#### **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

M-Braves unveil new food, beverage items - pg. 10

MDOT sponsors safety message contest in June - pg. 12



Vol. 6, No. 4 | May 2021

### **Pearl News**





### The Imagination Monster Project: PJHS and Children's of Mississippi join forces

By Alexa Haik

Art students at Pearl Junior High School (PJHS) recently partnered with the Children's of Mississippi Hospital to build 3D human-sized sculptures of monster drawings created by patients. At the helm of this unique project was Vashti Graham, a sixth-grade art fundamentals teacher at PJHS.

This was the first collaboration of its kind, and all told, there were over 300 art students who participated.

The original concept came from the Mississippi College (MC) Art Education Program, where Vashti Graham had been a student. She, along with her classmates, visited Batson Children's Hospital and met with nine patients who had agreed to participate in the project. Unfortunately, due to complications arising from COVID-19, the project had to be scrapped.

When Graham became a teacher at

PJHS this past fall, she decided the project was worth a second try, and with MC's permission, Graham completed as

set of four rainbow sculptures and the red pizza creature with Leo the dog at MC, was able to guide her sixth-grade



Special to The Pearl News

Members of the UMMC Child Life Specialist Team, from left, Michelle Chambers, Courtney Easterday, Pepper Weed-Cooper, Morgan Flournoy, Madeline Wilson, Tiffany Key, Cara Williams, Ashley Prendez, Erinn Funches and Kelsey Clark prepare for an art walk at the Batson Tower featuring life-size sculptures of patient's artwork Wednesday, May 19, 2021. The hand-made sculptures were made by Pearl Junior High art students.

a teacher what she began as a student. Graham, having already fabricated the art students to complete the pink girl, the butterfly, and the four-armed blue sculpture.

Graham then asked three other middle school art teachers to join the project. Cathryn Beck's seventh grade students completed the three headed monster that was started at MC. Sara Hall's eighth grade students completed the American superhero and party man. Kacee Hobson's creative project class completed the rainbow cloud.

Eventually, the fanciful three-dimensional creations became a gallery on wheels at Batson Children's Hospital where the sculptures are currently on display.

As for the students participating in the unique collaboration, Graham says, "They enjoyed being able to put their own twist and style on the projects. They liked that they had the ability to make another child feel loved and supported."

See page 17 for photospread.

## A guide to backyard critters, courtesy of Pearl Animal Control

By Officer Brandi Hankins of Pearl Police Department, Animal Control Division

In Rankin County, we are faced with four main wildlife nuisances. The skunk, the raccoon, the opossum and the armadillo. Lucky for us, they are all nocturnal. The annoying part is waking up to the holes in the yard, destroyed vegetables, garbage ransacked, etc. These animals all have advantages and disadvantages, but one thing is certain, we need them around. Exterminating them is not the key. Allowing these animals to do their jobs and letting them be on their way is definitely what we would like to see, but if it gets to be where they are attempting to lay roots, then humanely trapping them and allowing your animal control officers to relocate them is vital to our environment.

Thanks to their preference for a variety of foods, the skunk, the raccoon, opossum and armadillo all help aid in insect and rodent control. Skunks work

to keep insect populations under control by dining on critters like grasshoppers, beetles, crickets, and wasps. Second, they eat vegetation like fruits and berries, which assists with both the spread of seeds and in the cleanup of rotting fruit.

Raccoons are scavengers; they play an important role in cleaning up dead animals. They also dine on other species we consider pests, including snakes, frogs, lizards, and rats. Raccoons don't exclusively eat meat, either. Like skunks, raccoons are omnivores that also feast on berries and nuts, which in turn helps plants spread seeds. They may be known for making messes, but they do a good job of cleaning things up elsewhere. A single opossum can consume 5,000 ticks each year, and collectively, opossums kill over 90 percent of ticks that could otherwise easily spread dangerous illness. Despite the frustration over their denning habits, opossums actually protect us.

Armadillos are beneficial because

I'M YOUR LOCAL OPOSSUM!

I'M NATURE'S
PEST CONTROL &
CLEAN-UP CREW

I'm naturally immune to rabies

Just one of me eats up to 5,000
ticks per year

I can't catch or carry Lyme Disease

I also eat insects, spiders, small rodents, and dead stuff!

IF YOU SEE ME, KINDLY ISLORE ME.
I MEAN YOU NO HARM

Special to The Pearl News

they eat insects and other invertebrates. Armadillos are nearly blind and deaf and generally harmless, using escape as their first line of defense. They rely on their keen sense of smell to monitor their environment.

These are not animals to try to make contact with or keep as pets, as they do carry different types of diseases. These are definitely animals that you don't need to allow to stay for long periods of time, as well. A couple of ways to ensure you aren't enabling them to stay around is: Do not feed outdoors. Many people think if they see cats, they should leave food out for them. Please don't do this; not only can you receive a citation for doing this, but you are actually bringing wildlife onto your property, and they will likely stay. Secure garbage cans. It goes without saying that plastic garbage bags aren't secure enough - you need a heavy duty plastic or metal trash can with a well-fitting lid. Although it may not seem like it at the time, animals are pretty logical: they want warm shelter from the elements, food, and water. By making sure your property provides none of these things, you maximize the chances that any curious animals sniffing around will quickly move on.

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# Pearl News 4





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# "8 Ball" retires, Captain Hamilton's story

Special to The Richland News

Captain John Hamilton, originally from Seminary, Mississippi, moved to Richland at the young age of sixteen, where he has remained ever since. He completed school through his eighth-grade year, at which point he chose to drop out.

"You think you got the world by the tail," says Hamilton, "you go out there and you [think you] don't need an education...to make a few hundred dollars a week, when you don't have any bills... but then you start getting house notes and car notes and a family.

Hamilton began carving his own path by securing employment with Hall's Paneling & Floor Covering, a business located in Pearl. Hamilton explains that "I kindof finagled the numbers a little bit so they would hire me; they thought I was seven-

teen fixing to be eighteen." Nevertheless, the relationship was a supportive one.

"Those people were good enough to give me evenings off so I could go study for my GED." Hamilton was eventually able to obtain his GED through the Rankin County Board of Education pro-

With educational obligations fulfilled, Hamilton began seeking out his vocation, his calling, if you will. It so happened that directly adjacent to Hall's Paneling & Floor Covering was the Pearl Fire Sta-

"I could hear their bell go off, and every time I could get to the front door, I would watch it pull out, and it just interested

So that was it. When Hamilton reached the age of eighteen years, he became a volunteer firefighter with the Richland



Special to The Richland News

John "8 Ball" Hamilton

Fire Department. From that point forward, he did not look back. Hamilton remained with RFD until March of this year. All told, Hamilton accumulated thirty-two and a half years with the Richland Fire Department.

He celebrated his retirement on Saturday, February 27, surrounded by family, friends, as well as the brotherhood of firefighters who, for over thirty years, have served as a second family to Hamilton. RFD posted the following announcement on Facebook, "Captain John '8-Ball' Hamilton retired after thirty-two years of service. We enjoyed a private celebration with him at the station. We will be having a public retirement party in the future for him, and we will post the date when that is decided. Thanks for your service, Captain Hamilton, and may God bless you in your retirement!"

See page 4 for full story, "RFD veteran retires after thirty-two years of service."

## RHS selected for 2021 Partnership Excellence Award

Special to The Richland News

Richland High School (RHS) recently earned the prestigious Mississippi Association of Partners in Education (MAPE) 2021 Partnership Excellence Award for its partnership with the Richland Fire Department (RFD).

It came together through the efforts of RFD's Chief Brandon Weems and Captain Micah Sanford, who initially reached out to RHS with a plan. The plan was intended to develop an internal pool of applicants who would be trained and ready for employment after graduation. This coincided nicely with the students who had expressed an interest in becoming a firefighter as a career choice.

Qualified firemen from the RFD provided specialized training to RHS students, including: CPR certification; safety, search and rescue procedures; emergency removal of victims from





cars; proper technique for the use of rescue equipment; physical strength training; and fire suppression skills.

RHS is a Title I that serves nearly 800 students from grades seven through twelve, with about a sixty-three percent free and reduced lunch ratio. Many of



Images special to The Richland News

the students from Richland graduate and immediately enter the workforce.

To prepare students for this transition, RHS has continually sought assistance from members of the community to have their graduating seniors career/college ready. As a direct result, the graduation rate has increased over the past years from sixty-percent to nearly ninety-eight percent. A key factor was the development of career interest surveys that then developed into a curriculum and eventually created a clear pathway for students to take in pursuit of their career of

Due to the success of this collaboration, as well as a previously established collaboration with Hinds Community College (what is known as the Business academy), RHS is currently exploring ways to increase the scope of the program to include other careers in the law enforcement cluster, potentially developing the program into a certified academy.

See page 5 for companion article, "MAPE partnerships designed for student success."

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## MHS receives funding for new DON'T QUIT! Fitness Center

Special to The Florence News

Governor Tate Reeves and fitness icon Jake (Body by Jake) Steinfeld, Chairman of the National Foundation for Governors' Fitness Councils (NFGFC), recently announced the three Mississippi schools that were selected to each receive a stateof-the-art \$100,000 DON'T QUIT! Fitness Center.

The multi-million dollar DON'T QUIT! Campaign selected McLaurin Attendance Center in Florence and as one of the three most outstanding schools in the state for demonstrating leadership in getting and keeping their students fit.

Established in 2012, NFGFC has so far partnered with forty U.S. governors to gift "state-of-the-art fitness centers to students across the country." According to the NFGFC website, their mission, quite simply, "is to build a nation of the fittest, healthiest kids in the world."

"I can't wait to see what our teachers and students can do with these new fitness centers," said Governor Reeves. "I'm grateful to Jake and his entire team for their focus on instilling healthy habits in our young people. Their hard work and dedication are helping provide crucial





Interior layout of "DON'T QUIT!" Fitness Centers.

building blocks for our Mississippi kids to become healthy adults. I am proud that Mississippi is able to participate in this wonderful initiative!"

"We had an overwhelming response

Photos special to The Florence News

from elementary and middle schools throughout the great state of Mississippi. None of this would have been possible

without the incredible support of Governor Reeves, who helped make this campaign a huge success by putting the health and well-being of children first," said Mr. Steinfeld. "Three schools really embodied our mission of building a nation of the fittest, healthiest kids in the world. I'm thrilled to announce that Jefferson County Junior High School, McLaurin Attendance Center and Woolfolk Middle School are all being awarded a brand new \$100,000 DON'T QUIT! Fitness Centers. Congratulations to all, we look forward to visiting these three schools during our ribbon cutting ceremonies this fall!"

Each fitness center is financed through public/private partnerships with companies like The Coca-Cola Company, Amerigroup Foundation, Wheels Up and Nike, and does not rely on taxpayer dollars or state funding. Fitness in Motion provides all the fitness equipment, which is manufactured right here in the United States.

For more information about NFGFC, visit www.natgovfit.org.

See page 15 for a message from Jake Steinfeld: DON'T QUIT!

# MS Delta CC graduates a Florence native

Special to The Florence News

Mississippi Delta Community College (MDCC) held its Health Science Pinning and Graduation Ceremony Thursday, May 6, at 9 a.m. at Jim Randall Stadium on the Moorhead Campus. The ceremony included graduates from the Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Program, the Dental Hygiene Technology Program, the Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT) Program and the Radiologic Technology Program.

The processional was performed by Beverly Terrell, and Derrick Fields provided the invocation, with opening remarks by MDCC President Dr. Tyrone Jackson.

In total, sixty-nine students graduated from one of four health science programs. Each program prepares students for an exciting healthcare career. Graduates of these programs are awarded an Associate of Applied Science Degree from Mississippi Delta Community Col-

Anna Broome of Florence graduated from the Radiologic Technology Program. This program provides a general education and clinical training program that prepares students for a career in radiography. The technical program combines theory through traditional classroom instruction and laboratory experience on campus and clinical experiences in affiliated hospitals to provide opportunities for students



Anna Broome, 2021 graduate of the Radiologic Technology Program at MDCC.

to develop skills needed to enter the Radiology profession. The Radiologic Technology Program commences in August of each year and runs for twenty-two consecutive months, with a projected graduation date in May.

For more information about the MDCC health science programs, visit www.msdelta.edu/programs/ health-sciences/.

Students interested in enrolling in a health care program should register for orientation by visiting start.msdelta.edu. Orientation will be held in the J. T. Hall Coliseum on the Moorhead Campus of MDCC.

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## RFD veteran retires after thirty-two years of service

Special to SW Rankin News

Captain John Hamilton of Richland Fire

By Alexa Haik

The nickname, 8 Ball, came from the imagination of John Hamilton himself.

"I was about sixteen, right after I moved up here. We used to hang out at the South Gate Mini-Mart because they had a little game room...like an arcade, and of course before the day of cell phones and pagers, [people] used to call on the payphone. People would call up there and say, 'hey who is hanging out tonight?' I would answer the payphone 'Joe's Pool Hall, 8 Ball speaking.' It was just a joke, and it stuck. Now, probably ninety-percent of the people know me as 8 Ball."

Originally, Hamilton served as a volunteer for the Richland Fire Department (RFD). After approximately two and a half years serving the community in that capacity, the fire chief asked Hamiton to consider going full-time. The qualifications where simple: '8 Ball, if you can run a mile and a half in thirteen minutes and get the entrance into the academy, I'll hire you.' And he did. Hamilton was officially hired as a full-time firefighter for RFD on October 15 of 1989.

As a new hire, back in the late eighties, things were different, to say the least. For starters, the fire department consisted of a combination of volunteers and paid career

be on duty twenty-four hours a day. When they hired Hamilton, he became the third man, "they were growing...trying to get more men per shift."

Hamilton has watched as things have slowly improved over the years, as the city has responded to challenging situa-

In the late eighties, early nineties, Richland saw its fair share of devastating car accidents. At the time, the city had a total of three red lights on Highway 49. This, unfortunately, allowed traffic to travel at a relatively high rate of speed, which inevitably led to many tragic outcomes.

Department. "We used to have the truck stop on 49, and that always caused major car wrecks all the time, and we used to have to use the jaws of life to cut people out of cars quite often. They would cross the southbound lane and get into north-bound [traffic], and they didn't realize the speed of the cars going over the hill. I mean, it would be a T-bone [collision] or [a vehicle extraction] under an 18-wheeler all the time."

Since then, "they put the center median on the highway, and it just helped...

we don't have that many bad car wrecks anymore. They have since added the one at the curve and one at Harper Street, and that has slowed traffic down significantly. So, a lot of our wrecks are low impact. I've seen it come a long way."

He also remembers responding to multi-

ple mobile home fires early in his career. To date, Hamilton credits enhanced building code requirements for the significant decrease in these types of emergencies.

While Captain Hamilton has many memories to share from his time with

RFD, good and bad, there is one that stands out above the rest. "When me and my wife

were sitting at the ball field one day and just out of the blue, just sitting in our chair watching baseball, I said, 'you know what? Out of all the lives that I have seen leave this world, before I retire, I would love to deliver one baby.' About a year later, a young lady was coming through north and pulled into the 49 Tire Firestone and called 911, and I think it was probably one thirty, two in the morning. She didn't make it to the hospital in time, and I got to deliver a little baby boy. It probably wasn't six months later, a lady was coming to the hospital in labor. She pulled over in front of the school because the traffic was heavy. I delivered another little boy right in front of the school...the good Lord didn't bless me with just one delivery, he blessed me with two. That was probably one of the highlights of my

As of early 2021, Captain John Hamilton hung up his gear and signed off as a thirty-two-year veteran of the Richland Fire Department (RFD).

As far as plans for the future, "I haven't really written anything out in stone yet...probably do some camping. I want to spend a lot of time with my grandkids. We're big outdoors people, you know; we hunt, we fish, four-wheelers. So, I want to do that. I need to get caught up on some chores around the house and stuff like that. I got enough to keep me busy.'

What will he miss the most in retirement? "The brotherhood...we spend more time with these other firefighters than we do with our own wife or kids. The brotherhood, the comraderie, it's just being with your fellow firefighters...I can't even explain to you how close we are. Even though we argue sometimes, and we might disagree a lot, the brotherhood of firefighters is probably one of the closest relationships a person could ever have."







## MAPE partnerships designed for student success

Special to SW Rankin News

Mississippi Association of Partners in Education (MAPE) has served as a network of educators and community partners since 1984, and, is the only remaining statewide partnership organization of its kind in the U.S. They since received 501(c)(3) non-profit status in 1994. Their mission: to be "committed solely to providing training and materials to help build local support for the success of all students."

This year, Richland High School (RHS) and Richland Fire Department (RFD) were the honored recipients of the 2021 Partnership in Excellence award. They were recognized because of their "strong participation from students, teachers, parents, and the community," as well as the atmosphere they cultivated, in MAPE's opinion, "to still have room to grow their partnership in their community." MAPE's evaluation

was based on the application submitted by Richland Fire Department, as well as the judge's scores of the application.

The Partnership in Excellence award is given annually to partnerships that

Awards for Outstanding School-Community Partnerships.

How it works: Each school/school district forms a partnership within their community; goals for each partnership



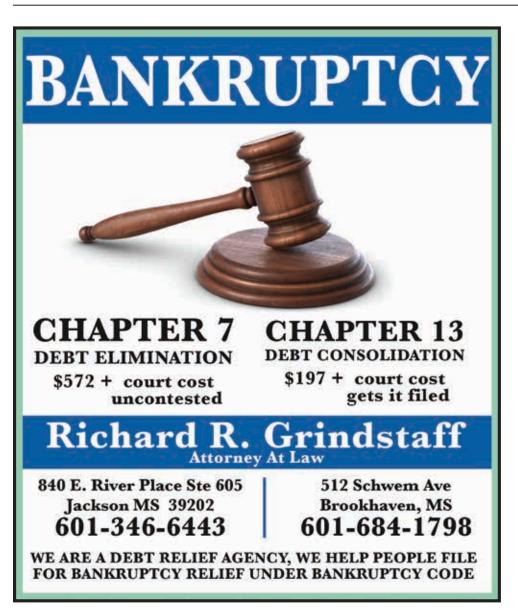
*Special to* SW Rankin News

have demonstrated strong participation from students, teachers, parents, and the community, and still have room to grow their partnership in the community. It is given as part of the overall Governor's are set and maintained by the school/ school district/community, and depends on the goals of the project that the partnership has formed to support; and each partnership is responsible for establishing and adhering to their own timeline. MAPE does not require partnerships to follow any one formula.

MAPE does provide guidelines for how to apply for the award. To qualify, partnerships must be between schools and communities, and show a strong benefit for the students, and meet a need that the school has identified.

Any school/school district in the state who is a member of MAPE may form a partnership and apply for the award. Many MAPE members are members due to their membership in PREPS, the Program of Research and Evaluation for Public Schools. https://www.mspreps.org/. Once a district joins PREPS for the year, their membership with MAPE is covered, and they immediately begin receiving the benefits of MAPE membership.

For further information about the Richland collaboration, visit: www.mapems. org/blogs/partnership-excellence-awards/richland-high-school.







## **Local Churches**

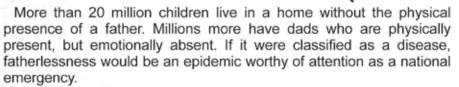




## Old Truths for Today

"ACT LIKE MEN" A Father's Day Message

J.T. Morgan



In 1 Corinthians 16:13 the apostle Paul commands the Corinthians to "be brave" (NKJV) also translated as: "quit you like men" (ASV, KJV); "act like men" (ESV, NASB); "be courageous" (NRSV); "be men of courage" (NIV). The Greek word is defined by Thayer: "to make a man of or make brave; to show one's self a man, be brave". In the New Testament men of God are often commanded to behave a certain way. How does one act like a man?

As a husband, a man is to love his wife. (Eph. 5:25-33). A real man is one who unselfishly loves his wife. He treats her with respect. Give her the affection that she is due. (1 Cor. 7:3). The husband should seek to understand his wife and give her honor. (1 Pet. 3:7-9). A real man is one who is considerate and seeks to exalt his wife.

When children come along, acting like a man involves responsibilities. As a father, you have the responsibility to teach your children in the ways of the Lord. (Eph. 6:4). Abraham was expected to be in control of his children and household. (Gen. 18:19). God commanded Israel to train their children. (Deut. 6:6-9). Joshua was a good example of one who acted like a man. (Josh. 24:15). Fathers who act like men will provide spiritual leadership and training for his children.

As a child (son or daughter) one is to honor their parents. This is a duty for all children. (Eph. 6:1-3). It is a duty that when the parents are old they will provide for them. (1 Tim. 5:8). Children are to support their mothers and grandmothers. (1 Tim. 5:16). A good son or daughter will see that their parents are cared for.

Sadly, the world pictures a different picture of what it means to be a man. Will we who are men be brave enough to behave the way God wants us to, and not just imitate those "models" of what the world shows as manly. "But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness..." (1 Tim. 6:12)

Florence Church of Christ, P.O. Box 277, 220 White Street Florence, Ms 39073 Visitors are always welcome!

# Pearl Chamber of Commerce hosts "Shop-A-Palooza"



Special to SW Rankin News

Special to SW Rankin News

Saturday, June 12, from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m., Pearl Chamber of Commerce will be hosting Shop-A-Palooza, with arts and crafts as well as boutique shopping, food vendor trucks and live music. The event will be held in the parking lot of Trustmark Park at 1 Braves Way in Pearl.

Vendor applications are now available at www.pearlms.org. There is a \$125 fee for merchandise vendors and a \$200 fee for food vendors. Fees may be paid via cash, check or credit card. A description of the merchandise to be sold is required. Food vendors must specify whether they will be using a food truck, trailer or tent. Vendor requests are allowable, and may be specified on the vendor form.

Vendors will be responsible for bringing their own set-up materials, including: tents, chairs, racks, shelving, etc. There will be no electricity available at the event, and those considering the use of a generator for electrical needs must be approved before-hand. Loud generators are prohibited.

Vendors may begin setting up on the afternoon of Friday, June 11, weather permitting. For local residents, The Chamber recommends bringing tents and other large items in advance, and follow with merchandise set-up Saturday morning.

Vendors may pull up at their designated space, but once unloading is completed, the vehicle must be relocated prior to opening for business.

For more information contact the Chamber at 601-939-3338.

## **Obituaries**

NAME	AGE	CITY	DOD	Funeral Home
Kathryn "Kitty" Ifkovitz	87	Tucson, Az	3/21/2020	Chancellor Funeral Home
Rex Edwin Allen	64	Florence, MS	5/3/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
George L. Patterson, Jr.	78	Florence, MS	5/8/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Ela Belle West Barron	97	Florence, MS	5/10/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Katie Louise Stegall Kirby	88	Florence, MS	5/12/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Billy Eugene Ball	65	Florence, MS	5/20/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Katye L. Cooper Summerlin	88	Florence, MS	5/22/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Anita Kennedy Adcock	67	Florence, MS	5/26/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home



## Pearl Pirates take home MHSAA State Championship

Special to SW Rankin News

It was a big night for the Pearl Pirate Track & Field team on Saturday, May 1, when the Pearl Boys Team took home the 2021 MHSAA 6A Track & Field State Championship for the third straight year. It also marks the seventeenth State Track & Field Championship, overall, for the boys team. This totals fifty-eight State Championships overall for the Boys and Girls Track & Field and Cross Country Program at Pearl. The girls also placed as runners-up to the current state champs, Clinton High School.

Although Pearl Pirate Track & Field team member Corvin Johnson was heavily favored in all events, he pulled a hamstring in the 100 meters and was unable to compete in his other events - the 200 meters and 400 meters. Johnson was the number one ranked runner in 6A in the 100 meter dash, 200 meter dash, 400 meter dash and the 110 meter hurdles.

The Pearl Boys team placed first in the final 2021 mile-split overall state ranking (all classifications), while winning the District, Region, South State and State Championships.

Pearl's Individual State Champions for boys included: Leo McIntyre, who won the Shot Put with a throw of 55 feet; Niquez Wade, who won the discus with a throw of 161 feet 7 inches and is the back to back 6A State Champion as well as the top discus thrower in the state this year; Corvin Johnson, who won the 110 meter Hurdles with a state best time of 14.38, and is the top 110m hurdler in the state this year; and Jerry Johnson, who won the long jump with a score of 23 feet 4.5 inches. Johnson's best jump this year, of 23 feet 5 inches, has him ranked number one in the state.

The Individual State Champions for the girls team were: Taylor Stratton, who won the 100m dash with a time of 12.51; and Thai Douglas, who won the 100m Hurdles with a time of 15.25.

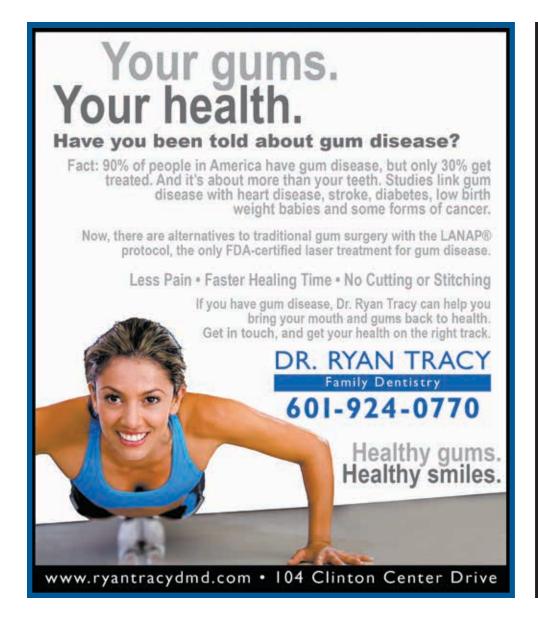
Head Track & Field/Cross Country Coach Chris Barnett had this to say about his teams' performance: "Our athletes performed well all year. We were able to overcome losing Corvin Johnson early after he won the 110 meter hurdles. I told the team after he went down that we had to step up for Corvin. It's tough to lose a kid that loves and competes the way Corvin does, especially in a Championship Meet. I'm proud our guys stepped up and we're able to over come."

Follow Pearl Pirate Track & Field team on Twitter - @PearlTrackXC, Instagram – PearlTrackXC and Facebook at Pearl Pirate Track & Field/ Cross Country.



Photos special to SW Rankin News







## Central Mississippi 7v7 Classic hosted by RHS Boys' Soccer

Special to SW Rankin News

The First Annual Central Mississippi 7v7 Classic, hosted by Richland High School Boys' soccer team, is scheduled to kick-off Monday, June 14, at the Richland Community Center Soccer Fields. This event is open to any and all junior high, high school, club soccer and adult teams interested in competing in 7v7 soccer games.

The event was originally imagined by the Richland boys soccer coaches, Coach Corey Myers and Coach John Adams, as a way to "continue to grow our soccer program." Myers says locale played a part in the planning as well.

"The city of Richland, being centrally located on Highway 49, is a great location for teams from all surrounding areas, as well as northern and southern cities, to meet centrally and play teams they may not normally play."

However, it is not only physical location that makes the City of Richland a prime spot for this type of competition, it is also about the people.

"Richland is a community that cares deeply about soccer. We have awe-



Special to SW Rankin News

some support for our soccer program from the Richland Parks and Rec department as they are allowing us to use their fields," says Myers.

Organized by the Richland Soccer Program and Richland High parents, also offers unique opportunity to provide competitive summer soccer matches for local school and club teams in preparation for the upcoming school season. Each team

the event

will play three games and go on to compete in a single elimination

tournament to determine a champion for each bracket. The competitions are separated into three divisions/brackets: the gold division for adult and high-level high school teams; the silver division for lower-level high school or junior varsity teams; and the red division for middle school/ junior high teams.

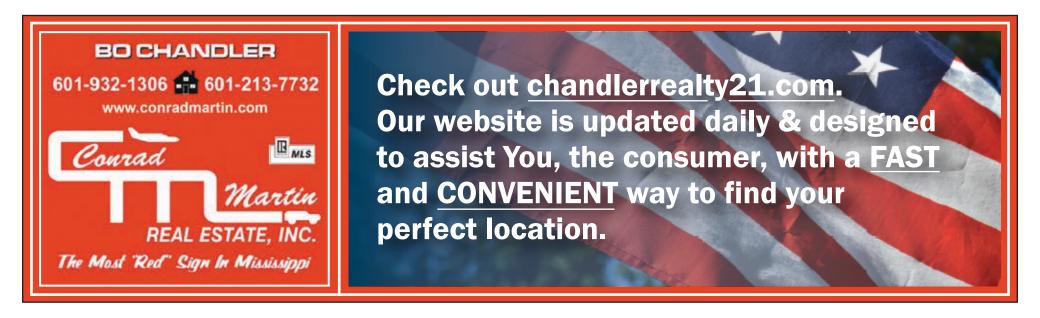
Concession stands will also be onsite with various food options such as: burgers, hot dogs and authentic Hispanic dishes.

As far as plans for the future, Myers says, "We hope this inaugural event is a success and will continue as an annual event."

This is a team event. The cost for participation is \$20 per registrant. Those interested may register online via the Richland High School Boys' soccer team social media pages or contact the Richland Boys soccer coaches, Coach Corey Myerscor202@rcsd.ms, or Coach John Adams-joh204@rcsd.ms. The deadline for registration is Friday, June 11.

Payments may be mailed to Richland Rangers Men Soccer, 331 Adams Street, Richland, Mississippi 39218 or Venmo @rangermens (Sandie Lee).

In the event of inclement weather, the Central Mississippi 7v7 Classic will be moved to Thursday, July 1.





## Upcoming events, latest news from Florence's Troop 85

Special to SW Rankin News

The Troop 85 Rummage Sale and Hamburger Plate Fundraiser will be held Saturday, June 26, at Victory Church, on 125 Hwy 469 North in Florence. The rummage sale begins in the church parking lot at 6 a.m., and

JUNE 26, 2021

VICTORY CMC

125 HWY 469 N

FLORENCE, MS

BEGINS AT 6:00AM

TROOP 85

**FUNDRAISER** 

S7.00 EACH

hamburger plate sales begin at 10:30 a.m. Each plate will include a hamburger, chips and a cookie at a cost of \$7.

For information requests, email 85scoutingfamily@gmail.com or message the "Troop 85 Florence, MS" Facebook page.

The Pack 85 cub scouts held their annual Pinewood Derby on March 27. Pictured (I to r) are the various race winners, front row: Troy Mitchell, Marc Mitchell, Maddox Spencer, Garrett Gammill and Copper Thurman; middle row: Drew Overstreet, Jase Morgan, Harleigh Short and Charles McGuire; and back row: David Dixon, Jonathan Pritchett, Pack Leader Jason Rideout and Tyler Gammill.







## M-Braves unveil new food, beverage items

Special to SW Rankin News

The M-Braves are excited to announce several new additions to the fan experience at Trustmark Park.

"We are excited to be introducing these new food and beverage options to M-Braves fans as we welcome everyone back to Trustmark Park for the 2021 season," said Vice President and General Manager Pete Laven. "From local flavors to brands enjoyed in stadiums nationwide, these new offerings are presented with the overall fan experience in mind."

The new options include:

A 360-degree indoor/outdoor bar: The Farm Bureau Grill, located behind the right-field wall at Trustmark Park, is now equipped with a brand new full-service 360-degree, indoor/outdoor bar. Fans can enjoy spirits inside the grill or walk up and enjoy a cocktail on the patio, all with picturesque views of the field.

Beer and spirits: The lineup for the 2021 season highlights several great Budweiser products, including a full line of Bud Light Seltzer flavors. Also new to the beer roster are Wicked Weed, Yuengling Flight, Golden Road Mango Cart, Southern Prohibition Crowd Control, and Elysian Space Dust, to name a few.



Special to SW Rankin News

M-Braves have also partnered with The Pinot Project to carry their pinot grigio, pinot noir, and rose France, which are offered in the glass, bottle, and can.

Concessions: The M-Braves culinary staff are also proud to announce the addition of "Hammer's Grill," a salute to Hall-of-Famer and Atlanta Braves legend Hank Aaron. There you can try the new "Churgers" and "Chompers." The "Churger" includes a beef patty and grilled chicken breast and pepper jack cheese. The "Chomper" consists of a beef patty, sliced bologna, pepper jack cheese, and coleslaw. Also available are plain ol' fried bologna sandwiches.

The Southern Comfort/Hickory Stand located on the first base concourse offers several fried food items, such as fried okra, fried pickles, and catfish basket served with jalapeno hush-puppies. It's also now a go-to spot for barbeque.

Fans may also try the new "Frenchy's Fried Tater Bar," a salute to former M-Brave Jeff Francoeur, featuring French fries, tater tots, and waffle fries offered with an assortment of toppings.

Kayem, All-Beef Hot Dogs, also served at Fenway Park in Boston, will be served at Trustmark Park and are made with premium cuts of beef. To add a local flavor, M-Braves will offer Country Pleasin' Sausage at Trustmark Park this season. Various hickory smoked flavors will be available for fans coming straight from their state-of-the-art meat processing plant in Florence, Mississippi.

The Nacho Mama's Stand down the first base line will now offer walking tacos, a mix of chicken or beef, a Top N' Go bag of Frito-Lay chips, including Fritos and Doritos.

Mississippi Braves single-game tickets are on sale now. Fans can purchase tickets to all sixty home games by calling the box office at 888-BRAVES4, or via Ticketmaster. All fans are strongly encouraged to manage their tickets through their mobile devices.

Fans are also encouraged to purchase tickets in advance to guarantee their seat and save from the day-of-game price. The M-Braves will work closely with the Atlanta Braves and local health officials to ensure the safest fan experience possible.

Mississippi Braves fans can guarantee their seat with 2021 season tickets. Also currently available are flex plans, group tickets, suite nights, and sponsorship opportunities. View ticket options at www.milb.com/mississippi/tickets. For more information, fans are encouraged to visit mississippibraves.com or call 888-BRAVES4.





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ment you by your lives it may be a consistent of the consistent of

### Florentine Club visits Welty Gardens | RHS names "Students of the Month"



Pictured (f to b) along hand rail, left side, are: Jeannie Pittman, Kathy Hilton, Betty Harpe and Judy Webb; and (f to b) right side, are: Club President Dianne Roberts, C. J. Applewhite and Dee Payne

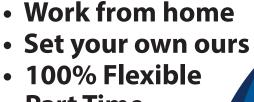
#### Special to SW Rankin News

Members of the GFWC-MFWC Florentine Club of Florence toured the Eudora Welty Gardens for their April 16 meeting. Jessica Hilton spoke to the club about women's clubs and the gardens. The members met afterwards at Smokehouse BBQ in Florence to discuss their May 22 bingo fundraiser for the club.

# NEWS ICHLAND **Pearl News FLORENCE**

## The Southwest Rankin News is now hiring full-time & part-time:

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Pictured (I to r) are the April Students of the Month, front row: Braxton Shields and Letty Sanchez; and back row: Kaygan Harrison and Jasmine Nguyen. Not pictured are Kennedy Knippers and Arely Diaz.



Pictured (I to r) are the February Students of the Month, front row: Mason Moha, Catalion Campusano and Brenna Sanford; and back row: Ben Bates, Destiny Lesh and Matthew Bass.



Special to SW Rankin News

Pictured (I to r) are the March Students of the Month, front row: Shelby Shields, Darrin Davidson and Alexis McGowan; and back row: Jeremy Thomas, Chloe Knippers and Ivan Thames.

#### Special to SW Rankin News

Richland High School (RHS) recently named the February, March and April 2021 Students of the Month.

These students are nominated and selected by their teachers for such qualities as dependability, attitude, leadership, attendance, and class work.

# MDOT sponsors safety message contest in June

YOUR MESSAGE

GOES HERE

Special to SW Rankin News

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) is once again sponsoring a Safety Message Contest, which will run through June 17.

"Each time MDOT sponsors this contest, the messages pour in from the public and they continue to get more creative," said Jeffery Altman, P.E., Acting MDOT Executive Director.

"It's been such a successful way to engage with the public and

help remind motorists of the importance of practicing safe driving when behind the wheel."

Over ninety percent of vehicle crashes are caused by driver decisions, such as speeding, driving aggressively, distracted or impaired. MDOT's witty traffic safety messages are part of an effort to

encourage drivers to change their actions behind the wheel. The messages are often related to current events and pop culture.

There is no limit to the number of messages submitted, but there are some

guidelines to remember: the message must relate to traffic safety; signs can only accommodate three lines and twentyone characters per line, including spaces; hashtags, phone numbers and website addresses are not allowed; and no emojis.

After entries have been submitted, MDOT will select the top five messages, and each will be displayed on overhead signs along Mississippi highways. The winning messages will also be posted on MDOT social media.

Special to SW Rankin News

To enter, head over to GoMDOT.com/MDOTcontest.

# Hinds Community College graduates nursing/allied health students



Taylor Bowman of Pearl graduated in one of three graduation ceremonies at Hinds Community College on May 13. She received an Associated Degree in Nursing. "It was hard but it was worth it," she said. Bowman, twenty-four, has two children, including one she had during nursing school.



Photos special to SW Rankin New

Pictured (I to r) are: Anna Grace Attkisson of Brandon, Brittany Rawson of Pearl, Reagan Johnson of Brandon, Olivia Allen of Wesson and Samantha Stovall of Florence, with Stovall's dad Donald Stovall. The women received an Associate Degree in Nursing from Hinds Community College on May 13.



In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972 of the Higher Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and other applicable Federal and State Acts, Hinds Community College offers equal education and employment opportunities and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability or veteran status in its educational programs and activities. The following have been designated to handle inquiries regarding these policies: EEOC Compliance: Sherry Franklin, Vice President of Instruction/Career & Technical Education, Box 1003, Utica, MS 39175; Phone: 601.885.7002 or Email: EEOC@hindscc.edu.



### MISSISSIPPI CHAMPIONSHIP HOT AIR BALLOON FEST

Thursday, July 1

6-9 p.m. | Launch Party on the Historic Courthouse Square in Canton Enjoy Shopping and Ballons on the Square featuring Dr. Zarr's Amazing Funk Monsters!

Friday. July 2

**6 a.m.** | Competition Flight at the Canton Mulipurpose Canter.

Join us for a night of fun at Nortpark Mall

**5 p.m.** | Dialogue on the Hill (Chicago Tribute Band)

**6:30 p.m.** | Blues Boys **8-8:30 p.m.** | Balloons Glow

Saturday. July 3

**7 a.m.** | Ballon Chase Bike Ride (6 a.m. regristration) & Competition Flight at the Canton Mu-ltipurpose Center

**6:30-9 p.m.** | Mississippi Championship Hot Air Balloon Fest at Canton Multipurpose Center

**6:30 p.m.** | Balloon Chase Run/Walk & Kids One Mile Run (5:30p.m. registration)

7:30 p.m. | Balloon Glow Regular Shapes with Special Music by DJ William Griffin

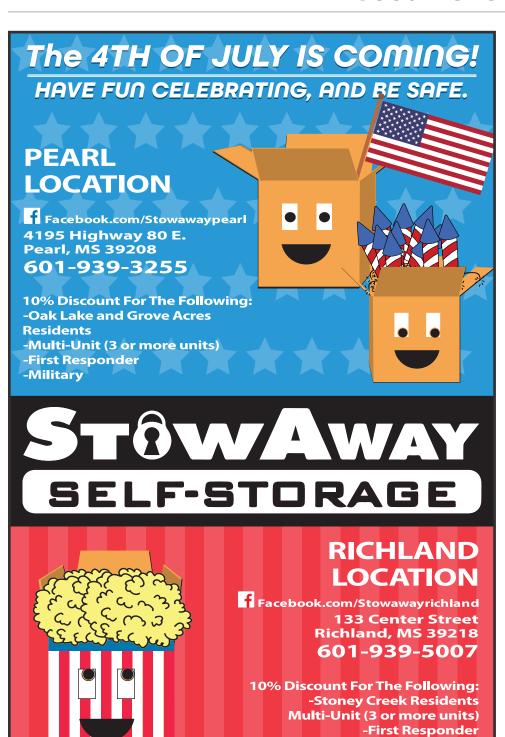
8 p.m. | Good Samaritan's \$5,000 Gold ball Drop Fundraiser

9 p.m. | Fireworks



**FOR MORE INFORMATION: CANTONTOURISM.COM | 601.859.1307 | 800.844.3369** 

Presented by Canton Tourismin collaboration with: The City of Canton | The City of Ridgeland The Good Samaritan Center, Mid-Mississippi Balloon Association





#### PHS's Farrar named Lindy Callahan Scholar-Athlete



Pearl High School (PHS) senior Claire Farrar was named a Lindy Callahan Scholar-Athlete. Sixteen seniors from across the state were selected as Lindy Callahan Scholar-Athletes for the Class of 2021. 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

## Mississippi Angels play strong in championship



The Lady Angels attending the Championship Game versus the Mississippi Bobcats at the Hoops on the Bayou tournament in Covington, Louisiana. They were 2-0 on the day defeating teams from Louisiana



Photos special to SW Rankin News

The Mississippi Angels returned home as runner-ups. Their stats were as follows: Tournament 1: no wins; Tournament 2: 1 win. Semi-Final appearance; Tournament 3: 3 wins; and played for the Championship, finishing as runner-up.

# A message from Jake Steinfeld: DON'T QUIT!

By Alexa Haik

Born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, Jake Steinfeld was an overweight kid, who also had a bad stutter.

As Steinfeld explains, these issues made him stand out for all the wrong reasons.

"I grew up with the John F. Kennedy President's fitness challenge. I remember wanting to get that patch to put on my gym shirt, the hundredth percentile patch, and I used to run the fifty-yard dash in three days. So, I never got the patch, and it was embarrassing, so not only was I overweight and I stuttered, but I was one of the only kids who didn't have a patch on my gym shirt."

At the age of thirteen, Steinfeld's father was inspired to buy him a set of weights. And, suddenly, the narrative shifted. It took some time, but he began to respond to life from the perspective of someone dedicated to fitness.

At the age of fourteen, working from this new outlook on life, he tried out for the basketball team, "cause I really loved basketball. I went out for the team, and I got cut. And like all of us, and once again, life is about moments; some times are great, some times are not so great. This was one that was not so great, and a friend gave me a poem called 'Don't Quit.'...I could have easily taken that poem and thrown it away, because I was embarrassed. My buddies made the team, and I am looking for my name on the gym wall, and it wasn't there. And I read the poem. This poem changed my life; it became a bible verse to me."

Eventually, after time, dedication, and a new "don't quit" perspective, permanent change took root inside and out,

"Not only did the weights build my body, but it built my confidence and self-esteem."

Steinfeld continues, at the age of sixty-three, to love working out, to love fitness, to love what it has done for him. "I have been very blessed in the fitness industry. I was the first guy to really do personal fitness training and made it an occupation. I parlayed that famous by association with all the people that I trained, Steven Speilberg, Harrison Ford, Priscilla Presley, Bette Midler, Warren Beatty, and Barbra Streisand and all these incredible folks. I learned a great lesson: that they are no different than us. The only difference is that they had a dream and never quit on their dream and never took no for an answer."

Then, a friend who also happened to be the current Governor of California, Arnold Schwarzenegger, asked Steinfeld if he would be willing to act as chair of the California Fitness Council. The year was 2006. Steinfeld took on the challenge, and responded swiftly with a number of different programs for the state. One of those was an event called the Spotlight Awards, where persons who were stand-outs in the field of health and fitness where honored. The ultimate prize was a brand new \$100,000 DON'T QUIT! Fitness Center that was awarded to a local school.

It went over so well that in 2011, according to Steinfeld, he was asked to take on the chairmanship of the National Foundation for Governor's Fitness Councils (NFGFC). He decided that their single mission was going to be this: "I want to put as many brand new \$100,000 DON'T QUIT! Fitness Centers in as many elementary and middle schools in this great country as humanly possible...I didn't want to do it where it would be challenging for a state to get on board, where it would be on their taxes or anything like that or where we needed funding from the state itself. I said I wanted to be able to pick up a phone, call a governor cold, and I want to have a gift of three brand new \$100,000 DON'T QUIT! Fitness Centers."

The NFGFC's simple mission each year is to select four states to gift three

brand new fitness centers to.

Mississippi will be the fortieth state. Steinfeld says when he reached out to Governor Reeves, the positive response from his office was almost instantaneous.

"I will tell you that Tate got back to us in less than forty-eight hours. I told Tate, 'I've got a gift. I have three brand new \$100,000 fitness centers that we want to gift to your state, and we want to kick it off with a contest." Of the many schools in Mississippi who applied, McLaurin Attendance Center was one of three schools hand picked by the foundation to receive this generous gift.

Once selected, members of Steinfeld's' team went to work. First visiting the sites of the future fitness center, selecting the space that will meet the foundation's criteria, and taking the "before photos." In the case of McLaurin Attendance Center, this phase of the project was completed in May. The final installation is scheduled for completion by August 2021.

Then there is the pep-rally and the official unveiling scheduled for October of 2021. Steinfeld and members of his team will assemble the student body on site, to not only share his story, but to offer words of encouragement, to "get out there and exercise, and do it together!"

The final product includes cardio, weight training, and resistance equipment. Even though the equipment remains the same from one school to the next, each space is unique. Steinfeld explains that the only requirement the foundation has for the school is at least 900 square feet of workable space.

But that is not all. Once the fitness center has been completed, NFGFC will meet the phys-ed teachers and the coaches to instruct them on all of the equipment, ensuring that the machines are used as intended.

From there, the sky is the limit for students, faculty and staff, as well as



Special to SW Rankin News

Fitness icon Jake (Body by Jake) Steinfeld, and Chairman of the National Foundation for Governors' Fitness Councils (NFGFC).

family members and the community as

"We get people to engage and as long as you are in there, one repetition... leads to two repetitions, two repetitions lead to three...that sense of accomplishment builds on itself" and it is Steinfeld's hope that the ripple effect of success will have more than just a physical impact. Perhaps, the transformation will allow folks to ask themselves, "if I am doing this, what else... might I be able to succeed at?"

It all harkens back to the inspirational message he received as a four-teen-year-old just setting out on what has now become a lifelong pursuit – "DON'T QUIT!," which he trademarked in 1981.

Steinfeld encourages everyone that, "If you are having kind of a tough day, those two lines [from the Don't Quit poem] which I end every television show with, 'stick to the fight when you're hardest hit. It's when things seem worst you must not quit'... they are powerful, because separately they are the two most negative words, "don't" and "quit." But "don't quit," [together become a positive] that is powerful. That is why we named them DON'T QUIT! Fitness Centers. We scream don't quit, and, if you believe don't quit, you can achieve anything you want in your life."





## Lost in Shangri-La: June book report from FRL

By Beth Woodmansee

On May 13, 1945, a C-47 carrying twenty-four passengers including the pilot and co-pilot crashed into the dense jungle of Dutch New Guinea. A short sight-seeing flyover of a large, remote hidden valley, dubbed "Shangri-La," ended in death for twenty-one and weeks of painful recovery for three.

Five passengers escaped the burning aircraft, two died within hours, leaving only three alive: Lieutenant John Mc-Collom, Sergeant Kenneth Decker and one WAC, Corporal Margaret Hastings.

Decker and Hastings were more severely injured than McCollom, who took over as the leader. Margaret suffered severe burns to her legs and feet and on the side of her face; Kenneth Decker had a bad gash in the side of his head. McCollom's only injury occurred when he brought one of the WACs out of the plane; he slipped, breaking a rib.

They found food to eat, mostly multi-colored hard

candies and a few containers of water and some medication. Hunger, pain and rain plagued them as they tried to rest without shelter. Two days later, McCollom climbed a tree and spotted a clearing. He suggested moving to the clearing where they might be seen by search planes overhead. When the two WACs died, John McCollom had wrapped them in some tarps and laid them at the base of a tree. Before they moved, he took clothing from their bodies and items they might need. Margaret wore her best friend's shoes, since her own had been lost; she could not have gone very far through the jungle in bare feet covered with burns.

McCollum feared she was developing wet gangrene. She struggled to keep up with the two men but managed only by crawling through the worst of the jungle vegetation.

They finally made it to the clearing,

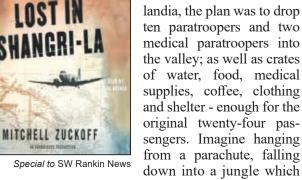
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they heard rustling in the edge of the jungle. What they saw was alarming—about forty near-naked native men armed with stone adzes walked into the open. Were they friendly? Cannibals?

McCollom told Margaret and Kenneth to smile. Smile! Smile! Grinning, they offered up their pocket knife and the multi-colored hard candies. The natives' leader approached them over a log and offered his hand. McCollom, smiling, grabbed it, beginning a friendship between the three Americans and the Yali people of Uwambo, their name for their village. The next day, the natives brought

> them food - yams - and continued helping them during their time in "Shangri-la."

> Back at the base in Hollandia, the plan was to drop ten paratroopers and two medical paratroopers into the valley; as well as crates of water, food, medical supplies, coffee, clothing and shelter - enough for the original twenty-four passengers. Imagine hanging from a parachute, falling



may be filled with cannibalistic stoneage natives...and the very real chance of death from Japanese soldiers hiding out in those jungles.

Margaret and Kenneth's wounds were top priority, for they were gangrenous. The process of healing such wounds out of a hospital environment was hard on patients and doctors alike; but it had to be done, or Margaret could have lost both her legs, and Kenneth could have died. Amazingly, their wounds healed. Six weeks later, on June 28, 1945, using a wooden glider, everyone was lifted out of the valley, and, before the day was over, John McCollom, Kenneth Decker and Margaret Hastings and the paratroopers were enjoying a warm bath--no longer "Lost in Shangri-la."

In 2011, historian/author Mitchell Zuckoff brought the story back from obscurity in his excellent work of fully-researched, non-fiction, which reads like

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# Photo diary of the "Imagination Monster Project"



PJHS art teacher Sara Hall with 3D monsters created PJHS eighth grade art students.



Drawings created by child patients at Batson Children's Hospital.

Special to SW Rankin News

Sixth-grade art students

at Pearl Junior High School

(PJHS) partnered with the

Children's of Mississippi

Hospital to create 3D hu-

man-sized sculptures of

imagination friend monster

drawings by patients. At the completion of the project, the





PJHS art teachers hand-de-

livered the sculptures to the

patients. This was the first

of this unique collaboration.

However, there are hopes for

future collaborative projects.

All told, there were over 300

(sixth, seventh, and eighth

grade) art students from PJHS who worked on creat-

ing these sculptures.



UMMC Child Life Specialist Team member Pepper Weed-Cooper waves to patient, Maikyah Bowers, twelve, her grandmother, Cynthia Spratt, and mother, Laura Moore, far left, during an art walk at the Batson Tower featuring life-size sculptures of patient's artwork Wednesday, May 19, 2021.



Members of the UMMC Child Life Specialist Team, from left, Cara Williams, Ashley Prendez and Madeline Wilson participate in an art walk at the Batson Tower featuring life-size sculptures of patient's artwork Wednesday, May 19, 2021.



PJHS art teacher Kacee Hobson with 3D sculpture created by Pearl Junior High Creative Projects.



Drawings created by child patients at Batson Children's Hospital.



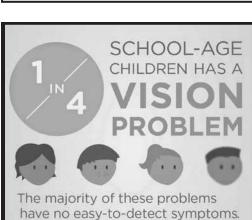




Photos and art special to SW Rankin News



PJHS art teacher Vashti Graham with 3D sculptures.



PJHS art teacher Cathryn Beck with 3D monster

created by seventh grade art class.

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## First annual "Eagles Up" event hosted by FHS

Special to SW Rankin News

The Eagle Up Weekend was the brainchild of Florence High School (FHS) head football coach Rod Davis, a University of Southern Mississippi (USM) Hall of Famer and NFL/Minnesota Vikings veteran. The event was intended as a fundraiser for the FHS football program and FHS athletics in general, but the overall purpose was to create excitement as a community after many months of social distancing.

With about one month to plan, Coach Davis needed some help to execute. TEAM Business Academy instructor Dre' Helms stepped up to volunteer her students for the marketing and overall planning of the event. TEAM Academy sophomores and juniors organized the event and all registration for event activities was handled online. Other school groups were tapped for support. Most notably, the FHS Medical Science Academy provided first aid and other support the day of the event. FHS JROTC members also assisted with parking and other logistics. Participants included individual students, student groups, Florence residents, and even members of the extended community.

To sign up, runners were able to register individually while the newly formed Florence Walking Club, sponsored by



Photo by Whitney Allgood

Florence High School (FHS) Cheer hosted a Mini Camp for future aspiring Eagle Cheerleaders on Friday, April 30. More than 100 elementary-aged students participated.



Photo by Belle Clark

Parents and fans got a glimpse at what next season will hold for the FMS Eagles at Eagle Up.



Photo by Karley

Young and old alike laced up their running or walking shoes to join in at the Eagle Spirit 5K & Fun Run as part of Eagle Up.



Photo by Karley Woods

FHS Medical Science Academy Kira Berch sports lots of paint powder as she finishes the Eagle Spirit 5K as part of Eagle Up Weekend on May 1.



Photo by Karley Woods

FHS Football put on an impressive display for parents and fans at the First Annual Eagle Up Weekend on May 1.

Performance Therapy, registered many members. More than 1,000 people attended the event and an estimated 150 students, and many teachers and staff members volunteered that day.

The event was held Saturday, May 1, and the schedule included: Kick-off at 8

a.m. with the Eagle Spirit 5K, followed at 9 a.m. by the Eagle Spirit Fun Run. Then, beginning at 10:30 a.m., the FMS Football scrimmage began with the FHS Red & Black game following an hour later. Finally, an Eagle Youth Football Combine was held at 2:30 p.m.

The Car Show, composed of local auto and ATV groups, ran from noon until 4:00 p.m.

Also, between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., local businesses, school groups, and student entrepreneurs participated in the Vendor Village. These vendor booths allowed participants time to shop local merchandise.

At the end of the day, medals were awarded for the Eagle Spirit 5K. Winners were as follows: overall male runner: Jose Ajpacaja; overall female runner: Shantay Steen; age group male winners: Lane Perret, Thomas Tubby, Clay Branch, Jaime Walley and Eddy Ajpacaja; and age group female winners: Marley French, Jenson Atwara, Amy Bishop, Nikia Tuttle and Ira Williams.

To date, the event collected a impressive \$7,000+. These funds will be used to support the football and athletic programs at Florence High School. However, the morale boost to students, faculty, and staff at FHS, as well as Florence residents, was immeasurable.



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