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SWRANKIN NEWS

Vol. 6, No. 9 | September 2021

The Pearl News

THE NEWS
RICHLAND

THE FLORENCE
NEWS

Knight ready to contribute to Rebels again

By Datti Jinkiri

As with most teams, the Ole Miss Rebels have headed into the 2021 college football season with hope and excitement. The team will return key pieces on both side of the football, including Pearl native Tylan Knight.

Knight has seen time as running back and defensive back during his career in Oxford, but the 2020 season saw him embrace a larger role on defense. He tallied a career-high twenty total tackles and two tackles for loss. Knight also led the team with forced three fumbles.

The 2018 Pearl High School graduate also had a knack for making big plays when the lights were at their brightest. With Mississippi State primed to tie the Egg Bowl in the first quarter, Knight caused a key turnover when he stripped Bulldog receiver Austin Williams of the

ball at the goal-line. His Rebel teammate, Deane Leonard, returned the ball eighty-four yards. The Rebels scored a touchdown just a few plays later, and they went on to defeat the Bulldogs 31-24.

In the Outback Bowl against nationally-ranked Indiana, Knight put an end to a Hoosier third quarter drive with another forced fumble. This time All-Big Ten wide receiver Whop Philyor was the victim, and the ball was promptly recovered teammate Jalen Jordan. The Rebels went on to upset the Hoosiers 26-20 in Tampa.

Knight and the Rebels will have a chance to build on their strong finish in 2020 very soon. The team opened the 2021 season with a non-conference win over Louisville at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta. ESPN televised the game nationally on September 6.



Special to The Pearl News

Pearl native Tylan Knight, player #4

Jason Davis "Kick Cancer Classic" honors namesake with benefit

Special to The Pearl News

Jason Davis Memorial "Kick Cancer Classic," a cancer benefit held in the memory of Pearl soccer player Jason Davis, is scheduled for Saturday October 30. Since 1995, the Pearl Youth Soccer League (PYSL) has been fortunate to provide this benefit soccer tournament, the proceeds of which are donated to a local family fighting cancer. The tournament is open to U6 - U19 teams, recreational and competitive.

Davis began playing soccer with PYSL during the year of its inception, 1980. He attended Pearl Schools from elementary through high school until graduation in 1993. While attending Pearl schools, he played for the Pearl Junior High and High School soccer teams from 1986 to 1993. After graduation, Davis attended The University of Mississippi and played on their first soccer team.

Davis was a freshman at Ole Miss when he was diagnosed with Squamous Cell Carcinoma in head and neck. He was



Brad Givens, the 2021 awardee. Givens lives in Pearl with his wife, Tiffany, and his four children. He is a member of McLaurin Heights Baptist Church and is also a member of the 114th MP Co. He works full time as a technician with the National Guard. In May, Brad was diagnosed with stage IV Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma.

able to complete the soccer season excluding the tournament games at the end of the season.

Davis received his cancer treatments at M.D. Anderson Hospital in Houston, Texas. Upon completing his treatments Davis returned to Ole Miss in the Fall



Photos special to The Pearl News

Jason Davis

of 1994. He attempted to practice with the soccer team but realized he was not physically able. Instead, Davis went to the City of Oxford and became a coach

for a U12 team.

While Davis was receiving cancer treatments at M.D. Anderson, the Pearl Youth Soccer League organized a tournament to raise money to help with Davis's expenses.

After he passed away, PYSL asked if they could continue the tournament in Davis's name to help others fighting cancer. In the early years the money was given to the American Cancer Society. More recently, the proceeds from the tournament go to benefit other cancer victims in Rankin County.

This year, registration closes October 27, at 12 pm. The tournament cost is \$12 per player. All U14 and above will be 7v7 small sided games. There will be no referees for this benefit tournament. Coaches will handle the games and any issues that arise will be handled by the tournament director. There is a \$5 Parking Fee.

Visit www.pearlsoccer.com to register for the 2021 event, or contact pearlsoccer@gmail.com for more information.

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One-of-a-kind memorial joins Traveling Wall exhibit

By Alexa Haik

The "Faces of the Fallen" display, a unique addition to The Vietnam Traveling Wall exhibit coming to Richland Thursday, September 16, is the one-of-a-kind creation of Mississippi residents, Bob and Richard Catlett. They created the display to honor service men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice.

The special display features one-hundred and six photographs of fallen military from the State of Mississippi, all branches of the service, and all participated on the war against terror. The order of deaths begins with the USS Cole in April 1991 and ends December 2013. Some of the memorials are silhouetted as the brothers were unable to obtain a photographic image.

Their current mission is to search "through these towns and find these



Pictured (l to r) are: Richard and Bob Catlett.

families and see if we can get a picture" for all names that are featured.

The display had been languishing in storage until just recently, when the Catletts pulled it out for refurbish-

ment... their first stop, Richland City Hall. The Wall itself will be open twenty-four hours a day during its time in Richland. The exhibit is open to all, free-of-charge.

Escort details: On Thursday, September 16, the wall will leave at noon from 3984 Highway 49 in Hattiesburg (Exxon Gas Station-next to Camp Shelby Southgate) and arrive at its' Town Square location, at 380 Scarbrough Street in Richland, around 2 p.m.

The itinerary: On Thursday, September 16, at 8 p.m. the wall opens; on Friday, September 17, at 10 a.m. the opening ceremony will be held; Saturday, September 18, at 7 p.m. is the candlelight ceremony; and on Monday, September 20, at 8 a.m. the wall closes.

Parking will be available at City Hall, the Senior Center and the Riverwood Shopping Center.

For those interested in volunteering, contact Stephanie Ward at 601-420-1530 or sward@richlandms.com.

For further information, visit www.richlandms.org/city-organizations/rede/ and www.travelingwall.us/.

"Petco Love" invests in MS-SPAN's lifesaving work

Special to The Richland News

Mississippi Spay & Neuter announced recently a \$7,500 grant investment from the newly named "Petco Love" to support their lifesaving work for animals in Central Mississippi.

Petco Love is a nonprofit leading change for pets nationally by making communities and pet families closer, stronger, and healthier. Since their founding in 1999 as the Petco Foundation, they've empowered organizations with \$300 million invested to date in adoption and other lifesaving efforts. And, they've helped find loving homes for more than 6.5 million pets in partnership with Petco and more than 4,000 organizations nationwide.

"Today Petco Love invests in Mississippi Spay & Neuter and hundreds of other organizations across the nation working to improve animal health and welfare as part of our commitment to

creating a future in which no pet is unnecessarily euthanized," said Susanne Kogut, President of Petco Love. "Our local investments are only one component. This year, we also launched the first of our national tools, Petco Love Lost, which empowers all animal lovers to drive lifesaving change right alongside us."

"This generous investment will support our feral cat spay/neuter program and help us have a greater lifesaving impact. Often, feral cats congregate in colonies, and their care is left to the generous person who feeds them. Helping with the cost of spay/neuter can reduce this burden and help prevent the further overpopulation in colonies. Petco Love's investment will help approximately 214 cats in need at our Big Fix Clinic, where we fix around forty-five feral cats each month," said Sharon Garner, Executive Director at Mississippi Spay & Neuter.

Mississippi Spay & Neuter is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ending animal homelessness and euthanasia through spay and neuter.

The organization has aided more than 90,000 animals by providing affordable spay and neuter services through their Big Fix Clinic and voucher programs.

Mississippi Spay and Neuter is located at 657 Highway 49 in Richland. For more information on Mississippi Spay & Neuter and its programs, call



Special to The Richland News

A feral cat recovers from spay surgery. All feral cats are ear-tipped, a universal sign that they've been spayed or neutered. Cats are released back in their territory the next day by their caregivers.

601-420-2438 or visit www.msspan.org.

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Call for vendors: Florence Fest October 2021

Special to The Florence News

The City of Florence will hold Florence Fest 2021 on Saturday, October 23. The event, set for Hemphill Park, will include arts and crafts and business booths, as well as food vendors. Registration is now open for all types of vendors. The registration deadline is October 8, at which time a \$25 late fee will be added. Booths are available until October 22, or until all booth spaces are taken.

Arts and crafts vendors will be provided a 10-foot by 12-foot space at \$50. Electricity is \$10 in addition to the booth fee. Vendors will need to supply tables, chairs, tents, and extension cords. Muffled generators are allowed.

A 10-foot by 12-foot booth space will also be provided to **businesses** at \$50 per business. Business booths may distribute pens, pencils, key chains, note pads, magnets, etc., but no food items.

Food vendors will be provided a 24-foot by 12-foot space at \$150 per



Photos special to The Florence News



Florence Fest 2019.

vendor. A food permit is required. Food vendors are also required to fully clean their area before leaving. Cooking oil and/or grease will need to be taken with the vendor for disposal.

Non-profit organizations are welcome to set-up space. Free booths for Florence-based organizations will be provided, and must be approved by the mayor. 110 V electricity can be provided at an additional \$10. Contact the city for availability.

A map with each vendor's assigned space, along with details of set up times, will be mailed to each, prior to

the event. Vendors will be required to collect sales tax for their sales and will be provided with a reporting form. Sales tax will be collected at the end of the day by City of Florence personnel to turn in to Mississippi State Tax Commission.

Vendor setup will begin Friday, October 22, from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. and Saturday morning from 6:30 a.m. until 8:30 a.m. The market will open at 9 a.m. and all vehicles must be out of the vendor area at that time. A parking area will be assigned for vendors.

Vendors may begin dismantling their booths at 4 p.m. or any time thereafter. No one will be allowed to bring a vehicle into the vendor area until that time. All vendors will be required to fully clean their area before leaving.

Return completed application with check (payable to City of Florence) to: City of Florence – Florence Fest, P.O. Box 187, Florence, Mississippi, 39073. Contact the City of Florence Parks and Recreation Department for further information at 601-845-5858 or email cityhalldclerk@gmail.com.

Womack of Florence wins Quilters Awards

Special to The Florence News

Lois Womack of Florence won a special novice award for her quilt named "My Whimsical Garden" at the Fortieth Jubilee Quilt Show, hosted by the Smoky Mountain Quilters of Tennessee (SMQ) July 30 through 31, at the Knoxville Expo Center in Knoxville, Tennessee. She also took home second place honors for her quilt named "Forest Galorest," which was entered in the Small Applique and/or Mixed Techniques – Team category.

The quilt show featured more than 200 quilts and approximately \$6,000 in awards. It celebrated the fortieth show hosted by the Smoky Mountain Quilters of Tennessee.

The guild meets monthly in Knoxville.



Lois Womack of Florence won a Second Place award for her quilt, "Forest Galorest."

The guild's primary goals are to promote and encourage the knowledge of quilt making as an art and a craft, to study its history as an integral part of the past, and to promote friendship through shared activities. Guild activities include

workshops, block drawings, exhibits, and quilts made for charitable organizations. The guild's more than 100 members are as diverse as the quilts they love -- traditional and art quilts, complex and



Photos special to The Florence News

Womack received a special Novice award for her quilt, "My Whimsical Garden."

minimalist modern designs, small and bed-sized, and hand or machine stitched.

For more information, visit www.smokytnquilts.com or follow them on Facebook.

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RCSD joins MDEQ's enHance program



Special to SW Rankin News

The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) recently accepted one new member and six renewal memberships into its enHance program for the 2021 class. The recognition was part of the annual workshop and awards luncheon held in Jackson. The class of 2020 was also recognized due to the cancelation of the annual meeting last year. Three new members and eleven renewing members were part of that group, including Rankin County School District (RCSD).

RCSD joined as an Associate in 2020, and have committed to pursuing Energy Star Certification for as many of their twenty-eight schools as possible. As they work towards this goal, they will be reducing their total energy consumption and thereby reduce their carbon footprint and associated greenhouse gas emissions.

The workshop also included presentations on various pollution prevention topics and issues. The annual meeting is

jointly sponsored by MDEQ's Pollution Prevention Program and the Mississippi Manufacturers Association.

enHance is a voluntary stewardship program that recognizes committed environmental leaders who accomplish goals beyond their legal requirements.

Participating organizations make a commitment to address and achieve ongoing environmental improvements.

enHance is open to facilities, cities, counties, and other entities who are interested in the program, and applicants can choose from three tiers: Leader, Steward, or Associate.

"It is an honor to recognize these members that actively strive to reduce their wastes, reduce their environmental impacts, and improve the quality of life in their communities. Their vision and leadership is to be commended as their efforts result in both immediate and long-term benefits for our state," said Chris Wells, MDEQ Executive Director.

For more information about the enHance program, visit www.mdeq.ms.gov/land/waste-division/enhance.

Richland-Florence Garden Club activities and announcements

Special to SW Rankin News

The Richland-Florence Garden Club (RFGC) held their first monthly meeting Thursday, September 2. Their guest speaker of the month was Marcie Lockett from "Birds Unlimited." Lockett spoke about hummingbirds.

Club members learned: how to differentiate between male and female birds; behavioral patterns of female "hummers"; the dangers of using red coloring/dye in hummingbird syrup; and, identifying the praying mantis as the number-one predator of humming birds.

Members and visitors said it was refreshing to gather together after many months and are anticipating and planning many interesting meetings with speakers and various activities.

Recently, RFGC members created bows for the Traveling Memorial Vietnam Wall, coming Thursday, September 16 through Sunday, September 19, to Richland Town Center.

RFGC also has an upcoming garage sale on Saturday, October 2, at the Richland Community Center, from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Present at the meeting were Gaynell Ainsworth, Barbara Anglin, Carol Azzone, Teenie Boone, Scottie Boyanton,



Debbie Knight of R-FGC.



Photos special to SW Rankin News

Marcie Lockett of Birds Unlimited.

Sandra Hales-Boyd, Rowan Craft, Peggy Evans, Susan Harrison, Elizabeth Hawthorne, Beverly Hemphill, Annajeral Knight, Debbie Knight, Shannon Laseter, Beth Sanford, Amanda Sartain, Connie Snow, Minetta Veasey, Lynn Wynne and speaker Marcie Lockett.

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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

City Beat Writer

Kerri Roberts

kerri@swrankinnews.com

Graphic Designer

Katie White

designer@SWRankinNews.com

Office Manager

Doris Bynum

Distribution

Ben Barnett

For submission information, email
news@SWRankinNews.com.

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Kickin' Cancer tournament announces 2021 champions

By Virginia Miller

The Rubber Busters did it again - they are the reigning champions for the Eighth Annual Kickin' Cancer Coed Kickball Tournament in Memory of Paige McLendon. The Enforcers took home second place and the Costumes for a Cause Award.

This year's recipient of all proceeds is wife, mother, nurse, and warrior Jenny Staggs; she and her family say they appreciate all those who contributed to the cause, as she continues to battle colon cancer with a vengeance.

The tournament organizers say they would like to express their thanks to all teams that participated in the 2021 event, including The Dream Team, Lockdown, Like Totally Pitchin,' Kickbacks, Scooby, G.I. Joes, and Blue Power Rangers. Last but not least, thanks and gratitude

are also expressed to the amazing volunteers, sponsors, and supporters; organizers say they could not do it without their help.

Tournament organizers say they would also like to express their appreciation to the City of Richland, Mayor Pat Sullivan, Cole Smith, Guy Smith, Jeff Payne, Irby Construction, Mazzio's Italian Eatery, Joey Sebren, Jimmy Dean and Tammy McGowan, Natalie Crowder, Christian Whitfield, Marshall Kranz, Maddie B. Kirk, Ty Wedgeworth, Bruce Agee, Tyler and Carson Weaver, Mike Dupree, Renee and Kevin Moha, Shaun Duran, and Mike Hollins.

Visit Kickin' Cancer Coed Kickball Tournament in Memory of Paige McLendon on Instagram and Facebook for upcoming tournaments.

For further information, contact m1llerfundraising@yahoo.com.



Team Lockdown



Team Totally Pitchin'



Team Enforcers



Team Kickbacks



Team Scooby



Team Rubber Busters



The Dream Team



Team Blue Power Rangers



Team G.I. Joes

Photos special to SW Rankin News



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Obituaries

NAME	AGE	CITY	DOD	Funeral Home
Pamela Harris White	70y	Florence, MS	7/31/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Jonathan Gifford Price	50y	Pearl, MS	7/31/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Kimberly Ann Gardner	40y	Richland, MS	8/4/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Kayla Joyce Padgett	60y	Brandon, MS	8/5/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Annie Mae Guthrie	86y	Florence, MS	8/9/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Nell Jackson Mees	81y	Richland, MS	8/9/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Rozella "Roze" Franks	72y	Florence, MS	8/9/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
James "Jimmy" Williamson	86y	Florence, MS	8/13/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
David Winston Nunnery	70y	Jackson, MS	8/15/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Allyn Roush	51y	Florence, MS	8/18/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Terry Scott Harrell, Sr.	66y	Florence, MS	8/18/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Rebecca Wallace Fendlason	62y	Richland, MS	8/19/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Johnny Kenneth Stevens	87y	Florence, MS	8/19/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Alice Josephine Story	95y	Ridgeland, MS	8/23/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Steve Mitchell Kelly	66y	Florence, MS	8/24/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Jonnie Gagneaux	50y	Pearl, MS	8/24/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Kathryn Mullins	90y	Pearl, MS	8/28/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Maudie Lee Wilson	89y	Florence, MS	8/31/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Lavelle Robertson	86y	Pearl, MS	8/31/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home
Jackie Dale Brunt	65y	Richland, MS	8/31/2021	Chancellor Funeral Home

Siemens Energy donates supplies to Richland High School



Special to SW Rankin News

Recently, Siemens Energy donated school supplies to Richland High School to assist students in preparation for the 2021-2022 school year. Pictured (l to r) are Siemens representative Debra Cameron, Dominic Dunham, Marcus Stewart, Thomas Dudley and Corey Yates.

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Old Truths for Today

The Two Builders

Matt. 7:21-29

J.T. Morgan



One of the highlights of the teachings of Jesus is recorded as "The Sermon on the Mount." These valuable lessons begin in Matthew chapter 5 where Jesus "went up into a mountain and His disciples came unto Him." (Matt. 5:1). This is the beginning of the wonderful lessons He taught. As the sermon closes it is brought to a dramatic climax with the parable of the "two builders."

This parable sums up the varied teaching of the world's greatest sermon and sets forth the absolute necessity of hearing and obeying the words of the Master Teachers. Its message is one of solemn warning as to the results of following or not following the teachings contained in this sermon. The truths relate to and affect the eternal destiny of every man and woman and is of the utmost urgency and importance.

The two builders represent two classes of men: those who build their lives on the truth of God's Word and those who fail to build on this one secure foundation. There are only two kinds of builders: those who build according to God's plans and those who build contrary to God's plan. There are also only two inevitable results: those who build with God are blessed and secure; those who build with God come to ruin.

In this parable Christ teaches us that every man is building; every building will be tested and the result of the testing depends upon the foundation. The only sure foundation is obedience to His word.

Each day we live we are putting materials into the building of our lives and character: the thoughts we think, the motives we cherish, the words we speak, the deeds we do, the aims we pursue. All of these many materials and more are going into the building of our spiritual house. Regardless of what materials we choose to put into our building, the fact remains this is the house in which he must dwell forever.

The master architect reminds us that every building shall be tested. Life itself is a testing time. Everyone is tested by the ordinary events and circumstances of daily living. Are we faithfully doing our work from day to day putting our best effort to the very best of our abilities? Are we assuming our full responsibility and fulfilling our obligations in the various relationships in life? The things we do, the things we read, the way we treat those about us, the pleasures we seek, the things we choose and the things we reject, all of these are tests of our characters and our building. The use we make of the Lord's Day tests whether we're building upon the solid rock of God's Word or upon the perilous sands of sinful disobedience. Are we truly seeking "first the Kingdom of God?" (Matt. 6:33).

The only sure foundation is Christ! The Christ-built life is the only life that will survive the test of time and eternity. The contrast between the two builders: one is permanent, the other perishes. Paul says there is no other foundation upon which we can build. (1 Cor. 3:10). What Christ builds stands forever! (1 Jno. 2:15-17).

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

Visitors are always welcome!

Adams receives NFHS MSHAA Coach of the Year Award



Special to SW Rankin News
Ranger Nation recently announced that Coach John Adams received NFHS MSHAA Coach of the Year Award from the Coaches Association. Pictured (l to r) are Athletic Director Coach Todd Montgomery and Coach John Adams.

City of Florence approves Troop 85 project proposal



Special to SW Rankin News
Jana-Len Jones of Florence's Troop 85 recently appeared before the Florence Mayor, Bob Morris, and Board of Aldermen, requesting approval to build an octagonal table and benches at the tennis courts at Hemphill Park. She explained that her project would allow tennis players to have somewhere to sit during practices and for parents to sit during matches. Jones received approval for the project. Eagle Day is scheduled for Thursday, October 21. Pictured (l to r) are Mayor Bob Morris and Jana-Len Jones.

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CMTR: Hatchling turtle foster program for educators



Special to SW Rankin News

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In 2018, CMTR began the hatchling turtle foster program for educators. For those interested in having educational turtles in their classrooms, but who don't have space or resources needed at home to care for a turtle year-round, this could be an excellent option. The educator will care for the hatchling(s) through the school year and return them when school wraps up the following summer (or, in some cases, release the turtles themselves with their students.)

This program is available to any and all educators, including public school educators, private school educators, college/university educators, as well as home-school educators.

Central Mississippi Turtle Rescue (CMTR) regularly takes in female turtles that lay eggs while in rehab. They also always check recently-deceased females and extract any eggs she might be carrying. These eggs are then incubated, and, if all goes well, baby turtles are hatched in two to three months. The hatchlings then remain in care over winter and are released the following summer.

It is important to note that turtles typ-

ically start hatching in August/September. CMTR makes sure they are eating and appear to be healthy before transferring them into any foster home or school. Approved applicants will receive the foster hatchling as soon as possible, but this means they may not have a foster turtle at the very beginning of the school year.

CMTR will contact applicants as soon as possible if their application is approved. Approved applicants will be granted foster turtles to care for on a first-come, first-served basis. Final approval and the transfer of turtles to the educators to foster will also depend on completion of attachments mentioned in the document.

Educators interested in this program may visit the CMTR website to view a full description of the program, a list of rules and to download an application. They are instructed to complete, sign and submit the application to turtlerescuems@gmail.com or by mail at Central MS Turtle Rescue, P.O. Box 1374, Florence, MS 39073.

For further information, visit www.centralmsturtleescue.com/-foster-programs.html.

Register now for fall Master Gardener class

Special to SW Rankin News

Gardeners wanting to contribute to their communities are encouraged to take advantage of an online training opportunity to hone their skills this fall. Registration ends September 15, for the newest class of Master Gardeners. These expert volunteers are trained and certified in consumer horticulture and related areas by the Mississippi State University Extension Service.

"In exchange for forty hours of educational training, participants return forty hours of volunteer service within one year of their training," said Jeff Wilson, Extension horticulture specialist and state coordinator of the Master Gardener program.

A community benefits in many ways from its local Master Gardeners. After the first year's forty-hour community service requirement is met, Master Gardeners continue to receive training and log a minimum of twenty community service hours a year to maintain their certified status.

The volunteer work of Master Gardeners helps local Extension offices reach a broader audience than is possible through just the efforts of Extension agents. Volunteers also extend the educational arm of the university to the public by providing horticultural information based on university research and recommendations.

"Master Gardener volunteers experi-

ence the personal satisfaction of serving their community, gaining horticultural expertise and connecting with their local gardening community," Wilson said.

This year, all Master Gardener instruction is online and self-paced. The current class begins October 1, and closes November 30.

The cost is \$125 for those desiring to become certified Master Gardener volunteers and provide forty hours of service. For \$200, a home-gardening course is available for those not interested in



Photo by MSU Extension Service/Kevin Hudson

Registration has begun for the next class of Master Gardeners, a program offered by the Mississippi State University Extension Service. Eileen Hollander of Pearl River County is one of the expert volunteers in this service organization.

the volunteer service component. A third option is to pay \$25 per class for select classes. These classes are available year-round and do not require volunteering.

To register for the training and learn more about the Master Gardener program, visit <http://msuext.ms/mg>.

MSU is an equal opportunity institution. For disability accommodation or questions about the Master Gardener program, contact Jeff Wilson at 662-566-8019 or jeff.wilson@msstate.edu.

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Agency on Aging adds "Chore Services" to its offerings

By Alexa Haik

The Central Mississippi Planning and Development District, Inc. (CMPDD) Area Agency on Aging is now offering "Chore Services" for seniors sixty years-of-age and older, in Hinds, Madison, and Rankin counties. At the helm of this newest offering is Dr. Chelsea Crittle, the triple A director at (CMPDD).

The primary focus of this program is to provide seniors with resources and services to enable them to remain at home as long as possible.

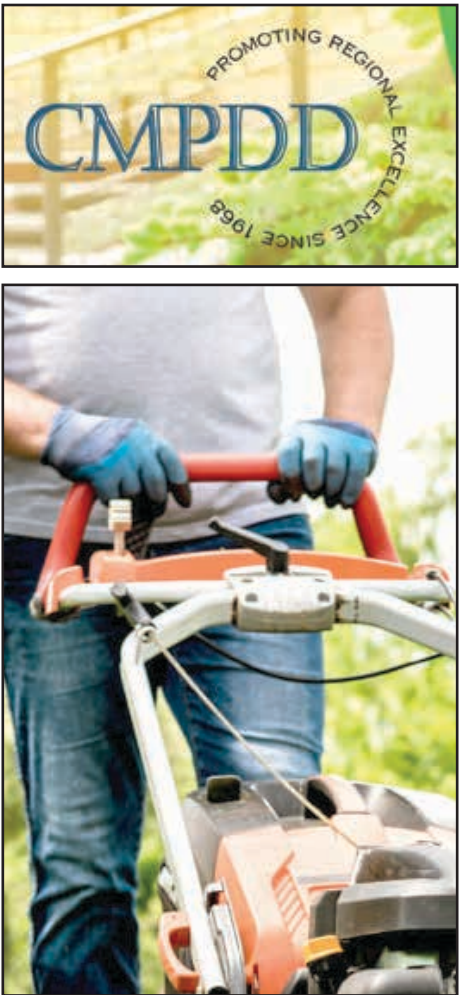
Dr. Crittle believes that, "a lot of times if they just had a little help, they could stay at home and still be able to be comfortable in their own environment."

Typically, the aging program provides staple services such as: meals, transportation, and home maker programs. An increase in funding, due at least in part to the COVID-19 outbreak, has allowed the agency an opportunity to be more creative with their offerings. Hence, Chore Services was born.

Following the receipt of Title 3 funding from Mississippi Department of Human Services, CMPDD was able to develop a budget. And, as with any federal funding, this includes budget-

ary limits. For the Chore Services program, there is a \$300 dollar budget per client available for a twelve-month period. The \$300 covers the cost for labor as well as supplies.

The types of chores that are covered under the program are considered minor, but never-the-less essential, household services. Examples include: changing air filters in an air conditioner; light bulb replacements; repairing or replacing a shower-head or toilet; light yard work; installing a ceiling fan; repairing or replacing a faucet; grab bar installation; etc. Chores that are not



Images special to SW Rankin News

covered under the program include: foundation work, most electrical work or changing freon in an air-conditioner.

For those interested in applying for the program, the first step in the process is to complete a needs assessment (not income based) over the phone. They will be asked a series of questions and from that assessment, applicants will receive a score. If they do not score high enough on the assessment, they will be notified immediately. If they are eligible, the next step is to discuss their primary needs and how CMPDD may help meet those needs.

Those interested in participating in the Chore Services program may contact Area Aging Program Case Manager Rodrick Smith, at 601-981-1516.

CMPDD is dedicated to serving the elderly and disabled population of Central Mississippi. Federal, state, and local resources enable CMPDD to provide coordination of a wide array of services throughout a seven-county region. As advocates for the elderly and disabled, it is CMPDD's mission to promote independence and dignity for those they serve through a comprehensive and coordinated system of quality services. As a designated Area Agency on Aging, CMPDD operates and administers the provisions of the Older Americans Act of 1965. CMPDD also partners with the State Division of Medicaid to provide home and community-based services through the Elderly and Disabled Medicaid Waiver Program.

CMPDD does accept donations to help fund these services, and often times donations are an important factor in extending a particular program. To donate to the CMPDD's Area Agency on Aging, contact Dr. Chelsea B. Crittle at 601- 981-1516 or visit www.cmpdd.org.

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Save the Date: PCC to host annual golf tournament October 1



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The Pearl Chamber of Commerce (PCC) will be hosting their annual two-flight golf tournament on Friday, October 1. The tournament will be held at the Pearl Municipal Golf Course, which "features 18-holes and 6,161 yards of golf from the longest tees for a par of 71. The course rating is 69.4, a slope of 123 on Bermuda grass," according to the Chamber's 2020 guide.

This year, check-in will begin at 7 a.m., with a shotgun start at 8 a.m. First place winners will receive \$400 per team, second place winners will receive \$300 per team, and third place winners will receive \$200 per team. There will be additional prizes for "closest to the hole" and "longest drive," as well as door prizes.

Registration will include three options for participants: the "4-Man Team Sponsorship," which includes four green fees, eight mulligans, two carts and lunch for all team members at a cost of \$400; the second option is a "Team & Hole Sponsorship," which includes four green fees, eight mulligans, two carts, hole sponsorship and lunch for all team members at a cost of \$475; and a third option, the "Hole Sponsorship," which includes a sign placed on the tee box at a cost of \$100.

To register, visit www.pearlms.org. Make checks payable to Pearl Chamber of Commerce. Registration forms may be submitted by mail to P. O. Box 54125, Pearl, Mississippi, 39288.

For further information, contact the Chamber at 601-939-3338.

MS ToyCON is back, and promises to be better than ever



Photos and image special to SW Rankin News

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Collectors, wander no more - Mississippi has its very own toy show. Mississippi's largest vintage and modern toy and pop culture collectibles show is back in a new location with a new title sponsor. This year's event is slated for Saturday, October 2, at the Pearl Community Center.

For far too long, Mississippi toy collectors have wandered the wasteland of rummage sales and scoured the caverns of antique shops clutching play-worn blackwells, A.R.A.H. torsos, and squishy, hollow MOTU heads. The dream of an event that allows collectors to touch and feel the objects of childhood is now a reality.

MS ToyCon is presented by Nerdvana Comics, Games, and Collectibles and a Mom's Trash Can Super Show.

Pearl Community Center is located at 2414 Old Brandon Road in Pearl. For more information and tickets, visit www.mstoycon.com.

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Latest news and activities for CMRLS library patrons

Special to SW Rankin News

The Central Mississippi Regional Library System (CMRLS) Board of Trustees and Library Team are committed to providing traditional library services, as well as digital services, which include access to eContent (eBooks and eAudios), databases, and free Wi-Fi at all branches.

Currently, all libraries are open and available to the public. Most libraries are open at their pre-pandemic operating hours. Each branch has hand sanitizer and masks for patron and staff use. They are recommending that patrons and staff wear masks, but it is not required. Because of the popularity and demand, the libraries are still offering curbside services.

All book returns are open. All returned materials are cleaned before they are shelved. Study rooms/spaces and meeting rooms are available for use. All public access computers are available for use. Free Wi-Fi can be accessed on the outside of the library building. They are offering virtual and limited in-person programs, mostly story time, book clubs and Friends of the Library meetings. All programs require pre-registration.

September is **National Library Card**

sign-up month. If a student is under the age of eighteen, he or she may get a fine-free library card, even if they already possess a library card. The fine-free card, called the "Acorn Card," is free and ensures that the card-holder is never charged late fees. To participate, check out two books; when those two books are brought back, the student may check out two more.

Pearl Library News:

Preschool Story Time is back at the Pearl Library on Wednesdays at 10 a.m. There will be stories, music and a craft. September themes include: Let's go to the library; Pirates; Crayons on Strike!; Apples; and Owls.

Also on Wednesdays at 4 p.m. is **Peanuts K-4 Story Time.** Stories, music and a craft will also be featured. This month's themes are: Library Card Sign Up Month; Apples; Pirates; Johnny Appleseed; and Books.

Teens are also encouraged to visit the library to pick up the take and make craft for the month.

The Pearl Book Club is scheduled to meet Wednesdays, September 15, and 29, at 10 a.m.

For families, the Pearl Library is hosting **Acorn the Squirrel Scavenger Hunt** on Thursday, September 16, at 6 p.m. The first participant to find Acorn Squirrel wins.

Richland Library News:

At the Richland Library this month, for children ages birth to twelve years old, is **Pre-school Story Time**, each Monday at 11 a.m. There will be age-appropriate books, songs and crafts. September themes include:

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Pizza on September 20, and Pete the Cat on September 27. To register online, visit www.cmrls.lib.ms.us.

Adults and senior adults are encouraged to visit the Richland Public Library on Tuesday, September 21, for the monthly **Richland Book Club** meeting. They will be discussing *Little Fires Everywhere*, by Celeste Ng. To request a copy, visit the CMRLS online catalog. A library card ID number

and pin number are required to log in. To inquire about meeting specifics, or to retrieve a lost pin number, call the Richland Library at 601-932-1846.

Florence Library News: Beginning in September, the Florence Library will be hosting **Story Time** each Wednesday at 11 a.m. The themes of the month include: Pete the Cat on September 15; Colors on September 22; Apples on September 29; and Pumpkins on October 6.

CMRLS has also recently introduced the new **cloudLibrary App Launch.** A virtual version of a patron's library card is now available on the cloudLibrary app. Patrons can borrow eBooks and eAudiobooks via their mobile device or computer, and borrow two items at a time while placing holds on other items.

CMRLS's new eBook and eAudio-book app service, cloudLibrary, is offered at no cost to all CMRLS patrons, requiring only a valid library card and PIN number. Bibliotheca's cloudLibrary app is available free through the Apple App Store or Google Play Store or by visiting www.yourcloudlibrary.com. This service is available now, and replaces the Axis360 app.

Visit CMRLS at www.cmrls.lib.ms.us for more information.



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BBLI of Pearl, building future leaders

By Alexa Haik

Bridge Builders Leadership Initiative (BBLI) was created to provide local students, sixth- through twelfth-grade, the opportunity to go "beyond the grades" and acquire the tools necessary to become caring leaders and model citizens. Pastors Jamane and Alecia Williams, The Bridge Church in Pearl, founded the non-profit organization after sensing a sincere call to reach the youth in the Rankin County area.

In the fall of 2017, Pastor J, as the students call him, began to see images of the faces of young people that he did not know, who needed help. Some needed help building their confidence. Some needed help building their character. Some just needed a place to belong.

Then came the inspirational phrase, "Bridge the Gap." Pastor J knew exactly what it meant – to create an organization that would do just that. Thus, the official name was conceived.

Since then, BBLI has provided a safe and constructive after-school atmosphere designed to promote positive change. Their specific objectives are to build character and integrity; to improve relational, social, and communication skills; to encourage teamwork and sportsmanship; to develop a community service mentality; and to enhance critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.

The organizational affairs of Bridge Builders are managed by its Board of Directors, who are responsible for the well-being and promotion of the organization in the community, including fundraising and making sure the organization continues to remain in compliance and in good standing within the community.

The Board Members are also very hands-on and actively involved in volunteering at Bridge Builders on a regular basis, di-

rectly impacting the lives of the students.

The program utilizes a variety of tools and resources, including interactive activities, hands-on assignments, crafts, mentorship books and practical role-play scenarios designed to develop character, instill leadership qualities and enhance practical life skills. They engage in a number of different physical and recreational activities, including basketball, volleyball, and kickball, and other gym and outdoor activities.

In addition, at the start of the pandemic, BBLI was able to conceive creative ways to reconnect with students and families virtually. They provided care packages to 130 BBLI families to help with food insecurity. Once they were able to meet again in person beginning in October 2020, they began to limit the number of students per week to thirty so that they could still gather safely. They were able to persevere and still have a successful year, despite the challenges that the pandemic presented.

One of the program's latest upgrade includes a new bus. For the past three plus years, BBLI was utilizing a 1981 model school bus that had been donated to transport students to the Pearl Parks and Rec Building each day.

During the 2021 summer, BBLI asked the community to participate in a fundraiser that they called "Move That Bus" to assist in an upgrade to a better, safer and more convenient bus. Thanks to the overwhelming response by so many, they were able to purchase a 2009 bus, equipped with air conditioning, tinted windows, security cameras, automatic doors, and more.

Future plans include expanding Bridge Builders activities from one day a week to five days a week for both kindergarten through fifth-grade and sixth- through twelfth-grade programs, an opportunity that has been made possible due in part to their partnership with Metropolitan

YMCA of Mississippi through a grant from Mississippi Department of Human Services. The hope is that this expansion will provide more mentorship opportunities for students, as well as offering students involved in school sports more days to participate in BBLI.

They have also added STEM programming and daily homework assistance for every student to their list of resources.

Later this year, they will break ground on the Bridge Builders Arts Complex that will allow for a variety of activities with additional space for more students and

families to participate in their programming.

To date, there are many success stories. BBLI has seen the confidence of many students increase tremendously and develop socially, shifting from being introverts to extroverts, from being self-consumed to being conscious and caring of others. Students have flourished and taken ownership in the many community-service projects.

See page 14 for photo spread.

Get Involved with Bridge Builders

Volunteers: Adults looking to volunteer at Bridge Builders can visit www.bbli.org/volunteer. Volunteers are always welcome and needed to interact with the program and students in a structured and fun environment. New volunteers are required to undergo a background check.

Patrons: Bridge Builders Leadership Initiative is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization, and all donations are tax exempt. Currently they are in search of several corporate community sponsors to donate services, resources and/or capital to help in the building of this

community resource. To donate, visit www.bbli.org/donate. BBLI also has sponsorship opportunities for businesses and corporations. Contact Executive Director Lauretha Bellinder at 601-460-4107 for information.

Participants: Bridge Builders is open to all students grades six through twelve in Pearl and the surrounding areas. Currently the program picks up students from Pearl public schools. All other students must be dropped off by a parent or guardian, but all students must be registered for the program in order to participate.

Bridge Builders also offers **Bridge Kidz After School** for children kindergarten through fifth-grade. Bridge Kidz provides transportation for local kids from school to an after-school facility located at 204 Country Place Parkway in Pearl. There is a \$50 registration fee per child. For more information, call 601-885-3087.

Cost: Bridge Builders Leadership Initiative is offered for free to middle school and high school students. For more information, visit www.bbli.org and follow them on Instagram and Facebook @BRIDGEBUILDERSLI.



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Sgt. Push-Up visits PLE to talk about germs



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Pictured (l to r) are, front row: Sawyer Garrett, Benjamin Garrett, Hughes Graham, Britton Bennett, Price Brewer, Emily Rowan, Will Durr, Laken Oberto, Everette Ostrander and Cash Wilbanks; and back row: Adrian Mayfield, Sgt. Push-Up and Linda Ming.

Special to SW Rankin News

Sergeant Push-Up recently visited Pearl Lower Elementary (PLE) and presented students with a book about being safe and germ free.

Sgt. Push-Up (Patrick Parker) is a military veteran. A Baltimore, Maryland, native, Parker entered the personal training profession while developing multiple youth programs. His "Stop I Count" movement includes the "One Million Push-ups" campaign to help end hunger for children and the "Unity Dance Challenge" to end hatred. *Sgt. Push-up Comes to the Rescue* is his first comic workbook, which teaches kids how to recognize the signs of bullying, talk to their parents about it, and empower themselves and their parents with effective, low risk strategies to end bullying.

Most recently, the decorated Iraqi War veteran released his second new comic workbook to help protect children from germs and COVID-19, entitled *Sgt. Push-Up Talks To The Kids About Germs*. It is an interactive comic workbook that reinforces techniques children should know regarding keeping themselves safe during these challenging times.

The *Sgt. Push-Up Talks To The Kids About Germs* workbook is a fun comic book that includes writing exercises that assist with teaching children about what happens when touching unclean surfaces, and how social distancing, and hand washing helps decrease the spread of germs.

For more information about Sgt. Push-Up and his youth programs, visit www.sgtpushup.com.

Students encouraged to apply for youth program



Special to SW Rankin News

Mississippi's 2021 USSYP delegates were Jacob Pearson of Corinth and Weston "Archer" Taylor of Petal. Pictured is Senator Roger F. Wicker with Pearson and Taylor.

Special to SW Rankin News

High school juniors and seniors in Mississippi are encouraged to apply to represent the state at the Sixtieth Annual United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) Washington Week.

Two students selected for the 2022 USSYP Washington Week will each re-

ceive an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., and a \$10,000 undergraduate college scholarship. This year's program will be March 5-12, 2022.

"The U.S. Senate Youth Program brings some of America's most promising young leaders together to explore future careers in public service and en-

continued on page 13

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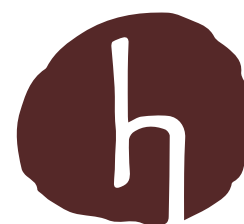
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Olivio is PPD’s Officer of the Month

Special to SW Rankin News

The City of Pearl recently announced that the Police Department Officer of the Month is Detective Reynaldo Olivio. After graduating from Poth High School in Texas in 1999, he joined the United States Marine Corp. He began his law enforcement career at the Carthage Police Department in 2006, later moving to the Flowood Police Department and was promoted to Detective in 2018.



Special to SW Rankin News
Pictured (l to r) are: Mayor Jake Windham and Detective Reynaldo Olivio.

Olivio began working at the Pearl Police Department (Pearl PD) in 2019 as a patrolman and was promoted to Detective in the Criminal Investigation Division in August 2020. Olivio has been involved in several major cases since he has been with Pearl PD, most recently a case that involved multiple auto burglaries at a local retail business.

On August 3, 2021, patrol officers with Pearl PD received a call in reference to an auto burglary. When the patrol officer arrived on scene, he was advised that there was more than one vehicle that had been burglarized. The patrol officer requested a detective to the scene. Detective Olivio responded. Detective Olivio, along with others, processed the scene and collected all evidence. The next day, Olivio and others were able to locate and arrest two suspects in the burglaries.

Due to Olivio’s initiative and resourcefulness, the suspected thieves were detained within one day. The Pearl PD says that Detective Olivio is a valuable asset to the police department and, with this special recognition, they would like to thank him for his dedication and service to the city of Pearl and the Pearl Police Department.

Students encouraged to apply for youth program

continued from page 12

gauge with representatives from each of our branches of government," said U.S. Senator Roger Wicker of Mississippi. "I highly encourage all eligible Mississippi students to apply for this once-in-a-lifetime experience."

"The United States Senate Youth Program offers opportunities for a couple of Mississippi’s brightest, community-minded students to interact with national leaders and their peers from around the country. I hope many students in Mississippi will apply for the 2022 program," said U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith of Mississippi.

In addition to outstanding leadership abilities and a strong commitment to volunteer work, USSYP delegates generally rank high academically in their states among high school juniors and seniors.

The USSYP brings the highest-level officials from each branch of government to meet with high school juniors or

seniors representing all fifty states, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Education Activity. The weeklong education and leadership program includes meetings with Senators, the President, cabinet secretaries, a justice of the Supreme Court, senior members of the national media, and other key policymakers. The Hearst Foundation fully funds and administers the USSYP without the use of any government funding.

Interested students and educators can visit www.ussenateyouth.org for more information. The deadline to apply for the USSYP program in Mississippi is October 1, 2021.

Applicants may also contact their high school principal or Mississippi’s state-level selection administrator: Sandra Hilliard, Education Specialist, Sr., Mississippi Department of Education, shilliard@mdek12.org for more information.



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Bridge Builders Leadership Initiative, a day in the life



Photos special to SW Rankin News
Bridge Builders Leadership Initiative, a 501c(3) non-profit organization, provides after-school services to area youth to keep them busy, keep them engaged and keep them inspired.



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September book report: *Farewell, My Lovely* by Raymond Chandler

By Beth Woodmansee for The Friends of the Richland Library

Raymond Chandler (1888 – 1959) was a grand master of a particular genre of fiction from early twentieth-century America - hardnosed detective fiction. In Philip Marlowe, he created a distinctly American protagonist, a man of few words, cynical, drinking too much and hiding within himself a sentimental core which keeps him working for his idea of what is right. Set in and around 1940s L.A., the title, *Farewell, My Lovely*, sounds like it might be a love story. It is—but don't expect hearts and flowers.

On page one, Philip Marlowe meets a huge man released from prison after eight years. Moose Malloy is seeking Velma. Standing in front of Florian's, the one-time night club where Velma once sang and danced before he went into the slammer, Moose longs for her. Marlowe is dragged into Moose's quest through a dark, dirty bar. Within the first hour, Moose's powerful hands kill Mr. Montgomery, the



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current manager of Florian's, in his office, because he didn't know where Velma was. By the time the police arrive, Marlowe is alone in the bar; Moose and everyone else fled the scene. Marlowe spends time answering questions from Detective-Lieutenant Nulty and a few of his men at the 77th Street Division of Bay City near Los Angeles.

Marlowe gets dragged into this case by Nulty, who really needs help. Learning where the widow of the previous owner of Florian's lives, Marlowe takes a bottle of bourbon to his interview of her. Mrs. Jessie Florian is a woman with one ambition—to stay drunk. She's a dirty old woman living in a dirty house, but, Marlowe gets information from her about

Velma, including a good photo of Velma with her signature, "Velma Valento." Jessie gets scared when she hears Moose is out of prison. She says Velma died in Texas. Truth? She'll die by Moose's hands before we reach the end. There's an artsy guy, Lindsay Marriott, with another racket. He calls Marlowe and offers him a hundred dollars to go with him to exchange \$8,000 dollars for a rare jade necklace which had been stolen from a woman at a party. Marriott is murdered before the night is over. A sweet girl, Anne Riordan, shows up and finds Marriott's body where the exchange was to take place. Marlowe

had been sapped (with a blackjack) on the back of his head. He was out for twenty minutes while Marriott was being beaten to death. Later, the sweet girl connects him with not-so-sweet Mrs. Lewin Lockridge Grayle. Elderly Mr. Grayle loves his Helen like Moose loves Velma. Helen hires Marlowe to find her jade necklace.

Jules Amthor, black-mailer, sends Marlowe on his way in the company of

two cops who pistol-whip him and leave him unconscious on a dirt road. Two days later, with effort, Marlowe brings himself to and escapes. He goes into the office of Dr. Sonderborg, who runs the "hospital" for treating alcohol and drug addiction. Sonderborg kept Marlowe doped up and locked in that room. In another room, Marlowe spied Moose Malloy relaxing with a newspaper and realized that Sonderborg's real racket is hiding and abetting criminals for a hefty fee.

Will Philip Marlowe locate Moose Malloy? Will Moose ever find Velma? Will the lovers live happily ever after? *Farewell, My Lovely* is one of the best novels I have read.

Florence first-responders receive "Lifesaving Award"



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Pictured (l to r) are Sergeant Glynn Hancock, Dispatcher Shannon Snell and Officer Kristen Arendale.

By Kerri Roberts

Recently, Lifesaving Awards and medals were presented to Sergeant Glynn Hancock, Officer Kristen Arendale, and Dispatcher Shannon Snell of the Florence Police Department. On two separate occasions, the actions of these officers and dispatcher went beyond the normal scope of duties, but they acted without hesitation.

On July 6, 2020, Officer Arendale and Sergeant Hancock responded to a medical call where a man was having chest pains. At first, the man seemed responsive, but then took a turn for the worse and was having trouble breath-

ing, eventually becoming unresponsive. They began life saving procedures while awaiting medical personnel. The patient was transported to the hospital, where he was later released, alive and well.

Then, on June 15, 2021, Arendale responded to call for a man having a possible heart attack. Dispatcher Snell was on scene and directed Arendale to the passenger side of a vehicle, where there was an unresponsive man. Arendale pulled the man from the vehicle, and Snell assisted with medical aid. He was transported to the hospital, where he underwent surgery but was later released, alive and well.

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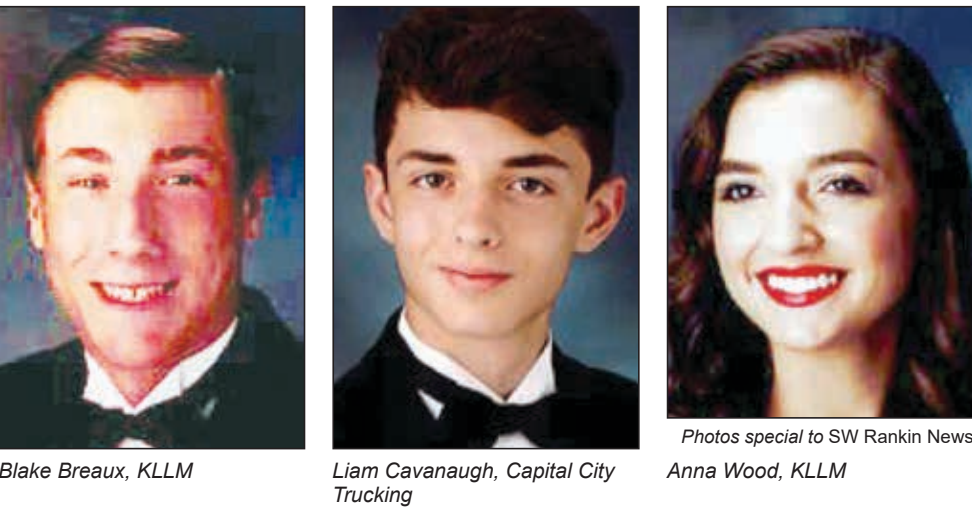
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Florence residents awarded 2021 MTAF scholarships

Richland PD's Officer Barta receives service pin



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Over thirty years ago, the Mississippi Trucking Association Foundation (MTFA) Scholarship Program was created. Recently, three Florence residents were among a select twenty-two awarded MTAF Scholarships for the 2021-2022 school year: Blake Breaux, Liam Cavanaugh and Anna Wood.

The primary objective of the Foundation, a 501(c) (3) charitable corporation designed to receive contributions, memorial gifts and property, is to promote educational projects related to the trucking industry and provide scholarships to deserving students who have ties to the trucking industry and who are enrolled in scholastic endeavors. This class joins over 300 students who have received this scholarship.

Scholarships are offered through the Mississippi Trucking Association Foundation, Mike McLarty Endowment, the John Fayard Endowment, H. Dean Cotten Endowment, G. Larry Kerr Endowment, the R. Gene Holmes Endowment, the Vernon & Nancy Sawyer Endowment, and the John Stomps Endowment.



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Richland Police Department's Officer James Barta was recently recognized for his fifteen years of service with the City of Richland. Alderman A.J. Shields presented Officer Barta with a service pin at the August 17 Board meeting.

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