Clubs of Mississippi, Inc., a member of the National Garden Clubs, Inc. and the Nat-chez Trace District.

PCC announces "Firefighter of the Month"

Special to SW Rankin News

Pearl Chamber of Commerce (PCC) recently announced that Lt. Sam Granberry has been selected as the January Firefighter of the Month. Granberry started work at the Pearl Fire Department in October 2014 after previously working at the Canton Fire Department. He was recently promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. During Granberry's time with the department, he attended multiple classes through the Mississippi State Fire Academy to further his knowledge in fire service. According to PCC [Granberry] dedication and effort is respected throughout the Fire Department. His positive attitude is contagious to other cowork-

ers, and he is a vital link in helping the shift run efficiently. Granberry takes a special interest in teaching younger firefighters how to become a valuable team member through training and experience. Granberry is a 2003 graduate of Benton Academy and is married to Amanda Granberry.



Pictured (l to r) are: Fire Chief Brad Thornton, Lieutenant Sam Granberry and Mayor Jake Windham.

Special to SW Rankin News

Lil' Rangers celebrate perfect attendance



Special to SW Rankin News

Over 100 Lil' Rangers were recognized recently for perfect attendance for the month of December. They attended the "Count Me In Celebration" sponsored by First Baptist Church of Richland.

FHS's Brewer signs with CLCC



Special to SW Rankin News

Landon Brewer, a senior at Florence High School (FHS), is signing to continue his playing career and education at Copiah-Lincoln Community College (CLCC). Pictured (l to r) are, front row: grandmother Martha Summerlin, Landon Brewer and mother Tammy Brewer-Mullins; and back row: Assistant Principal Keith Reed, Coach Bill Hood, grandfather Don Summerlin, cousin Caleb Rigsby, Principal Tony Martin and Coach Joshua Cavanaugh.

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Florence students awarded 2019-20 "High School Heisman"

Special to SW Rankin News

Two students from Florence High School were awarded the High School Heisman for the 2019-20 school year. Each year, the Heisman Foundation honors students that excel academically, in their chosen athletic fields, and establish themselves as community leaders.

Layla Green, daughter of Leonardo and Dr. Traci Green, was selected as a Rankin County recipient of the award. Athletically, Green has been a member of the Florence High School (FHS) varsity dance team for four years. She has competed each year as a soloist and as a part of the team's competition squad. Green was selected by the Universal Dance Association as an All-American for her sophomore, junior and senior year. Academically, Green has maintained a 4.0 while taking a rigorous schedule of advanced placement and dual credit courses. She has been active in the school's business academy and Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) Program. She was selected to attend Mississippi State University's accelerating students into the accounting profession summer camp and was awarded the "Best Start-Up Business Award." She has been a three-time

state DECA finalist and - time district first place winner. She qualified for and attended the International Career Development Conference in both 2018 and 2019. She is currently serving as the vice-president of leadership of FHS DECA. She was a scholarship winner for the Distinguished Young Women of Rankin County program and was chosen to represent Florence High at the Southern Pine Youth Leadership Conference. At FHS, she has received the Distinguished Service Award for having more than 100 hours of community service, Academic Excellence Awards in her freshman, sophomore, and junior years, and has been chosen student of the month. She also currently serves as Vice President of the Key Club Service Organization and on the Mayor's Youth Council.

Will Lingold, son of Robert and Kelley Lingold, was selected as a Rankin County recipient of the award. Lingold has played varsity football and been a member of the varsity power-lifting team for four years. He played in the South State Championship his freshman year and has been recognized as a second team offensive lineman, a two time first team defensive lineman, and the district defensive line MVP. He also served as a captain for the 2019 football season. Lingold was part of



Layla Green



Photos special to SW Rankin News

Will Lingold

the first ever Regional Power-lifting Champions at Florence High School and has competed twice in the South State Power-lifting Meet. Academically, Lingold has maintained a 4.0 while taking a rigorous schedule of advanced placement and dual credit courses, and he scored a twenty-eight on the ACT. He has served as class president twice and remained actively involved in the FHS student council. Lingold has been a member of Key Club, where he par-

ticipated in community service programs. He is also a member of First Baptist Church Florence, where he serves on the student leadership team and has been on mission trips and worked with church members to complete community service projects. Lingold has been recognized as the "Most Outstanding Male Student" his freshman and sophomore year, and he was chosen to represent FHS at the Hugh Bryan Leadership Conference.

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Long, Case named MSH employees of the month



Rachel Long



Photos special to SW Rankin News

Melissa Case

Special to SW Rankin News

Rachel Long was recently named Mississippi State Hospital's (MSH) November Employee of the Month for Support Services.

Long, who grew up in Richland and now lives in Pearl, is an Accountant Auditor II in Fiscal Services. The Hinds Community College graduate has worked at MSH for over four years.

Melissa Case has been named Mississippi State Hospital (MSH) December

employee of the Month for Clinical Service.

Magee native Case, who now lives in Pearl, is a Social Worker II in Forensic Services. Case is a alumna of Hinds Community College, Mississippi College and Brescia University who began working at MSH in 2015.

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.

PUE fifth-graders participate in Christmas program



Pearl Upper Elementary (PUE) students who participated in the square dancing portion of the program are pictured (l to r), front row: Paydin Farough, Sydney Garner, Madi Cox, Kaylee Thrash, Elliott Neal, Tristain Owens and Delsi Ulloa; middle row: Kaidence Welch, Chloe Gomez, Bella Weems, Xavier Shoto, Parker Batson, Issac Little and Amanda Bilbro; and back row: Bella Lalor, Lexi Carpenter, Kennedy Merritt, Destin Temple, Zende Wyatt and Lyric Bender.



Photos special to SW Rankin News

PUE students who were cast members are pictured (l to r), front row: Evelyn Maeda-Sirin, Analynn Barera, Donovan Jenkins, Dustin Roberts and Vaiden Jackson; and back row: Kaelyn Sance, Wolfe Watts, Preston Roberts, Abigail Gordon and Addison Robinson. Not pictured is Jahzara Paige.

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Northside Elementary students share joy



Special to SW Rankin News

Students in Shea Hennessy's Quest class at Northside Elementary encouraged students and teachers to share what brings them joy. Pictured (l to r) are: Marley Parker and Kynnedi Rankin.

RHS athlete of the month announced



Special to SW Rankin News

Pictured (l to r) are: Philip Dunn, Joshua Jackson, Janaya Spence and Assistant Athletic Director Katie Allen.

Special to SW Rankin News

Janaya Spence and Joshua Jackson were selected as Richland High School's (RHS) December "Athlete of the Month." Spence is a member of

the girls basketball team in which she averaged ten points, six rebounds and four assists for the Lady Rangers in district play. Jackson is a member of the bowling team and bowled a 234 against Clinton.

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MSH Employees honored for years of service

Special to SW Rankin News

Mississippi State Hospital (MSH) recently honored employees with November anniversaries for their years of service to the hospital.

Service awards are given to MSH employees in the month of their date of hire, beginning with one year and followed by every fifth anniversary year. Employees receive a Certificate of Appreciation and a Service Award Pin.

The program is sponsored by Friends of Mississippi State Hospital, Inc.



Special to SW Rankin News

Mississippi State Hospital (MSH) November service award recipients include, (l to r) front row : Kaye Myers (Jackson, twenty years), Melissa Andress (Utica, one year), Stephanie Battle (Clinton, one year), Mechelle Allen (Brandon, fifteen years), Brittany Collier (Brandon, one year) and Samquinnetta Hartzog (Florence, one year); and back row: Kay Desai (Ridgeland, twenty year), Debbie Boteler (Richland, fifteen years), June McCafferty (Braxton, ten years), Fredrica Oliver (Bolton, one year), Tamela Sanders (Jackson, twenty years), Elnora Humphrey (Canton, five years) and Terri Jenkins (Jackson, twenty-five years).

Northside third-graders study digestive system



Special to SW Rankin News

Third-grade students at Northside Elementary in Pearl completed a unit on the human body. During their study of the digestive system, students simulated the process of absorption in the intestines using oatmeal and tights. Pictured (l to r) are: Olivia Lewis and Lily Cummins.

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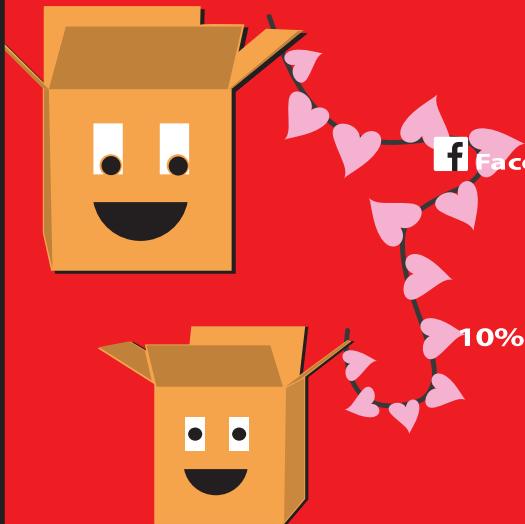
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8:30AM – 5:00PM

Florence's own MGMS to hold annual show in Jackson

Special to SW Rankin News

The Mississippi Gem and Mineral Society's (MGMS) Sixty-First Annual Show is scheduled for February 22 through 23 at the Trade Mart on the Mississippi State Fairgrounds in Jackson.

Hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, February 22, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, February 23. Admission is \$6 for adults and \$3 for students. Scouts and scout leaders in uniform get \$2 admission. Children five and younger get in free. Hourly door prizes will be drawn for adults and students.

MGMS Show Chair Carol Ishee of Pelahatchie said, "We have something for all ages and a variety of interests. It's family oriented. It's fun and educational."

The show features museum displays and hands-on crafts and learning activities for children. Gem tree making allows children to use their creativity. The "touch and see" table gives all visitors an opportunity to examine a large collection of Mississippi rocks and minerals as well as specimens from around the country.

More than twenty-five vendors from around the country will sell fossils, gems and jewelry for those who want to take home a piece of the past or shop



Special to SW Rankin News

Jesse McFarland of Brandon and Terry Comfort of Carthage explain flint knapping and the use of stone tools by early Native Americans. Pictured (l to r) are: Jessie McFarland and Terry Comfort.

for sparkle. Vendors range from the Petrified Forest from Flora to the Geode Gallery of Davenport, Iowa, and Stones and Bones of Franklin, North Carolina. The large market offers for sale fossils, gems, geodes and minerals ranging from tiny fish fossils to cathedral amethyst. A broad range of jewelry, from fine jewelry to children's trinkets, are offered.

Lapidary enthusiasts and jewelry artisans can find gems, beads, cabs, slabs, stones, specimens, carvings, books and tools.

Jewelry artists will demonstrate techniques in beading, wire wrapping, gem faceting, cabochon mak-

ing and other stone work throughout the show.

Flint knapping enthusiasts will show how primitive peoples created arrows, bow drills and other tools. Jesse McFarland of Brandon and Terry Comfort of Carthage are among the flint knappers who will demonstrate how to make arrows and other lithic tools.

The Artifact Shack from Sylvarena, Mississippi, near Bay Springs, will return for the fourth year at the show. Owner Jeff McCraw has spent a lifetime collecting Native American artifacts and

fossils. Visitors can inspect close-up his Ice Age fossil collection which includes a mastodon molar and tusk, bones of the giant ground sloth, a bison skull and others.

People with an interest in archaeology, geology and paleontology will have an opportunity to talk with professionals and students in those disciplines. Educational displays will include fossils from the collection of the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science, artifacts collected by members of the Mississippi Archaeological Association, and Native American tools from MGMS members' collections. Special exhibits are provided by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), the University of Mississippi and the University of Southern Mississippi.

For more information, call MGMS Show Chair Carol Ishee at 601-497-2938 or e-mail izzie1259@aol.com.

The Mississippi Gem and Mineral Society, founded in 1957, promotes knowledge and enjoyment of activities related to the earth sciences. MGMS members include amateurs and professionals with a wide range of earth science and artistic interests. To learn more about the gem and mineral show, or about MGMS membership, visit the web site at www.missgms.org.

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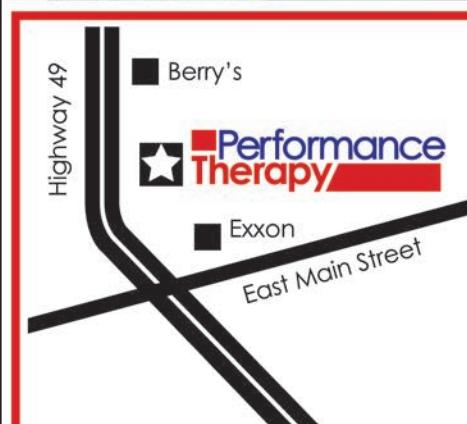
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Dates set for Mississippi Braves 2020 season

Special to SW Rankin News

The Mississippi Braves (M-Braves), Double-A affiliate of the Atlanta Braves, recently announced home game times and fireworks dates for the 2020 season. The upcoming season marks the sixteenth season of Braves baseball at Trustmark Park.

Opening Night, Thursday, April 9, vs. Jacksonville is scheduled for 6:35 p.m. and features the first of thirteen post-game fireworks shows in 2020. Most Monday through Friday games will once again have a 6:35 p.m. first pitch, and all Saturday games, which include post-game fireworks, begin at 6:05 p.m. Sunday games throughout the season will start at 2:05 p.m., with one exception being May 24, at 6:05 p.m., featuring post-game fireworks to celebrate Memorial Day.

The M-Braves will host four Education/Camp Day games beginning at 10:35 a.m. (Tuesday, April 21, vs.

Jackson (Tennessee), Wednesday, April 29, vs. Pensacola, Monday, June 15, vs. Tennessee, and Monday, June 29 vs. Rocket City. Monday, April 13, vs.

begin at 1:05 p.m. The M-Braves will conclude the home schedule with a 6:35 p.m. contest against Biloxi on Tuesday, September 1, to wrap up a five-game

Game times are subject to change. The full 2020 promotional schedule will be announced at a later date. Individual game tickets will go on sale in

March. Season tickets, mini-plans, and sponsorship packages for the 2020 season are on sale now. For more information or to pick out seats today, stop by the Mississippi Braves front office or call 888-BRAVES4.

Based in Pearl, MS since 2005, the Mississippi Braves are the Double-A Southern League affiliate of the Atlanta Braves. The M-Braves are owned and operated by the Atlanta Braves, the longest continuously operated franchise in Major League Baseball. Follow the

MISSISSIPPI Braves SCHEDULE/GAME TIMES

The calendar grid shows the following schedule highlights:

- April:** Opening Night vs. Jacksonville (JAX) on Thursday, April 9, 6:35 PM. Home games include vs. Jacksonville (JAX), Rocket City (RCT), Tennessee (TNS), and Biloxi (BLX).
- May:** Home games include vs. Tennessee (TNS), Jacksonville (JAX), and Biloxi (BLX). Memorial Day game on Monday, May 24, at 6:05 PM.
- June:** Home games include vs. Biloxi (BLX), Tennessee (TNS), Jacksonville (JAX), and Rocket City (RCT).
- July:** Home games include vs. Biloxi (BLX), Chattanooga (CHA), Jacksonville (JAX), and Tennessee (TNS).
- August:** Home games include vs. Chattanooga (CHA), Jacksonville (JAX), and Biloxi (BLX).
- September:** Home games include vs. Tennessee (TNS) and Biloxi (BLX).

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Jacksonville is a 1:05 p.m. Easter Monday Special, and Memorial Day, Monday, May 25, vs. Pensacola will also

series. Visit www.milb.com to download the 2020 Schedule Calendar.

M-Braves at www.mississippibraves.com, www.facebook.com/mbraves, and www.twitter.com/mbraves.

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"Officer of the Month" awarded by PCC



Special to SW Rankin News

Pearl Chamber of Commerce recently announced that the Pearl Police Department Officer of the Month for December is Sergeant John Burt.

The 2020 "Krewe de Roux" is here

Special to SW Rankin News

Leadership Rankin, along with Rankin Youth Leadership, presents the second annual Krewe de Roux Festival on Friday, February 21, and Saturday, February 22.

As a ten-month program hosted by the Rankin County Chamber of Commerce, Leadership Rankin sharpens the leadership skills of the participants and requires them to complete a community service project prior to graduation. The current class chose to produce a fun-filled, family-oriented Mardi Gras parade, gumbo cook-off and festival to support and promote tourism in Rankin County.

The parade will be held Friday, February 21, at 6:30 p.m. in downtown Bran-

don. Business and community groups throughout the county are encouraged to participate by registering floats and decorated cars. The fee for floats is \$75 and cars are \$50. There is no entry fee for schools, but they must register.

The Gumbo Cook-Off, featuring forty cooking teams and sideline festivities, is scheduled for Saturday, February 22, from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. at the Brandon Amphitheater. Tickets are \$10 for the second-annual event featuring Southern Komfort Brass Band and U.S. Band, gumbo tasting, kids' zone and food trucks.

For more information and registration details, contact Carley Keyes at the Rankin County Chamber of Commerce: ckeyes@rankinchamber.com or 601-825-2268.



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Pearl Police Department seeking new recruits

Special to SW Rankin News

The Pearl Police Department is accepting applications for the position of certified police officer. Requirements for applying for the position are the following: must be a graduate of a state accredited law enforcement academy; must be at least twenty-one years of age and have a high school diploma or G.E.D.; must have no previous convictions for felony crimes or crimes of domestic violence; must agree to participate in an extensive selection process that includes: physical fitness test, extensive background investigation, drug screen and psychological examination and must possess a valid Mississippi driver license.

Duties for this position include, but are not limited to: perform law enforcement and crime prevention work; control traffic and enforce state and local traffic regulations; perform investigative work; participate in and provide support and assistance to special crime prevention and enforcement programs as assigned; provide courteous, efficient and responsive service to city residents and the general public; perform other duties as assigned; applicants are required to complete the state minimum standards of Training Academy.



Special to SW Rankin News

The Pearl Police Department is also accepting applications for the position of communications officer. To apply for this position, interested persons must be: at least eighteen years of age; possess a high school diploma or G.E.D and have no previous felony convictions or any convictions for domestic violence.

Applicants must agree to a selection

process, including: a typing test; extensive interview to include a separate in-home interview; background investigation as well as a drug screen.

Duties include but are not limited to: operating telephone, radio and other telecommunications equipment; answering emergency and distress calls; dispatching public safety personnel

(police and fire) to calls for service; responding to inquiries by the public and other government agencies and interacting with other city, county, state and federal agencies and personnel.

To apply for these position, visit the Pearl Police Department at 2561 Old Brandon Road Pearl, Mississippi, in person, to pick up an application.

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