



THE CANTON NEWS

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P.O. Box 1163, Canton, MS 39046

Muscee makes \$2M investment, adds 40 jobs

By Susie A. Wolfe

Leisha Pickering and Adam Pierce started Musee Bath LLC in 2011 with one person at a local farmer's market. Now they operate the largest bath balm manufacturer in the United States with 3,500 retail customers and 50 employees. In December, they moved into the 43,000 sq. ft. former Mississippi Film Studio Building in Canton with a \$2 million corporate investment and plans to create 40 new jobs. Ian MacDonald, director of operations, is also a part owner.

Pickering is self-proclaimed idea person and creative thinker. A former event planner and pastry chef, Pickering started the for-profit company with a strong social component. She said she went about it "backwards." She wanted to help find jobs for those "unemployable" people like the ones

who had been in prison, addicted to drugs, or have a disability. She said they built Musee around how the company fits the person, not how the person fits Musee.

The name "Musee" is Pickering's made-up word that stands for "things that bring joy." It is taken from the word "muse" that means inspiration or a water nymph doing shenanigans. She said her "muse" led her to come back to Mississippi to help make a difference in people's lives.

"We don't define people by their past," said Pickering. "We create a stable environment where we move forward with a person's potential and possibility. Where they are encouraged and loved."

Muscee has set the standard for the growing bath balm market in a number of ways, including adding the surprises inside the bath balm which is now a standard. The products are made the "old-fash-



Photo by The Canton News

Pictured (l to r) are founders Adam Pierce and Leisha Pickering. The new Musee location in Canton has a bath balm bakery, where workers use the bakers trays to transport the balm balms that are sold at 3,500 locations around the United States.

ioned way" and appeal to everyone from three to 93 years old. Each of the 100 bath balms have

its own recipe, and also have encouraging names and messages.

cont. on page 5

Pierce appointed to Naval Academy Prep

Special to The Canton News

Kenna Pierce, Jr., has been nominated and appointed to the United States Naval Academy Preparatory School in Newport, Rhode Island. The 10-month program prepares midshipman candidates for the rigorous journey ahead at the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. The U.S. Naval Academy is a prestigious college that enhances midshipmen, mentally, morally, and physically for service in the U.S. Navy.

Every year, there are on average 16,000 students who apply to the Naval Academy, of which 1,200 students receive appointments. Only 250 students are



Special to The Canton News

Kenna Pierce Jr. is the first student in the history of Canton High School to be accepted into the United States Naval Academy Preparatory School. Pictured (l to r) are: Captain David Bryson, Pierce, and Senior Chief Alonza Myers.

appointed annually to the preparatory school. Each candidate must qualify scholastically, medically, and physically before being appointed. After receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science from the Naval Academy, Pierce will be commissioned into the Navy prepared to lead Marines and sailors in the fleet. He will report to Newport on July 24. After being commissioned into the Navy as an Ensign, Pierce plans to become a Surface Warfare Officer or a Naval Aviator.

Pierce has been in JROTC for the past three years, and he is currently the commanding officer of the battalion.

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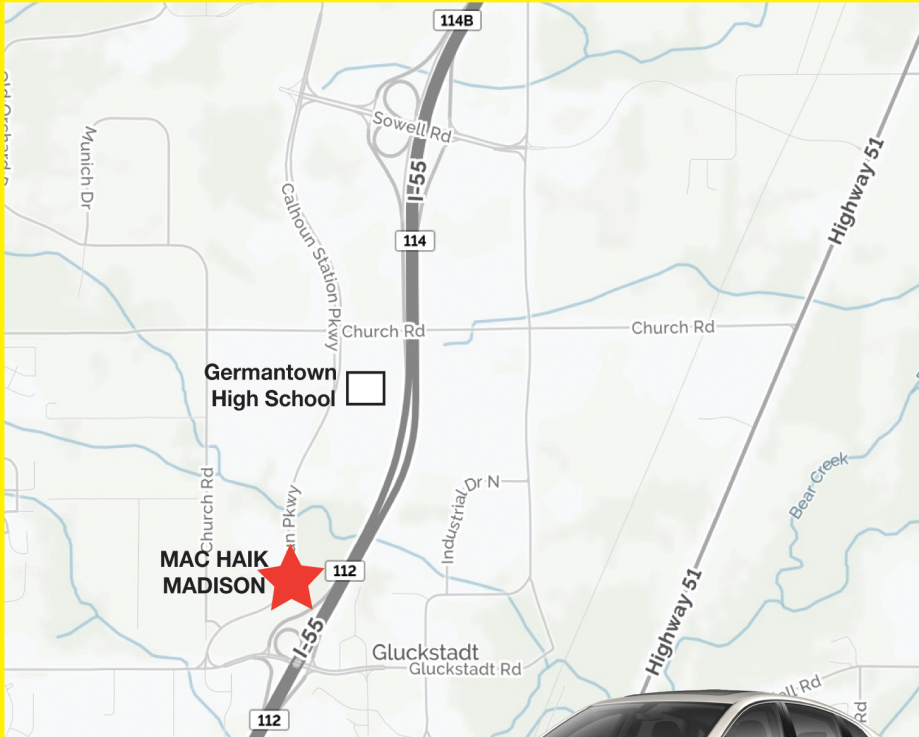
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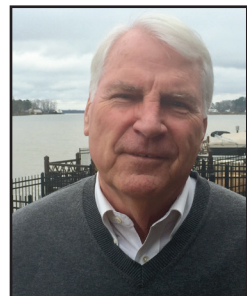
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Know Your Neighbor: Bobby Winstead

By Guest Columnist Jim Ritchie



Special to The Canton News

You may have heard of instances where well-laid life plans built over carefully thought-out strategies are changed in a flash by a totally unexpected event. This month's neighbor had this experience twice in the form of two telephone calls.

Meet Bobby Ray Winstead, Canton native, the youngest of eight children (he is fifteen minutes younger than his twin sister, Billie Faye), who attended Canton Public Schools and was elected Mr. CHS at Canton High. He aspired to attend the U.S. Naval Academy and had completed all the requirements to do so except for his physical exam. He was on his way to Meridian to take his physical when the first telephone call mentioned above came. Billy Cooper, the Canton High football coach, called and informed him that Ole Miss was offering him a football scholarship. A quick de-

cision had to be made, and the Naval Academy came in second.

Winstead earned a BA in Education with a major in mathematics at Ole Miss, while lettering in football. He did his student teaching at Rogers High in Canton and was offered a teaching contract in a Georgia school, where he was to teach five classes and serve as assistant football coach. Then, the second telephone call came. A friend who worked for Pillsbury in Ellijay, Georgia, called him and asked if he knew of anybody who might be interested in a job with Pillsbury at one and a half times the salary he was offered at the school. So, his career shifted from education to food processing, and he held various positions in management for over forty years at Pillsbury, B.C. Rogers Company, Sanderson Farms, Delta Pride Catfish and Choctaw Maid. His knowledge of the food industry prompted him to purchase a Logan Farms Honey Glazed Ham franchise in Jackson, which he owned for ten years before selling it, retiring and moving back home to Canton.

He, of course, didn't accomplish these things alone. When he was

elected Mr. CHS, Miss "Boopie" Rimmer was elected Miss CHS, and she opted to attend Mississippi Southern.

They had been friends all through their Canton Public School days, and that friendship continued until their junior year in college, when the relationship took a lucky turn for Winstead, and she consented to marry him. This union produced two children and five grandchildren. Winstead currently works part time in the pro shop at Canton Country Club. He said it gets him out of Boopie's way in the house, and she's perfectly satisfied with this arrangement. But there's always the possibility of another phone call.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Jim Ritchie is a published author, storyteller, entertainer and grandfather of eleven. He is amazed at the number of talented and accomplished people who live in the Canton area, and he thinks local citizens should know about some of them. Ritchie and professional artist wife, Perry, live in the Shocco community out from Canton. View their work at www.southernstories.com.

Families First opens Resource Center

Special to The Canton News

Families First for Mississippi has officially opened the Parent Resource Center in the Canton Elementary School Annex Building. This photo is from the soft opening held at 740 E Academy Street, Canton, MS 39046. It is staffed by Pricilla Jeffers, bilingual trainer.

The Parent Center will have classes Monday-Thursday focusing on parenting, job skills, literacy, and education. Fridays will be designated for online diploma classes. The center also has a toy lending library, library



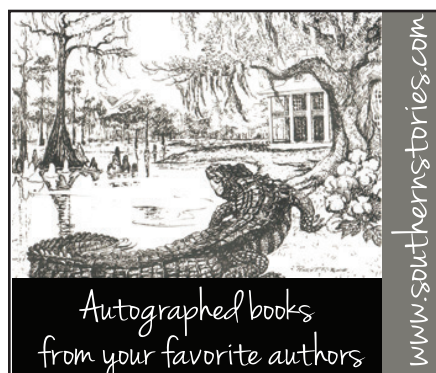
Special to The Canton News

featuring Hispanic and English books, computer lab, and clothing closet. The center is open from 8

a.m.-4 p.m. For more information contact Pricilla Jeffers, 601-383-3955, and pjeffers@mscec.org.

CORRECTION

In the Feb. 1 issue, *The Canton News* in the Keep Canton Beautiful story on the front page, mistakenly identified the right-hand person in the photo as Becky Lyons, CEO. Ms. Lyons is the Chief Operating Officer (COO).



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Canton High School wins the 5A-3 Championship



Special to The Canton News

Canton High boys are MHSAA District 3 Class 5-A Region 3 Champions. The CHS Tigers triumphed over Cleveland Central in a hard-fought battle ending with a final score of 54-40.



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Pictured (l to r): Montavious Esco and Jamal Porter from Canton High.

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CHS Tigers sign to play college football in MS



Photo by Jud Meaders, Jr.

Wide Receiver Antoine Robinson, right, and Defensive Back Zahlyn McGruder, left, are shown with Coach Calvin Bolton on National Signing Day in February.

Special to The Canton News

Wide Receiver Antoine Robinson and Defensive Back Zahlyn McGruder received full scholarships as they signed their letters of intent to continue their education and continue playing the sport they love. The Canton High football players say their hard work is truly paying off. Antoine Robinson, the son of Tamarra Davis and Antoine Robison

received a full scholarship from Copiah Lincoln (Co-Lin) Community College.

Zahlyn McGruder, the son of Shavonda McGruder, received a full scholarship from Hinds Community College. Both Tigers plan to major in Business or Engineering. CHS Head Football Coach Calvin Bolton and their families say they are extremely proud of their accomplishments and look forward to many more ahead.

cont. from front page

Muscee makes \$2 Million investment adds 40 jobs

They released a line of soaps March 1 that will have one of 14 words stamped into the soap, like "Shine," or "Courage." They are made with the cold process method using vegetable-based oils with lye, which is not used in the current soap manufacturing process, because it takes longer.

Again, the heart of the company is to help people, so the pieces of soap that are scraps in the manufacturing process will be sent to South Africa where Pickering said, "soap is a luxury."

On April 1, Musee plans to release their new line of candles. Musee is also in the process of introducing a new logo that looks like flower with a lightning bug built in. One of Pickering's favorite quotes is "if it's a dark enough, one small light shines bright."

Pickering said she enjoys taking a small idea and working to

make it flourish. With a new location, new products, and many new ideas, Musee has a bright future.

"We're proud of our affiliates' work. They are rallying volunteers to energize community improvement across the state," said Keep Mississippi Beautiful Executive Director Sarah Kountouris.

Keep Canton Beautiful was one of more than 80 individuals and organizations from communities across America to receive national recognition. Keep America Beautiful's National Awards recognize the passion, dedication and impact of Keep America Beautiful's affiliates from across the nation as well as partner organizations and individuals who share Keep America Beautiful's vision of a country in which every community is a clean, green and beautiful place to live.

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Biblical Flowers program presented at Garden Club



Special to The Canton News

The Canton Garden Club had its February Meeting at the Rose Garden Room on Union Street. The program, "Biblical Flowers," was presented by Sarah Bowen. There were 20 members present and they exchanged Valentine desserts. Follow the Canton Garden Club on Facebook.

Mr. and Miss CA 2018



Special to The Canton News

Canton Academy recently selected Mr. And Miss CA for 2018. Joseph McLean was named Mr. CA, and Virginia Grace Lavender was named Miss CA.

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Canton Academy names special 2018 awards



Special to The Canton News

Pictured (l to r): Canton Academy Best All Around Junior High Eli Crosby and Edi Craft.



Special to The Canton News

Pictured (l to r): Canton Academy Most Handsome Patrick Sandridge and Most Beautiful Prestley Smith.

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Connecting the Dots Foundation, Inc. honors Bowman

By Guest Columnist Cynthia Goodloe Palmer

March is National Women's History Month, and the 2018 national theme is "Nevertheless, She Persisted." On March 24, Connecting the Dots Foundation, Inc. (CDF) will "Celebrate Women of Courage and Endurance," honoring the late Sister Thea Bowman among other women of distinction.

Sister Thea was a Roman Catholic nun, Sister of Perpetual Adoration, teacher, and scholar who made a major contribution to the ministry of the Catholic Church in Canton and worldwide. Gifted with a brilliant mind, beautiful voice and a dynamic personality, Sister Thea shared the message of God's love through a teaching career. After 16 years of teaching, at the elementary, secondary and university level, the bishop of Jackson, Mississippi, invited her to become the consultant for inter-cultural awareness. In her role as consultant, Sister Thea gave presentations across the country;



Special to The Canton News

Sister Thea Bowman, pictured, and other women of distinction will be honored on March 24.

lively gatherings that combined singing, gospel preaching, prayer and storytelling. Her programs were directed to break down racial and cultural barriers. She encouraged people to communicate with one another so that they could understand other cultures and races.

She became an evangelist, assist-

ed in the production of an African American Catholic hymnal, and was a popular soloist and speaker on faith and spirituality in her final years. She helped found the National Black Sisters Conference to provide support for African-American women in Catholic religious institutes. She has been designated a Servant of God. Sister

Thea is featured in the Multi-Cultural museum in Canton.

The other honorees are: Dr. Helen Barnes, the first African American, female faculty at UMMC; Eliza Pillars, the first African American public health nurse; Beth Orlansky, attorney with the Mississippi Center for Justice; and Pam Johnson, author, community activist, media and issues consultant.

The program will be held at the Marriott Hotel Downtown Jackson, beginning at 6 p.m. Scholarships will be given to support projects that uplift the community. For ticket, sponsorship information, contact Marilyn Luckett, executive director, at 601-813-5045 or connectingdots369@gmail.com

EDITOR'S NOTE: Palmer is an award-winning recording artist and is a three-time winner at the Mississippi Gospel Music Awards. She serves as the founder and president of the Canton Gospel Music Association.

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NMED announces board



Photo by The Canton News

The NMED governing board pictured (l to r) are, front row: Earnestine Bilbrew, Dr. Pollia Griffin, and Pallascene Bright Cole, and second row: Ed Hightower, Diane Day, Dr. Mary Sims-Johnson, and Doris Sutherland. Not pictured is Willie Cline.

Special to The Canton News

The North Madison County Economic Development Council (NMED) recently announced their current governing board. The non-profit organization's mission is to secure economic and workforce development in the rural communities of Northeast Madison County.

The Board of Directors include Earnestine Bilbrew, Bilbrew Consulting, vice chair; Dr. Pollia Griffin, retired educator and member of the Madison County School Board, chair; and Pallascene Bright Cole, retired educator and consultant, second vice chair; and second row: Ed Hightower, Sacred Heart Catholic Mission, Board member; Diane Day, certified public accountant, financial analyst; Dr. Mary Sims-Johnson, Madison

County Citizens Services Agency, treasurer; Doris Sutherland, retired from the Illinois Department of Human Services, secretary, and Willie Cline, owner Cline Properties, Board member.

NMED was organized in April 2016. The stated objectives include providing opportunities for the community to engage in recreational and family-oriented activities, sponsoring events and activities to promote community awareness and community building, seeking businesses and industries to promote the growth, and aligning resources, eliminating barriers and promoting services, programs, housing and jobs.

Any start-up business interested in NMED should contact Dr. Pollia Griffin at 601-832-4769. The group meets the second Friday of each month at 9 a.m.

Give God all the glory

By Guest Columnist Pastor Guy Odom,
First Baptist Canton

I am currently reading for my devotions each day a book entitled *Uncommon Life Daily Challenge*.



Special to The Canton News

It contains a devotion for 365 days a year. The author is one of my favorite football coaches, Tony Dungy. Dungy is a devout follower of Jesus Christ and the former coach of the Indianapolis Colts. He won a Super Bowl there with one of the best quarterbacks of all time, Peyton Manning. Well, he is a very fine writer, as well. I would like to share one of his devotions that hit me in a big way. The title of this devotion is called "No Fanfare." The scripture says, "Don't do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward from your Father in heaven. When you give to someone in need, don't do as the hypocrites do—blowing trumpets in the synagogues and streets to call attention to their acts of charity!" Matthew 6:1-2

"Tim Tebow received just about every award that a football play-

er can get in college—a Heisman Trophy, the Maxwell Award, and two national championships with the Florida Gators, to name a few. His dad told Nathan that at the end of the season, he was helping Tim pack up his belongings in the locker room when Tim asked his father if he would carry a box to the car. Tim's dad peeked inside the box, full of trophies, plaques, and certificates, most of which his dad never knew his son had won. His dad said, "Tim is just quiet that way... .." He simply doesn't tell anyone or us." Like the weekly hospital visits that often last hours as the nurses lead him to room after room, and the countless phone calls to people who need a word of encouragement. "Done for the right reasons, without fanfare or publicity."

"God wants all of us to live lives of impact, but not in order to receive accolades and recognition!"

God should receive all glory with the gifts and talents that we have been given!

-Pastor Guy

EDITOR'S NOTE: Guy Odom has been pastor at First Baptist Church of Canton since 2012. He and his wife, Tommi, have two sons, Ely and Cy. He is originally from Vicksburg.

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Luckett wins state honor



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Dwight Luckett, Jr. won first place in the 2018 State Reading Fair in the category of Informational Nonfiction Digital Media. Luckett, a 12-year-old seventh grader at Huey Porter Middle School, is the son of Beverly and Dwight Luckett, Sr.

MCCSA receives recognition



Special to The Canton News

MCCSA Transit Staff pictured (l to r) front row, are: Sundleeen Frazier, operator; Randy Boyd, operator; Patricia Williams, operator; Tina Wilkinson, operator; Dr. Mary Sims-Johnson, executive director; Hema Desai, secretary/dispatcher; Dianne Esco, operator; Terray White, operator; and back row: Annie Jackson, administrative assistant; April Lewis-Nash, program manager; and Rickey Bouldin, transit support specialist.

Special to The Canton News

Madison County Citizens Services Agency (MCCSA) was recognized as the General Public Transit System of the Year on November 16, 2017 in Starkville, Mississippi by the Mississippi

Public Transit Association.

MCCSA was specifically recognized for exemplifying multiple competencies in the field of rural Community Transit, including management, leadership, productivity, vision, and innovation.



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CPSD begins supplemental instructional services

By Cassandra Williams,
Superintendent CPSD



Special to The Canton News

Just a few short months ago, I was greeting our babies on the first day of school. Incredibly, we are approaching the end of our school year, which means that our students will soon begin taking state assessments. Our students will participate in the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) beginning in April with our third grade ELA assessment. This is one of our most important assessments, as it determines whether or not students can move on to fourth grade. Principals at each of our four elementary schools will host sessions for parents of third graders to provide them with information about this very important assessment. State assessments will continue through early May. We believe that the processes that we have put in place this year have prepared our students to be successful on these

exams.

We learned in the last two years that the key to supporting our students' growth is to increase the amount of time that they spend with new and prerequisite content. We've provided pull-out tutorials for students to help fill in learning gaps in reading and mathematics. As an extra layer of support, we will again offer Saturday School for our students on April 7, April 14, April 21, and April 28. We've identified students whom we feel would benefit most from this extra instruction, and these students' parents will soon receive a letter that provides details about the Saturday sessions. However, any parent who would like their child to attend Saturday School, can register him or her by calling the school's principal. Breakfast, lunch, and transportation will be provided. Last year, we had an average of 500 students each Saturday! We hope to beat those numbers this year.

Spring Break for our district is March 12-March 16; however, we want our students to continue to practice the skills that they are learning in class. Therefore, students in grades three - eight



2018 I!CAN Ambassadors with coordinators

Special to The Canton News

and high school students who are enrolled in English I, English II, Algebra I, US History, and/or Biology I will receive Spring Break packets again this year. Students will also receive Assessment Readiness packets in April. Last year, our students eagerly completed these Spring Break and Assessment Readiness packets to help reinforce content and skills.

Parents can assist their children in preparing for the state assessments by encouraging them to complete the supplemental assignments, by registering them for Saturday School, and by making sure that they are well-rested be-

fore each exam. We've worked all year to ensure that our students master grade-level content and show growth. When you see our students at home, church, or in the neighborhood, give them a pat on the back for working so hard this year, and encourage them to shine!

EDITOR'S NOTE: With over twenty years in education, Cassandra Williams' focus as superintendent of the Canton Public School District is to increase student achievement through an invigorated emphasis on teaching, learning, and nurturing.

BEWARE OF MISLEADING REQUEST FOR MONEY

Some of our customers are receiving letters from American Water Resources regarding buying insurance for water line breaks. I would like customers to know this is not through CMU, and This is not a product endorsed by CMU.

Stephen Thompson
Canton Municipal Utilities
General Manager

AMERICAN WATER RESOURCES of Mississippi
Attn: L. 5252

Water line information for homeowners in the Canton area

Dear Customer:

As a homeowner you should be aware that property owners served by Canton Municipal Utilities are responsible for the maintenance and repair of the water line from the water meter to the house. This is the homeowner's responsibility and is not covered by the water line insurance. Please see our website at www.amwater.com for more information.

Homeowners already have American Water Resources of Mississippi for water service line repair. This program is designed to provide homeowners with a prompt response and can be provided for up to \$5,000 for covered water line breaks. This program is not a replacement for the water line insurance that you purchase. Please see our website at www.amwater.com for more information.

How to use the service:

Call the toll-free hotline that is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The hotline is 1-877-532-5268. Please provide the address of the water line break and the location of the water meter. The hotline operator will provide you with a list of the water line repair companies that are available to serve you. Please call one of the companies to schedule a repair. The repair will be completed within 24 hours.

Call today at 1-877-532-5268 or visit www.amwater.com

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Trains making a comeback to Canton this year

Special to The Canton News

While the Canton Redevelopment office has many ongoing projects, as well as new ones that Director Dorothy Nelson can't yet discuss, the office also oversees the Canton Depot Train Museum. The renovations to the depot and the museum were completed in 2000, but, according to Nelson, a large percentage of Cantonians aren't aware it exists.

The trains no longer use the Canton tracks on a daily basis; however, a \$7.5 million FAST-LANE grant has congressional funding approval to reopen 90 miles of track from Grenada to Canton. The project, which will include repairing bridges, replacing crossties and installing active warning devices, should proceed quickly, since an environmental review is part of the requirements for release of funds. The environmental should be completed by the end of March. No problems are expected, according

to the project administrator, Chris Pope, of North Central Planning and Development District, since the work will be within the existing railroad right-of-way. The grant recipient is North Central Mississippi Regional Railroad Authority and the operator of the line is Iowa Pacific Holdings. The work is expected to take twelve months to complete.

The Redevelopment office has worked for years, in conjunction with the Chamber and the Tourism offices, to offer civic and cultural anchors as means of attracting people into Canton and creating pride for the citizens. Unless citizens recognize the importance of the assets, they will become indifferent to its preservation. A visit to Canton's train museum will create in all who visit an interest in pursuing the railroad as an economic driver for the City.

To arrange tours of the museum, call the Redevelopment Office; 601-859-3815.

Bolden State Farm named Best Insurance Agency



Special to The Canton News

The Arnel D. Bolden State Farm Insurance Agency was voted as Best Insurance Agency in the Best of Canton the last three years in a row. Citizens of Canton voted in the annual survey. Pictured (l to r) are: Ari-Elle Grace, daughter; Dr. LaToya Bolden, wife; Arnel Bolden, agent; and Shevetta Johnson, team member.

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Dondre Blackmon sells real estate and concrete

By Susie A. Wolfe



Special to The Canton News

In his early teens, Dondre Blackmon was a Hip Hop artist writing his own songs. After high school, he chose to go to real estate school and work with his father and brothers in the family's concrete company.

Today, at 22, Blackmon is a real estate producer at Turnkey Properties, LLC in Madison; a business developer for Blackmon Concrete, one of the biggest commercial foundation companies in Mississippi; and a keyboard/pianist at St. John Missionary Baptist Church in Camden.

In addition to his father, Floyd

Blackmon, Sr., mentoring his son about the concrete and foundation business, Blackmon has the leadership and support of Bob Montgomery from Montgomery McGraw Law Firm and Stuart Warren at Turnkey Properties.

Warren said, "Dondre is doing what it takes to be an entrepreneur in a competitive real estate market. He works hard and is using tools to get the visibility he needs to be a super success."

Montgomery said he has known Blackmon, Sr., for 50 years, and he is one of the hardest working men he's ever known. He feels Dondre is following in his father's footsteps. He said he met him as a 13-year-old when he was a songwriter trying to get his songs copyrighted.

Blackmon and his wife, Lakeo, have been married since 2016, and live in Canton.

NMED sponsors inaugural Small Business Forum



Special to The Canton News

Special to The Canton News

The North Madison County Economic Development Council (NMED) recently sponsored a small business forum for businesses located in Northeast Madison County. It was held at the Sacred Heart Family Life Center in Camden with more than 37 businesses participating. Legislative and countywide

updates were presented by Rep. Kenneth Walker, District 27, and Supervisor Paul Griffin, District Five. Participants dialogued and networked on combining resources to expand their services.

NMED continues to hold open enrollment to build an active membership directory. Interested businesses should contact Dr. Pollia Griffin at 601-832-4769.

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Prayer Meeting
Children & Youth Activities
Choir Rehearsal

Seafood King Restaurant opens in west Canton

By Susie A. Wolfe

Seafood King Restaurant opened on Feather Lane, just down from Tractor Supply Company, in October. They sell seafood cooked and frozen and also offer catering.

Serving Coast seafood and Louisiana crawfish, owner John Kellum said this restaurant is not affiliated with Louisiana Seafood King that closed on the opposite side of the interstate. It is one of his three restaurants, the other two being the Crawfish King restaurants in Flowood and Richland.

"We named the restaurant Seafood King because we want folks to know that we are not seasonal," said Kellum. "We serve fresh seafood, fresh cut fries, hushpuppies, gumbo and homemade Coleslaw. And, right now, we have both live and cooked crawfish."

On the menu are shrimp, snow crabs, Dungeness crabs, king crabs, blue crabs and lobster tails. They offer seafood

baskets with catfish, shrimp, oyster, chicken strips, and pan trout. In addition to raw seafood including all types of crabs, they offer red snapper, red fish, tilapia, tuna, alligator, and frog legs; they also have pork, crawfish and alligator boudin sausage.

Kellum and Restaurant Manager Eddie Norman met in Hattiesburg working at Chesterfields. Kellum has also worked with Inserve Corporation in Meridian and served as a food and beverage manager in Hammond, Louisiana.

His son, John Bailey, and two nephews also work in his restaurants, as does Norman's son Landon.

The Seafood King Restaurant is open six days a week, Tuesday through Sunday, at 11 a.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, they close at 8. Friday and Saturday, they close at 9, and Sunday at 7. For more information, call the Restaurant at 601-859-1144, or visit their Facebook page.

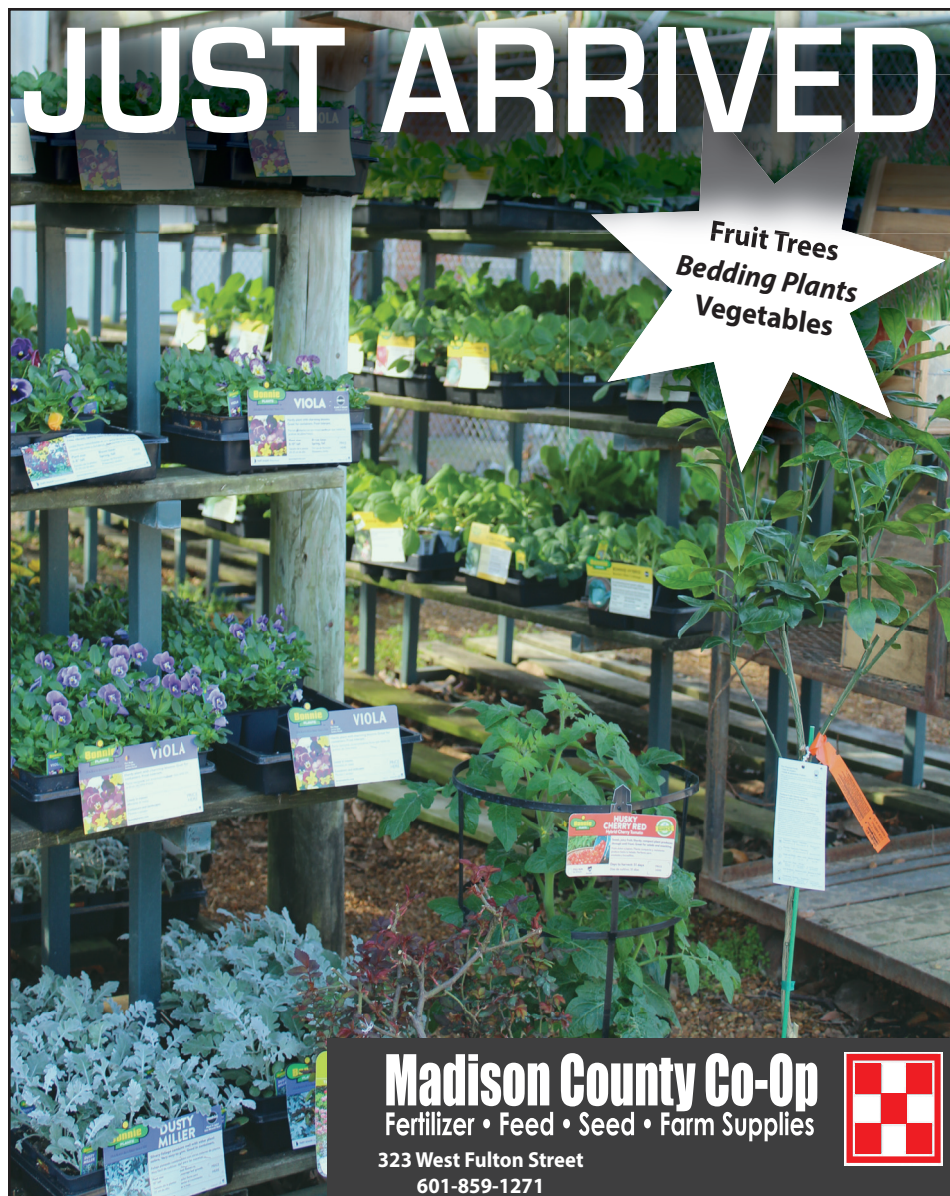


Photos by The Canton News

Pictured (l to r) are Owner John Kellum, and Manager Eddie Norman, who opened Seafood King Restaurant, offering fresh and frozen seafood choices.

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MCLS reimagines the bookmobile as mobile library

Special to The Canton News

The Madison County Library System is reimagining the bookmobile as a mobile library complete with books, periodicals, computer stations, genealogy resources, free Wi-Fi and more. The libraries will partner with local schools, nursing homes, churches, daycares, businesses and special events to bring a full range of library services directly to the public. Patrons may even request materials in advance to be delivered by the bookmobile.

The goal is to remove barriers that prevent traditional library use whether cultural, socioeconomic or physical. The bookmobile will

enable them to bring the library out into the community, reaching underserved areas and community members, including rural communities, the elderly, the disabled and the homebound. Studies show that bookmobiles encourage library use by non-users and bring library services to the children of non-users, advancing our goal of early literacy education. Furthermore, bookmobiles serve as mobile ambassadors to non-users unfamiliar with the range of services available at the library, often prompting them to become library patrons.

While MCLS will travel throughout the county, their focus will be those underserved areas

and populations. They will work directly with schools to provide students and teachers with access to the public library collection, delivered directly to the schools as well as the technology oriented after-school programs such as coding and STEM activities. In addition, with 51% of library computer users reporting no home internet access, the bookmobile, with its free Wi-Fi and computer stations, will serve as a mobile research and job application center.

A van style unit has been selected for customization to fit the community needs, complete with shelving, story time benches, wheelchair lift and outside

awning with tables and chairs, offering a quiet, shaded reading and computer space.

As always, the library would benefit from the support of the community to ensure the success and sustainability of the projects and to continue to bring innovative services to patrons. Friends groups will sponsor book sales and fundraisers, and the library welcomes corporate sponsorships, as well.

Contact your local branch for fundraiser or individual donation information. Businesses interested in becoming a corporate sponsor may contact Tonja Johnson, MCLS Executive Director, for more details.



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