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# The Pearl News

Good News  
You Can Use

Vol. 5, No. 7 | July 2020

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

## City of Pearl welcomes community theatre

By Guest Columnist Erick Weeks

Pearl Community Theatre (PCT) will be led by Artistic Director Harriet Matthews, alongside a newly-appointed Board of Directors, and will produce a season of shows, events, and educational opportunities.

This project, which was first envisioned by Matthews, former Pearl High School (PHS) theatre director, and Erick Weeks, current PHS theatre director, has truly blossomed into something spectacular over the past few months. After meeting in the fall with Mayor Jake Windham, who was very receptive to the idea of incorporating a community theatre within the city of Pearl, we were given the go ahead to open the window for applications for board members.

We were thrilled with the amount of people interested. Reaching almost 1,000 followers on Facebook, we were so excited that the public was just as

excited as we were. We are so honored to welcome Doug Hutton as the inaugural president, who will lead and represent the theatre and Board of Directors. Doug, a native of Jackson, has served on many community theatre boards and is excited to help make PCT the best it can be. Vice-president of PCT will be Debbie Moore of Pearl, who has also served on community theatre boards and has been an active advocate for community theatre. Our finance director, who is no stranger to Pearl, will be Ms. Haley Sutton, former PHS grad.

Emily Miller, another PHS grad, will serve as secretary. Marketing and public relations will be handled by Erick Weeks. Our fundraising chair position

will be held by Jason McCarty, former PHS grad. Events director will be Justin Dennis, former PHS grad, and our business partnership director will be Sydnee Tapley, who is another former PHS grad.

Payton Cook, former PHS grad, will also serve as student coordinator in efforts to reaching out to students of theatre from all ages. Members-at-Large for the PCT Board of Directors are Shannon McDowell, PJHS theatre director; Sasha Carpenter, former PHS grad; Jeremey

Cooper, former PHS grad; and Heather Barnes, PJHS math/creative arts teacher. We are so thrilled to announce such an outstanding group of theatre people, and we look forward the many creative possibilities to come.



Photo special to The Pearl News  
Harriet Matthews, Pearl Community Theatre (PCT) Artistic Director

The purpose of Pearl Community Theatre is to create and provide a diverse community theatre that enriches, educates and entertains the people of our community and surrounding areas. PCT will be a vital part of the cultural life in our community by striving to enhance the creativity and quality of our performances, growing our membership and expanding our audiences, encouraging volunteerism, training and motivating local talent that will continue to pursue and support the theatre arts, while meeting the needs of our audiences by staying in touch with the community's desires.

"We felt there was a void which needed to be filled within our city when it came to theatre, so we worked together to fill it by starting our own. Theatre is community building at its core, and I'm so thrilled to play a part," said Matthews. **EDITOR'S NOTE:** Erick Weeks serves as the Marketing and Public Relations Director for Pearl Community Theatre.

## Pearl police honored for exceptional performance

Special to The Pearl News

On May 16, 2020, The Pearl Police Department (PPD) received a call from an elderly female at the Pearlwood Apartments. The female stated that someone was inside her home with a knife. The female also stated that she had her two small grandchildren inside the home with her. Officer Wilkes Carter was the first officer to arrive on scene and was able to breach the door to make entry. Upon entry, Carter quickly assessed the injured female and children asking them where the intruder was located in the residence. He was then able to remove the victims from the residence safely while securing the scene so the intruder could not flee.

Carter quickly determined that the intruder was hiding in the attic of the apartment and was in the midst of locating the attic hatch to make entry when other officers arrived on scene. Officer Carter was joined by Officer Edgar Le-

mus and Investigator Steven Frederick to enter the attic and locate the suspect. The suspect was placed into custody without any further harm or injury to the victim or responding officers.

Not knowing exactly where the suspect was hiding or whether he was armed, all three officers exhibited extraordinary courage and bravery in uncertain circumstances.

Ultimately, the victims were all transported to a local hospital and are recovering from the mental and physical injuries they sustained from this incident.

All three officers received the Officers of the Month award and, in addition, Officer Carter received the Life Saving Award.

Carter graduated from high school in 2003 and then attended Hinds Community College. He graduated from the Jackson Police Department Academy in 2008. He worked at the Byram Police Department and joined the PPD in 2016. Carter is a member of the PPD

Swat Team and is on the Patrol Division. He is married to Courtney Carter and has two daughters ages nine and three.

Investigator Steven Frederick graduated from high school in 2003 and served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 2005 to 2009 including combat deployments to Iraq. He graduated from Jackson Police Department (JPD) Academy in 2012 and worked at JPD until 2014, when he came to Pearl. He is a member of the Pearl PD Swat Team and worked in Criminal Investigations before he transferred to the FLEX Unit (Street Crime Prevention).



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Pictured (l to r) are: Chief Dean Scott, Officer Wilkes Carter, Investigator Steven Frederick and Officer Edgar Lemus.

He has a new baby boy that was born in March.

Officer Edgar Lemus graduated from high school in 2009 and attended Fullerton Community College. He worked at the Columbus Police Department and graduated from Mississippi Law Enforcement Officers' Training Academy (MLEOTA) in 2017. He began his career at PPD in 2019 and is assigned to the Patrol Division.



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# THE NEWS RICHLAND

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## Rocking Richland event a huge success

By Alexa Haik

Earlier this spring, Tammy Morgan, administrative assistant of Parks and Recreation for the City of Richland, began scouring the internet for ideas... looking for activities that residents of all ages could participate in once the City's walking trails re-opened. She stumbled upon a description of an activity that required only one essential element - painted rocks. This activity, Morgan felt, was ideal, because it was an outdoor exercise that allowed for social distancing requirements. She then tweaked it slightly by turning the activity into a contest, and thus "Rocking Richland" was born.

Morgan, her grandson Cooper Hammons, as well as multiple employees of the City, assisted in painting the lions-share of the rocks. However, there was an additional treat...the inclusion of the "Speaks Rocks," so named as the rocks were painted by the famous Mississippi artist, Cliff Speaks. The contest participants lucky enough to discover a Speak rock were not only recognized for their achievement, they were also allowed to keep these as keepsakes.

Rocking Richland officially kicked-off Friday, May 15, as the Parks and Rec Department placed painted rocks around all of the walking trails at East-side, Westside Park and the Community Center. Participants were instructed to pose for a photo with



Photos special to The Richland News

each of the rocks found and then email the images, along with contact information, to Morgan. All discovered treasures were then returned to the original location, allowing others a chance to unearth them.

Each week, the individual who located the most rocks was awarded a \$50 gift card and a mention on the City of Richland's Facebook page. The official winners of the 2020 contest were: Christopher Reel, Grayson Cobb, Oli Barefoot and The Fortado

Family. Winners of the Speaks Rocks challenge were: John Parker Chance, Grayson Cobb, Shirley Botkin, Shannon Williams and Austin Williams.

While they expected there to be an interest in this event, the Parks and Rec department for the City of Richland had no idea Morgan's brain child would become as popular as it turned out to be. In all, more than 100 citizens of all ages participated. Barbara Adams, Special Events Coordinator for the City, sums up the experience this way: "The beauty of this event was its simplicity and thinking out of the box to engage our citizens with an outdoor event that was in a safe environment. [It] also brought families together having fun!"

While the first annual Rocking Richland contest officially ended June 5, plans are already being made for other "Rocking Events" that will include local businesses of Richland.

For further information about this, or other upcoming events scheduled in the City of Richland, contact Barbara Adams at 601-420-3402.

**See page 5 for photo spread.**

## Richland Library re-opens in July, with modifications

Special to The Richland News

CMRLS recently announced the re-opening of the Richland Public Library. In that regard, they have also announced special modifications to their standard operating procedures in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Hours of Operation have been altered accordingly. Richland Library is now open 10 a.m. through 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Upon entry to the Richland Library, patrons must adhere to the following guidelines: answer a series of health-related questions; wear a mask; wash and sanitize hands prior to or immediately

upon entry; stay a minimum of six feet away from other patrons and employees and move any items touched to the "designated area."

Regarding returning library items, the book drop is now open. All due dates were extended to September 30, and therefore no overdue fines will accrue. Returned items will remain on a patron's account in quarantine for a one week period (without counting toward overdue penalties) before being



Special to The Richland News

made available to library members to check out.

There will be a limit to the number of patrons who can occupy the library at one

time to maintain social distancing guidelines. It is critical that, upon entry to any CMRLS facility, all signs and designated floor markings be adhered to. Curbside services will continue to be an option.

Computer use will be available in a limited capacity, to maintain a space of six feet between each, and will be sanitized between users. Patrons are asked to reserve thirty minute sessions, one person per computer.

CMRLS will continue virtual programming via CMRLS.Libraries on Facebook. For a schedule of programs and events, visit [www.cmrls.lib.ms.us](http://www.cmrls.lib.ms.us). To contact the Richland Library, call 601-932-1846 or email [richland@cmrls.lib.ms.us](mailto:richland@cmrls.lib.ms.us).



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Florence natives join Hinds High-Steppers - pg. 11

# THE FLORENCE NEWS

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## Snapping turtles rescued by Florence's CMTR

By Guest Columnist Christy Milbourne

Back in the 1950s/1960s, an individual captured several alligator snapping turtles from various locations and relocated them to his private lake. Over the last year or so, the dam of this lake began to leak, necessitating the draining of the lake to repair the dam. Since the alligator snapping turtles do not belong in that lake, and taking away their water will force them into neighboring yards and roads, an effort is underway to rescue these turtles from the lake before the lake is fully drained. Because capturing them after-the fact would be very difficult, an effort was made last week to trap as many of them as possible using humane traps. Once trapped, they were (and will be again) brought here [to the Central MS Turtle Rescue] for temporary housing. A researcher currently working with this species will take tissue samples from each individual to perform DNA analysis, which will determine the point of origin for each animal. We will then release the turtles back to their proper drainage, per the results of the DNA testing.

It's important to note that this capture and possession has been and will continue to be done under all appropriate permissions and permits. Alligator snappers are a species of concern here, and the laws regarding their possession have

changed drastically over the last several decades. It is now illegal to possess one without a Small Game Hunting/Freshwater Fishing License, to possess one smaller than 24" in straight carapace length, and/or to capture/possess more than one per license year. And it is certainly now seriously frowned upon to catch them and put them in your own pond, also known as farming. The individual who did so with these animals did so with good intentions, but, as we can see now, it was ultimately to the detriment of the turtles. The turtles he placed in his lake have reproduced over the decades, and now there are many more turtles than the lake

can support. We're finding they've been eating some odd "foods" such as garbage, plastic and fishing bait, and we've also noted the scars and missing appendages resulting from multiple fights between these turtles who have been placed in close proximity to one another and have been forced to fight for food, mates, and other resources.



Special to The Florence News

Christy Milbourne holding one of the prized alligator snapping turtles rescued from a private lake.

This particular species of turtle has sparked countless fears in humans for generations. They certainly look menacing and grow quite large. But we would like to encourage people to appreciate them, rather than

fear them. They are not aggressive unless provoked (cornering them, harass-

ing them, etc.), they don't chase people, and they certainly don't eat people. (In fact, I have never heard of a single case of someone being bitten by one that they weren't already harassing.) They usually hang out at the bottom of ponds, rivers, and lakes and use an appendage inside their mouths that resembles a worm to lure food to them. They like easy food (such as bait on the end of a fishing line). They don't chase swimming children, and they aren't a menace to the health of any body of water where they occur naturally (although they do bear much of the blame through public myth and misconception). They're magnificent animals that can live, in some cases, longer than you or me. They've been on this planet for hundreds of millions of years, but now, because of human interference, are becoming threatened throughout much of their natural range. Decades of habitat destruction, using them for food, or outright killing them because people are scared of them, have caused their numbers to decline. If we're not careful, we'll wake up one day to the news that they have become extinct. And that would be a true shame.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Milbourne is the Founder and Executive Director at Central MS Turtle Rescue.*

**See page 9 for photo spread.**

## Florence student selected for UMMC scholarship

Special to The Florence News

Bailey Steen of Florence is among eight MC students selected to obtain scholarships for medical or dental school at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, UMMC officials say. The Legislature funded the program to increase the pool of rural physicians and dentists.

Mississippi College student Hannah

"Bailey" Steen of Florence will enroll in 2022 at the University of Mississippi School of Dentistry.

"This has been a dream I've been working towards for ten years," she said. "I've been blessed with the opportunity." Steen thanks dentists and professors as well as the scholarship program for making her dream become a reality.

Being chosen among nearly two dozen Mississippi Rural Physicians Schol-

ars in June makes it possible for Steen to achieve her goals.

MC students chosen for medical school scholarships include Rebecca Grewe of Flora, Kenley Cochran of Beaumont, Neha Dhaliwa of Canton, Hannah Mixon of Vancleave, Macia Outlaw of Brandon, T.J. McIntosh of Wren and Max Pappas of Laurel.

Dr. Wahnee Sherman, director of the rural physicians program based at

UMMC, welcomes the new students enrolling in 2021 and 2022.

"We are looking forward to working with them and helping them become physicians, dentists and leaders in rural Mississippi."



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MC student Hannah Steen of Florence



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## Remembering Mayor Vaughn Galloway

*Special to The SW Rankin News*

The City of Pearl recently honored former mayor Vaughn Galloway, upon news of his passing.

Galloway was considered to be one of Pearl's founding fathers, having held office for almost a decade, as Pearl's second Mayor between the years 1980 and 1989.

Mayor Galloway led the way to secure school bond referendums that built a new junior high and new high school, as well as setting the foundation for improved water, sewer, and drainage services and led the city to obtain what is now the Pearl Municipal Golf Course.

Ron Morgan, Administrative Assistant to Galloway, says Vaughn brought the city back from a dire financial situation with strong fiscal conser-

vative leadership. Morgan also says Vaughn's legacy is based on "Christian faith, integrity and restoration of the public's faith in Pearl's elect-



*Pictured (l to r) are: wife Bonnie Galloway and Vaughn Galloway.*



*Photos special to The SW Rankin News*

*Mayor Galloway*

ed leadership. Mayor Jake Windham has lowered flags in the city to half staff in Galloway's honor. We pray for comfort for his wife Bonnie, his son Byron and the entire Galloway family."

## MSPAN announces new wellness clinic



*Special to SW Rankin News*

*Special to SW Rankin News*

Mississippi Spay and Neuter (MSPAN), a nonprofit organization, is now offering wellness services to pets in low-income households. Located at the Wellness Clinics at Elaine's Basic Care and Wellness Center on 657 Hwy 49 in Richland, wellness visits are offered every other Thursday to those residents who qualify.

The two requirements for participating in this special program are: each pet must be spayed or neutered and the family's household income must be below \$28,000/yr. If the pet is not fixed, all of the services will be offered in conjunction with spay/neuter surgery.

The services, products and cost that are

offered include: a \$10 per pet office fee; a \$10 per pet rabies vaccine; a \$15 per pet annual vaccine (FVRCP for cats, DAPPV for dogs); a fifteen per pet Bordetella Vaccine (dogs only); a \$25 per pet microchip; a \$6 per pet nail trim; \$8-16 per pet dog dewormer- depending on weight (covers hookworms, tapeworms, roundworms & whipworms); a \$6 per pet cat dewormer- \$6 (covers hookworms, tapeworms & roundworms); a \$16-19 per pet Advantage Multi for dogs- one month dose- depending on weight and a \$14 to \$16 per pet Advantage Multi for cats- one month dose, depending on weight.

Spots are available by appointment only and will be booked in order of calls received. Call 601-420-2438 to schedule an appointment.

### SWRANKIN NEWS

P.O. Box 5963, Pearl, MS 39208  
601-706-9237

Volume 5 Issue 7  
Circulation - 15,000

#### **Publisher**

Clay Mansell  
claymansell@SWRankinNews.com

#### **Editor in Chief**

Stephanie Tracy

#### **Managing Editor**

Alexa Haik  
news@swrankinnews.com

#### **Sales Representatives**

Clay Mansell  
claymansell@SWRankinNews.com

#### **Graphic Designer**

Katie White  
designer@SWRankinNews.com

#### **Office Manager**

Doris Bynum

#### **Distribution**

Ben Barnett

For submission information, email  
news@SWRankinNews.com.

Southwest Rankin News is published  
on the second Tuesday of every month.

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# Pearl resident honored by MSH

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Mississippi State Hospital held a special ceremony recently to honor three Employees of the Year (EOY) for 2019. Shelli Pitts, a Pearl resident, was the Clinical Service honoree. Pitts is a Licensed Practical Nurse in Inpatient Services. A Hinds Community College graduate, she has worked at MSH since 1997. With the traditional banquet ruled out because of COVID-19 safety measures, MSH took its ceremony outside, where all the 2019 Employees of the Month strolled down a decorated runway one at a time cheered on by a small group of executive leadership. After that ceremony, a parade of vehicles visited the building of each of the EOY winners and delivered cake, ice cream and a large facsimile check. Each EOY winner received a personalized plaque and an actual \$250 check from Friends of Mississippi State Hospital, Inc., the volunteer organization that sponsors the hospital's employee

recognition program. All of the 2019 Employees of the Month were invited to the ceremony, and each one received a personalized yard sign, a poster featuring all the honorees, a commemorative pin, a gift card from Mangia Bene Restaurant Group, pictures from the event and other assorted goodies. The Employees of the Month, chosen by a special committee, are nominated by coworkers and approved by supervisors for their outstanding contributions on the job and their embodiment of the hospital's core values of respect, relationships, accountability, teamwork and diversity. The employee recognition program is sponsored by Friends of Mississippi State Hospital, Inc., a volunteer organization.

MSH, a program of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, was founded in 1855 and helps the individuals it serves achieve mental wellness by encouraging hope, promoting safety, and supporting recovery. The hospital is accredited by the Joint Commission.



Special to SW Rankin News  
Shelli Pitts, MSH's 2019 Clinical Service Employee of the Year honoree.

## CMRLS announces distance programs for summer

Special to SW Rankin News

Central Mississippi Regional Library System (CMRLS) recently announced remote learning programs and activities via their group and Facebook pages. Programs for Preschoolers, kids (K-fourth grade), tweens (fifth-eighth grade), teens (ninth-twelfth grade), adults, and an Adult Summer Book Club will be announced on the group pages found on the CMRLS Groups pages. Interested parties may join one or more. These age-appropriate programs include stories, crafts, trivia, and more. The Beanstack App is also available to access remote library activities. Download the free app for a smart device or computer to access the site. Need help? The library staff will be available to answer any question regarding the summer programs. All family programs will be announced on the CMRLS Facebook

page each Saturday at 9 a.m. All ages are invited to visit and participate. The list of programs currently scheduled for July includes: July 18: Princess Story Time with Hanna and July 25: Magician Dorian LaChance. The CMRLS Adult Summer Book Club will begin the summer with two books *Sharpe's Trafalgar* by Bernard Cornwell and *The Oysterville Sewing Circle* by Susan Wiggs. Choose one of these, request a book from the library, or download the title from FREADING <https://libraryaware.com/2145Z3>. Join the Facebook Groups page for the Adult Summer Book Club to find others reading the book. The teen remote programs for summer include some fun activities that will be posted weekly in the TEEN (ninth-twelfth grade) Imagine Your Story Summer Library Program group on Facebook.



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\*Winner will receive a \$25 gift certificate from ChixChicken & Chopz at the Outlets of Mississippi in Pearl.

THE FLORENCE NEWS

THE RICHLAND NEWS

Pearl News

In one advertisement in this issue, we've placed this newspaper image. **NEWS** Find it, write the advertiser's name and the page number where you found it below, and mail this form to the indicated address. A drawing will be held to determine our winner from all correct entries received by June 25, 2020. There will be one winner per each issue in which this contest entry form appears. One entry per household per issue, please.

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Mail entries to:  
P.O. Box 5963  
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# Obituaries

NAME	AGE	CITY	DOD	Funeral Home
Cynthia A. Page	70	Richland, MS	05/30/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Lillie M. Bridges	81	Florence, MS	05/31/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Israel Lee Hodges	44	Florence, MS	05/31/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Mary Beth Hester	57	Jackson, MS	06/04/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
James "Jimmy" Barlow	72	Blacksburg, MS	06/05/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Mary Corinne Hudson Addy	89	Old Pearl, MS	06/09/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Harvey S. McKie III	76	Florence, MS	06/10/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Martha Hogan	89	Florence, MS	06/10/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Robert Macklin	71	Florence, MS	06/13/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Eleanor "Ellie" Ballengee	86	Richland, MS	06/14/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Sara Gilmore	92	Florence, MS	06/15/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Cydnie Dewitt	19	Florence, MS	06/19/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Cadance Blough	21	Pearl, MS	06/19/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Leroy Wilson	90	Richland, MS	06/19/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Wayne McBride	66	Florence, MS	06/20/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Jax Alexander Chunn	Inf.	Florence, MS	06/21/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Loraine Padelford	99	Monterey, MS	06/22/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Glenn T. Marshall, Jr.	63	Tilatoba, MS	06/24/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Miriam Ellis	89	Richland, MS	06/24/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Sam Maggio, Jr.	65	Richland, MS	06/26/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Bobby Jean Druetta	87	Florence, MS	06/29/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Harold Harris	62	Florence, MS	06/29/20	ChancellorFuneralHome
Linda Sullivan	74	Florence, MS	06/29/20	ChancellorFuneralHome

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# Five ways to boost bird enjoyment

By Sherry Lucas

When pandemic shelter-at-home orders left many stuck at the house last spring, who was still on the move? Birds.

Migrating beauties and backyard residents were about the only ones swooping by for a visit, and folks responded accordingly.

Bird-watching has soared nationwide during the pandemic. Apps such as eBird, to help keep a checklist of sightings, and Merlin Bird ID, with its info-packed field guide, can be a big help supporting the newfound passion.

Long-time backyard birders know well the thrill and the solace that bird-watching brings.

"It has really given me some entertainment during this very difficult time," says Gayla Dance, who lives in Rankin County on the reservoir. "We have bird feeders everywhere, and built a pond to bring in birds, so I have quite an ensemble." When she travels, her bird guide and binoculars are the first things in her suitcase.

Her advice to new birders? Water is a big draw. She once rigged up a bird bath for her mother, who was getting older and could no longer fill her feeders, with a garden hose on a slow drip, that was very successful in attracting birds. In her own backyard, in addition to quality seeds, she likes putting out suet, orange halves and grapes. "Mine have, like, a little buffet," and the variety pulls in a variety of birds.

Stacie Clark of Pearl counts cardinals and bluebirds among her favorites, and takes a keen interest in birds' yearly patterns. Carolina wrens nest in the Boston ferns she hangs on her porch each spring, often building one within a day or two of when they go up. At home more this spring, she noticed the wrens hanging out under the porch, almost rushing her to get those ferns into place.

Clark developed a similar kinship with bluebirds. Acting on a tip from Wild

Birds Unlimited, she started putting out live mealworms for them. "They will sit out here and wait by the little cup we put them in, until we fill it."

Anytime is a good time to look for birds. But, "Typically, the best time is in the morning or the evening," says Adam Rohnke of Clinton, a wildlife biologist and an ornithologist by training who works with Central Mississippi Research & Extension in Raymond. Summers in Mississippi, "At 2 o'clock in the afternoon, nobody wants to be out there,

Kristina Jordan says Eastside Park's greater number of trees may better serve birders on the lookout.

Rohnke suggests these five birds (not standard run-of-the-mill birds but often common backyard ones) to watch for, listen for and try to attract in central Mississippi:

**Eastern Towhee** - The robust, robin-sized ground-dweller is often heard more than seen, Rohnke says. Listen for a two-part call note "chewink" or the three-part up-swinging whistle of "Drink

says. Adult males have a metallic green back and sides with a deep ruby throat, while females and juveniles are similarly colored but lack that ruby throat. Nectar is a primary food source.

A hummingbird feeder filled with one part sugar to four parts water (boil, then cool, no red dye needed) is a good way to attract them, along with plants such as coral honeysuckle, salvias, red buckeyes and more.

**Red-headed Woodpecker** - The deep-red head, white chest and belly, and bluish-black back, tail and wings, with white wing patches, make this beauty a study in contrasts. Hear them drumming on trees, utility poles, aluminum gutters and even metal lawn art. They nest in cavities, including utility poles and dead trees, and sometimes human structures. Maintaining any dead tree in the yard, safely away from structures or walkways, can attract them.

**White-eyed Vireo** - Small and constantly on the move in shrubs and trees of the mid-level canopy, the songbird's appearance is a contrast of overall washed yellow with gray atop its head and nape, white chest, charcoal grayish black wings and two creamy-white wing bars. It's aptly named for its bright-white iris, surrounded by yellow feathers often referred to as "spectacles," Rohnke says. Shrubby hedgerows under mid-canopy hardwoods draw these birds, which prefer to forage and call from cover.

**House Finch** - The House Finch has become a Mississippi resident since the 1980s and is well-adapted to living among humans. The sparrow-sized bird has brown feathers across the majority of its body with broken dark brown streaks down the chest and belly. The male has a rosy red on the head and breast that slowly fades down the body — a coloration the females and juveniles lack.

They're easily enticed to hopper, window and tube-style feeders featuring black oil sunflower seeds and finch seed mixes.



House finch

Special to SW Rankin News

including birds."

Because the watch targets are usually small and skittish, first order of business is to make buddies with your binoculars. Binocular problems are more often due to user error than faulty equipment, so if you're experiencing trouble, frustration or focus issues, consult a fellow birder or even a YouTube video for adjustment tips.

Holly Haralson, assistant director of Pearl Parks & Recreation, suggests Bright Park, 3705 Flynn Drive, as a destination for birders who want to go beyond their backyard. "It's got a pond and a nice walking trail," she says of the arboretum park and its abundance of trees and shrubs.

In Richland, the Community Center's

your tea" as the birds rummage through leaves while foraging in thickets and bushes. The striking male has a jet-black head, throat, wings and tail, and dark-orange sides and white belly. Females and juveniles present the same pattern, but with chestnut-brown instead of black. Their diet consists of native seeds, fruit, buds, insects and crustaceans.

Towhees prefer cover and forage under short bushes like azaleas and wax myrtles. They'll visit feeder stations where there are low platform feeders and scratch along the periphery of the feeding area.

**Ruby-throated hummingbird** - The little ruby and emerald migratory visitor, a mark of summer, measures about the length of an adult human thumb, Rohnke



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# Rocking Richland event a huge success




Parker with Cliff Speaks rock.



Second week winner Oli Barefoot.



Third week Speaks rock recipients, Shannon Williams and Austin Williams.



Cobb with Cliff Speaks rock.



First week winners Christopher Reel and Grayson Cobb.



Second week Speaks rock recipient, Shirley Botkin.



Third week winners, The Fortado Family.

Photos special to SW Rankin News



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# Pack 85 of Florence holds "Crossover Ceremony"



On June 2, 2020, Pack 85 of Florence held their crossover ceremony, where members of the Rising Phoenix patrol were awarded with the Arrow of Light award and became new members of Troop 85. Pictured (l to r) are, front row: Nic Guthrie, Rob Short, Jessie Rico, Ezekial Chancellor, Ethan Miller, Peyton Rideout, Cameron Sones, Cade Sills, Payton Smith, Jake Dear; and back row: Jason Rideout, Robert Short, Kevin Sills, Heidi Sills and Jimbo Dear.



On June 2, 2020, Payton Smith of Florence became the first girl in Pack 85 history to earn the Arrow of Light award. The Arrow of Light is the highest achievement to be earned in Cub Scouts. She now joins Troop 85G to continue working toward the achievement of Eagle Scout. Pictured with Payton are Cub Scout leader Heidi Sills and Troop 85G leader Christy Bridges.

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# RMYC "Adopts-a-Floor" for a good cause

*Special to SW Rankin News*

Richland Mayor's Youth Council (RMYC) is primarily a community service organization. They assist the community in city events while earning volunteer hours that are credited towards their high school graduation. Every year, members of RMYC select an organization to donate items and/or service. In the past, RMYC selected a local animal shelter, Blair E Batson Hospital for Children as well as a local women's shelter as a service project.

This past October, youth council selected Blair E Batson once more. The first step was sending out messages, encouraging people to donate items. Then COVID-19 entered the picture. Before RMYC could respond, Blair E. Batson contacted them directly, requesting snack-food donations. They were experiencing a shortage because the usual volume of donations had stopped. Stephanie Ward, administrative assistant to the Mayor and Mayor's Youth Council sponsor, without hesitation, said yes. Ward explains that "this particular snack drive happened very last minute."

The "Adopt-a-Floor" program assists parents of children who are receiving treatments at Blair E. Batson, who are

taking temporary residency at the hospital. Ward says that they are in need of a little extra nutrition "because, if you have a sick child, you do not want to

their meals.

Ward delivers the donated snacks to the hospital herself. She says the process includes making an appointment



*Special to SW Rankin News*

*Pictured (l to r) are: RMYC Sponsor Stephanie Ward and Mayor Pat Sullivan.*

leave the room to get something to eat." So for each patient on the adopted floor, one family member gets two snacks, to tide them over and help supplement

with the hospital program coordinator to schedule a specific drop-off time. The drop-off location is typically a certain door located in front of the Blair E.

Batson complex. She explains that it is easier to come to the car and load up onto carts, then transport the donations to the families. This time protocols were a little different...maintaining social distancing, wearing masks/gloves and following hospital regulation that have been put in place since the COVID-19 outbreak.

Ward has since challenged other mayors' youth councils in Rankin County to participate in this particular service project as a way to encourage more involvement. She says so far she has heard back from one youth council who accepted her challenge.

Ward says that, in general, "I would love to challenge anybody in our county to look into doing service projects, not just Blair E Batson, but also the women's shelter, animal shelter, anything for the greater good of the community to help others. I want people to start looking into what people need; sometimes a person in the community may just need a hello, just how are you doing, there may be an organization in the community that needs help, especially now, since the virus is going on. Their funding has probably been cut, or something like that. I just want people to reach out and help others."

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# Snapping turtles rescued by Florence's CMTR



Central Mississippi Turtle Rescue (CMTR) of Florence, Mississippi, provides proper husbandry, diet and medical intervention for injured tortoises and turtles in the state of Mississippi. For more information about the rescue visit [www.centralmsturtlerescue.com](http://www.centralmsturtlerescue.com) or visit their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/centralmsturtlerescue>.

Photos special to SW Rankin News

Pictured above (l to r) are: Tom Fortenberry and Ph.D. student Luke Pearson.

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*"The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" Psalm 27:1*

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## Old Truths for Today

By J.T. Morgan

### THE LORD'S HIGHWAY

All across America there are numerous super highways that crisscross the nation. These highways are designed and constructed by some of the best engineers in this country. If possible when we are traveling we want to travel on one of these nice 4-lane highways rather than the older 2-lane ones.

Now the Bible describes the Lord's highway, the people should live and conduct their lives. This is described by the apostle Paul as "a more excellent way". "And yet I show you a more excellent way". (1 Cor. 12:31).

The Lord's way is a more excellent way because it is a Highway of Holiness. The prophet Isaiah describes it this way, "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: whoever walks the road, although a fool, shall not go astray." (Isa.35:8). This way shall be for those who live righteous lives. The wicked shall not be found on this highway.

The Lord's Highway is the only way that leads to eternal life. Notice the words of Jesus, "Enter in at the strait gate for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction and there are many that go in by it, Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way that leads to life, and there are few that find it." (Matt.7:13-14). Since the Lord's way, the narrow way is the only way that leads to heaven and it is the "more excellent way".

The "more excellent way" was dedicated by the Lord Himself. It is a "new and living way". (Heb.10:19-20). Since this way is dedicated or consecrated by the blood of Christ all who travel it have been redeemed by His blood. (Col.1:14). All who travel the Lord's way compose the church which Jesus purchased with His blood. (Acts 20:28).

Through the years, men have designed ways in their efforts to reach heaven without traveling on the King's Highway, "the more excellent way". However, such ways only lead to destruction. (Matt.7:13). Jesus said, "I am THE WAY, the truth and the life: no man comes to the Father, but by me." (Jno.14:6). One who tries to enter heaven by any other way "is a thief and a robber". (Jno.10:1). Men's ways are contradictory and misleading, but in the "more excellent way" there is no contradiction or deception.

To enter the "more excellent way", the Lord's Way, one must (1) hear the gospel. (Rom.10:17); (2) believe (Mk 16:16); (3) repent of all sin (Acts 17:30); (4) confess faith in Christ (Rom.10:9-10; Acts 8:36); (5) be baptized "into Jesus Christ" "for the remission of sins" (Rom.6:3-6; Acts 2:38; 22:16).

Jeremiah stated, "O Lord I know that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walks to direct his own steps". (Jer.10:23). Since man cannot direct his own way to heaven, let us travel the Lord's Way, "the more excellent way", the "way of Holiness", the way dedicated with the blood of Jesus, the way set forth in the scriptures if we desire to reach heaven!

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# Wearing a face mask: Do's and don'ts

Special to SW Rankin News

While many businesses, public facilities as well as some cities and counties are requiring the use of a face mask, guidelines on the proper function and use of any type of face covering is essential. The Mississippi State Department of Health recommends following suggestions put in place by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The following is a summary of those recommendations.

To wear a face covering correctly, take the following steps: wash your hands before putting on your face covering; put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin; try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face and make sure you can breathe easily. Don't put the covering around your neck or up on your forehead. Don't touch the face covering, and, if you do, wash your hands. To remove a face mask properly, it should be done carefully, when at home: untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops; handle only by the ear loops or ties; fold outside corners together; place covering (if it is fabric)

in the washing machine (to learn more about how to wash cloth face coverings visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>) and be careful not to touch eyes, nose, and mouth when removing. Wash hands immediately after removing.

It is important to note that children under age two, or anyone who has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance, should not wear a face covering of any kind.

Use of a face mask can protect the wearer and also can protect others in the community, especially the most vulnerable. It helps protect others in case the wearer is infected but doesn't have symptoms, and wearing one in public can provide protection when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.

Cloth face coverings, essentially, are an additional step to help slow the spread of COVID-19 when combined with every day preventive actions and social distancing in public settings. For more information, visit <https://msdh.ms.gov> and <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>.



Special to SW Rankin News

## Richland-Florence Garden Club thanks police

Special to SW Rankin News

Recently the Richland-Florence Garden Club (R-FGC) separated into two teams to provide lunch for the Florence and the Richland Po-

lice Departments. It was the club's way of thanking and showing appreciation to the police officers for all they do. R-FGC credits Probitry Contracting Group for donating the pork loins-prepared by the Country Meat

Packers; McAlister's Deli for donating the tea; and the Garden Club ladies for preparing the vegetables, the casseroles, the bread, and the desserts.

Garden Club members who con-

tributed food items not pictured are: R-FGC Vice President Gaynell Ainsworth, Carol Azzone, Sandra Hales-Boyd, Elizabeth Hawthorne, Shannon Laseter, Marie Phillips, Beth Sanford and Linda Stringer.



Pictured (l to r) front row (kneeling): Detective Amanda Brown and Detective Coty Hamilton; middle row: Rowan Craft, Glenda Scoggins, Doris McBride, Lynn Wynne, R-FGC Recording Secretary Shirley Wilson, Lt. Mike Hilton, Chief Russell James, Assistant Chief Dalton McDonald, Detective James Barta and Lt. James Whittington; and back row: Officer Gena Pepper, R-FGC Treasurer Susan Harrison and R-FGC President Debbie Knight.



Photos special to SW Rankin News

Pictured (l to r) are: R-FGC member Susie Gulleddge, Police Chief Richard Thomas, R-FGC Treasurer Susan Harrison and R-FGC member Minetta Veazey.

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NEWS



Florence natives join Hinds Hi-Steppers



Shelby Bounds



Maddy Smith

Special to SW Rankin News

Hinds Community College recently announced the members of the Hi-Steppers precision dance team for 2020-21. Among the new members were three Florence, Mississippi residents: Shelby Bounds, Maddy Smith and Alex Thomas.

The Hinds Hi-Steppers are one of the oldest precision dance lines in the nation and perform at football games, exhibitions, parades, and community and charitable events. The Hi-Steppers are under the direction of Angela Hite of Raymond.



Alex Thomas

Photos special to SW Rankin News

Rounds places first in state-wide art contest

Special to SW Rankin News

State Treasurer David McRae recently announced the winners of the 2020 College Savings Mississippi Art Contest. Among the winners was Florence's very own Charles Rounds, who placed first in the ninth through twelve grade art contest. He will receive a scholarship in the form of a Mississippi Affordable College Savings (MACS) account.

A MACS account can be used for tuition, books, supplies, and certain room and board expenses. It can also be used for elementary and secondary tuition expenses.



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## PHS Senior named "Lindy Callahan Scholar-Athlete"



Special to SW Rankin News

Pearl High School (PHS) Senior Jay Ward was named a Lindy Callahan Scholar-Athlete. Sixteen seniors from across the state were selected as Lindy Callahan Scholar-Athletes for the Class of 2020. The honorees — one boy and one girl from each of the MHSAA's eight geographical districts — were chosen for their academic accomplishments as well as their participation in high school athletics and extracurricular activities.

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