

First Senior Safety and Health Fair held in January

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Pastor's Perspective: Live by the rules

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NEWS Pelahatchie

Good News You Can Use

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Yogi on the Lake announces \$1 million+ upgrades

By Susie A. Wolfe

Yogi on the Lake in Pelahatchie, an award-winning Leisure Systems Inc. property, has announced it will be upgrading its splash pad to the status of water park. The date is to be determined, but construction will hopefully begin in the Spring.

There will also be one significant addition to the Yogi family this year confirmed Manager David Sparkman. "Cindy will now be living at Yogi on the Lake alongside Yogi and BooBoo." "Our splash pad had 13 water features," said Manager Rhonda Sparkman, "and the new structure will have 79 water features, and will be classified as a water park."

Included in the multiple upgrades will be new flooring at Yogi cabins on the lakeside. Local craftsman Mark Reagan Construction is doing the work.

EDITOR'S NOTE: See story on Yogi Awards on page 7.



Special to Pelahatchie News

The Pelahatchie Yogi resort will get a new water park with 79 water features sometime this year.

Pelahatchie City Clerk resigns, Board bans cell phones

Special to Pelahatchie News

Mayor Ryshonda Beechem and Board of Aldermen met in a regular board meeting on Tuesday, January 2, at City Hall, followed by a Special Board Meeting on Monday, January 8. Other key happenings in January include the resignation of City Clerk Bettye Massey, effective January 24. Massey has held that position for 29 years.

Alderman Michael Adams made the recommendation that the possession and use of cell phones by the public be banned from the meetings of the Board Room of City Hall. On a motion from Alderman Adams, seconded by Alderman Eddie Jones, the Board unanimously adopted the resolution banning the possession and use of cell phones by the public from the Board



Photo by Pelahatchie News

Mayor, Board of Aldermen and Town employees are shown at 2017's Mayor's Prayer Breakfast.

meetings. The Mayor asked that the minutes reflect she did not agree with this decision.

January 2 business included:

- Building Official Lynn Gunn submitted his immediate resignation.
- The Board voted to accept the low bid of Mississippi Elevator LLC in the

amount of \$7239.00. This was tabled from the December meeting.

- The Board unanimously approved the FEMA pay request in the amount \$117,714.50.

- The Board entered into executive session to discuss personnel matters within the Police Department, affected by the budget. No action was taken during the executive session.

- Alderman Jones made the motion to reduce the Police Department budget by \$50,000, with the particular cuts being a result of the reduction, to Police Chief Kevin Poole's discretion. Alderman Frank Boyd seconded, with all voting aye.

- Mayor Beechem presented two quotes for materials for Milltown park fencing from Jeffcoat Fencing for \$2782.21 and from Home Depot

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Pelahatchie Fire Department 2017 Year in Review

By Susie A. Wolfe

The Pelahatchie Fire Department had an active year in 2017. Operating with two engine companies and one rescue unit with 25 fire fighters, they completed 1,505.5 man-hours of training, consisting of firefighting and medical-type training and doing public education presentations. Five members also completed the Mississippi Fire Academy Volunteer Certification Class to obtain Level-I Certification.

The VFD had an eight-minute response time for the whole year. They responded to 410 calls for emergency service in 2017, including 26 fires, 335 emergency medical calls, seven hazardous conditions, six service calls, 27 Good Intent calls, six false alarms, and three were severe weather calls. In their mutual aid agreement with other departments, they also responded to 15 calls for assistance.

The Fire Department operates mainly on donations from the public. To make a donation, contact any member of the department or mail to: Pelahatchie Fire Department, Attention: Karl VanHorn, P.O. Box 229, Pelahatchie, MS 39145.



Photo by Pelahatchie News



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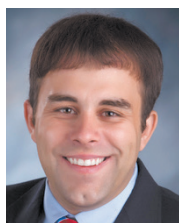
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Legislative updates: It's time to let the teachers teach



By Tom Miles, State Representative, House District #75

Special to Pelahatchie News

While the nation has seen the majority of states steer away from the mandatory testing system that has shackled our classroom teachers and students for over a decade, Mississippi is still stubbornly hanging on. This, despite the fact that only a handful of states are now using mandated tests to determine whether or not a child should be allowed to graduate.

For the second year in a row, I have filed a bill to abolish all the statewide testing used as exit exams for our students and replace this testing with the ACT test.

Last month, I asked my social media friends what improvements they

would like to see in our public education system. Not surprisingly, the one thing everyone seemed to agree on was that it is time to eliminate mandatory state testing and free up teachers so that they can do their jobs. While we'll never get back the many hours that our professional educators have spent working to tick the checkboxes on this imposed system, we should now turn our attention on a way to dismantle this idea that state tests are the final determiners of whether our students can succeed or whether or not they can proceed to the next level of their education.

We all recognize that public school teachers feel the need to "teach to the test" because theirs and their school's success ratings are directly correlated to their students' performance on these tests. We know that test taking has evolved into such an important part

of a student's education experience that special programs, performances, and curriculums infuse every aspect of school life with the "importance" of these tests. There is something fundamentally wrong with forcing our teachers to "teach to the test" while ignoring important concepts and learning opportunities related to their subject matters.

Why use the ACT test instead of state-mandated exit tests?

First, the state pays for all juniors to take this test. Using the ACT will drastically curb the test-taking industry that takes valuable taxpayer money to continue the mandated programs.

Second, no college asks what a student made on their state exit tests; they ask what they made on their ACT. If a so-called purpose of the state exit tests is to make sure students are ready for college, the ACT will tell us that. And

teachers can get back to making sure our students are exposed to as much information as possible instead of narrowly focusing on state testing criteria.

Many educators recognize that some very smart students are just not good test takers. Their anxiety at test taking time affects their scores, and some students dread the test taking so much that they would rather drop out of school than complete the exit exams. In these cases, the tests are resulting in the exact opposite results they should.

I am hopeful that my idea will be supported by my colleagues.

It's time to let the teachers teach.

For more information on this idea, visit www.fairtest.org.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Representative Tom Miles serves as State Representative for House District #75 in Scott and Eastern Rankin Counties.

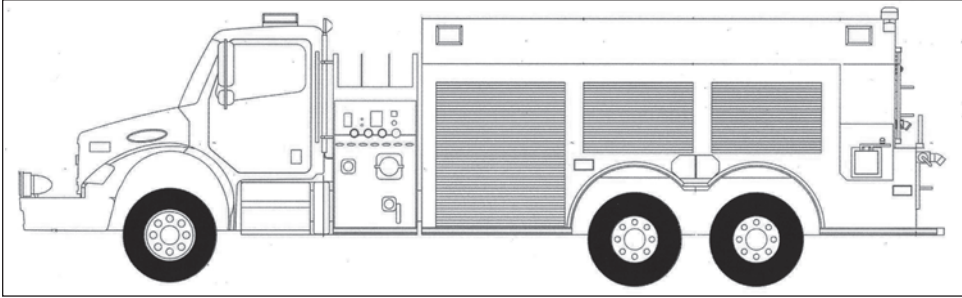
Ambiance named Rankin's Best Landscaper



Special to Pelahatchie News

Ambiance Landscape, LLC was named "Best Landscaper" at Rankin's Red Carpet Best of the Best Gala held January 18. The event, which had a record-breaking crowd, was sponsored by the Rankin Chamber of Commerce and Hometown Rankin Magazine. Pictured (l to r) are: Tahya Dobbs, publisher of Hometown Rankin Magazine; Josh McCrory, Ambiance landscape architect; Lea Denson, office manager; Jordan Dixon, business development; Blake Boyer, owner; Brett Denson, owner; and Mandi Arinder, executive director of the Rankin Chamber.

VFD gets new truck



Special to Pelahatchie News

The 3,000-gallon tanker pumper designed to the Pelahatchie Volunteer Fire Department's specifications is expected to be ready in August.

By Susie A. Wolfe

The Pelahatchie Volunteer Fire Department will be getting its new fire truck in August, according to Fire Chief Karl VanHorn. The truck, designed to the Fire Department's specifications and funded by a FEMA grant and \$18,000 Pelahatchie funds, is being built by Midwest Fire in Minnesota.

VanHorn said the \$360,000 truck is a

tanker pumper that will hold 3,000 gallons of water that will serve not only the Town, but also help with fires in Rankin County. The trucks the department currently operate hold 1,000 gallons of water. This tanker will be able to dump the 3,000 gallons in a dump tank and be refilled in three or four minutes by a single person.

He added that this is the only tanker of its type in the County. He will get updates as the truck is being built.

Duke's named Rankin's Best Steakhouse



Special to Pelahatchie News

Duke's Steak House was named "Best Steakhouse" at Rankin's Red Carpet Best of the Best Gala held January 18. The event, which had a record-breaking crowd and over 65,000 votes in 59 categories, was sponsored by the Rankin Chamber of Commerce and Hometown Rankin Magazine. Pictured (l to r) are Tahya Dobbs, publisher of Hometown Rankin Magazine; Boo Baker, owner of Duke's; and Mandi Arinder, executive director of the Rankin Chamber.

continued from page 1

City Clerk resigns, Board bans phones

for \$473.60. Alderman Boyd made the motion to approve both of the quotes, with a second from Alderman Jones, with all voting aye.

• Mayor Beechem presented quotes from M & R Protective Systems for access control system for double doors in City Hall and additional camera system for Boardroom and Mayor's office. After discussion, Alderman Jones made the motion to table this request, with a second from Alderman Boyd, with all voting aye.

• Alderman Margie Warren who recommended the Board establish a policy through resolution that members of the Board may bring up for discussion and vote items not previously set on the Agenda. On a motion from Alderman Warren, with a second from Alderman Jones, the Board unanimously approved the resolution establishing policy that members of the Board may bring up for discussion and vote items not previously set on the agenda.

• Alderman Warren also recommended the Board adopt a policy establishing that members of the Board may make recommendations to the Board. On a motion from Alderman Warren, second from Alderman Jones, the Board adopted the resolution that members of the Board may make recommendations to the Board. Alderman Jones seconded with all voting

aye.

• Mayor Beechem requested establishing a hiring procedure and guidelines to allow the Mayor and Board members to have time to review the applicants and interview them before they are presented to the Board. After discussion it was determined that there is a procedure in place in the Personnel Policy. Alderman Boyd made the motion to table this until the Attorney could review. Alderman Adams seconded, with all voting aye.

A Special Meeting was held on Monday, January 8, in the conference room of City Hall to discuss making an amendment of the procedures, rules and restrictions for purchases, and expenditures by municipal departments, department heads, and employees. After discussion, Alderman Jones made the motion that department heads be authorized to make purchases up to \$600 without prior approval of the mayor. Any purchase over \$600 would require approval unless it was an emergency purchase.

The second item on the agenda was setting regular work sessions for the Board. After discussion with no vote taken, the Board decided to consider the possibility of setting regular work sessions to be held two weeks after the regular board meeting.

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Leadership in the workplace begins with leadership in the home



Special to Pelahatchie News



By Doug Carter,
Rankin County
Extension Agent

Abraham Lincoln once said, "The strength of a nation lies in the homes of its people."

Leadership begins in the home. One cannot be a truly effective leader in the classroom or boardroom, unless they are first a leader in the family room.

Four leadership traits that must be developed with the family are:

1. Knowledge - Know your flock, which is your family. Get to really know your spouse and your children: spend quality time with them. Make time to regularly date your spouse and children to connect with them individually. Mark the dates on your calendar and guard the precious time set aside for your family. You can't understand someone if you don't spend time getting to know him or her. Also, know your "herd," which is your children's friends. Lead with wisdom and understanding; look for the teachable moments. Use everyday experiences to

teach character traits and values.

2. Sacrifice - Model being a servant leader. We live in a "what's in it for me" culture. Becoming a servant leader means putting others' needs before our own. It is better if each spouse is willing to give 100 percent. Children should be taught to sacrifice some things without expecting anything in return.

3. Character - Character is who we are when no one else is looking; it is caught---not taught. Honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, kindness and forgiveness are all traits of good character. Model good character in the home, and make sure your walk matches your talk. Doing the right thing is more important than doing things right.

4. Vision - What is your family's vision? What is your family's purpose? Sit down with your family and write out some goals and a mission statement. Businesses have mission statements, churches have mission statements, how much stronger our families would be if we had a written statement of our purpose. If we don't know where we are going, we are likely to end up somewhere else.

First Senior Health and Safety Fair held January



Photos by Pelahatchie News

Mrs. Virginia Heard is shown getting her blood pressure taken by Pam McKinney of the St. Dominic Family Medical Clinic at the January 22 Senior Health and Safety Fair held at the Community Center. Fifteen providers had booths to help educate seniors on things from physical therapy and massage and exercise to dentistry, hearing, wills, insurance and home health. Other booths included a car care vendor, a lawn care service and a drug store.

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Pelahatchie High School Honor Roll

Special to Pelahatchie News

The Honor roll recipients for the first semester are listed below. Each student had all A's or A's and B's for the first semester average in each course.

A Honor Roll: Attkisson, Anna Grace, 12th grade; Pinter, Lizzy, 12th grade; Munoz-Ramos, Cheyla, 11th grade; Renfroe, Brenna, 11th grade; Till, Harrison, 11th grade; White, Jordan, 11th grade; Whitney, Hannah, 11th grade; Alman, Bethani Grace, 10th grade; Castillo, Scarlett, 10th grade; Dawson, Abigail, 10th grade; Goldman, Sydny, 10th grade; Irvin, Devin, 10th grade; Myers, Aliza, 10th grade; Scherer, Anna, 10th grade; Herrington, Meghan, 9th grade; Hester, MaKaylee, 9th grade; Cain, Madelyn, 8th grade; Doster, Collins, 8th grade; Doster, Kenner, 8th grade; Mills, Haley, 8th grade; Pearson, Brianna, 8th grade; Till, Adlyn, 8th grade; Valentine,

Marie, 8th grade; Boyer, Eli, 7th grade; Cain, Hunter, 7th grade; and Patton, Camden, 7th grade;

A/B Honor Roll: Bowman, Caiti, 12th grade; Burkes, Lanie, 12th grade; Edwards, Maleigh, 12th grade; Hobson, Morghan, 12th grade; Horton, Jarrett, 12th grade; Myers, Cody, 12th grade; Walters, Gabbi, 12th grade; White, Blaine, 12th grade; Bayliss, Katie, 11th grade; Boyd, Morgan, 11th grade; Collier, Tiara, 11th grade; Flores, Keyanna, 11th grade; Hamilton, Carmen, 11th grade; Reynolds, Dajah, 11th grade; Smith, Jessica, 11th grade; Stokes, Kiaieshi, 11th grade; Thomas, Dessi, 11th grade; Till, Gunner, 11th grade; Wilder, Cedrick, 11th grade; Wohlan, Ben, 11th grade; Anderson, Wesley, 10th grade; Atkinson, Isabella, 10th grade; Banuelas-Lopez, Maria, 10th grade; Carter, Anna Grace, 10th grade; Cochran, Kimberly, 10th grade; Dixon, Kennedi,

10th grade; Gray, Emma, 10th grade; Hendrix, Haleigh, 10th grade; Langley, Hunter, 10th grade; Lawrence, Hannah, 10th grade; Martin, Tayla, 10th grade; Munoz-Ramos, Elsi, 10th grade; Sturgill, Denver, 10th grade; Bennett, Dana, 9th grade; Boydston, Gaven, 9th grade; Boyer, Katie Belle, 9th grade; Epling, Kathryn, 9th grade; Gibney, Victoria Rose, 9th grade; Hamilton, Chloe, 9th grade; Harper, Matthew, 9th grade; Jenkins, Joshua, 9th grade; Johnson, Bailey, 9th grade; Parish, Bailey, 9th grade; Romero Leyva, Azusena, 9th grade; Sanders, Reagan, 9th grade; Scherer, Malori, 9th grade; Thompson, Jacob, 9th grade; Walters, Cass, 9th grade; Walters, Chloe, 9th grade; Watkins, Cameron, 9th grade; Bayliss, Sarah, 8th grade; Beeman, Justin, 8th grade; Broome, Madison, 8th grade; Flores, Christina, 8th grade; Gary, Kiara, 8th grade; Goldman, Levi, 8th

grade; Goodin, McKinley, 8th grade; Henderson, Colby, 8th grade; Hobson, Megann Alana, 8th grade; Johnson, Janay, 8th grade; Thompson, Randy, 8th grade; Ward, Garland, 8th grade; Watkins, Tingly Jo, 8th grade; Weems, Callie, 8th grade; White, Kaitlyn, 8th grade; Adams, Haley, 7th grade; Adams, Hart, 7th grade; Banuelas, Eriberto, 7th grade; Carter, Leah Kathryn, 7th grade; Garner, Nataliya, 7th grade; Haden, Kayden, 7th grade; Harris, Janiya, 7th grade; Holmes, Madi, 7th grade; Jenkins, Daniel, 7th grade; Johnson, Makenzie, 7th grade; Jones, Kendall, 7th grade; King, Elizabeth, 7th grade; Lindsey, Addison, 7th grade; McCamon, Macy, 7th grade; McGill, Mariah, 7th grade; Morgan, Abbott, 7th grade; Rainer, Nicole, 7th grade; Stringer, Symon, 7th grade; Tucker, Ella, 7th grade; Walters, Maddie Grace, 7th grade; Waters, Jalynne, 7th grade; and White, Holly, 7th grade.

PES students visit Winter Wonderland

By Dana Lee and Rebecca Nelson, Pelahatchie Elementary

Pelahatchie Elementary is a model site for Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS). That means we strive to focus on positive behavior rather than negative behavior. Everyone knows it can be difficult to maintain good behavior the weeks leading up to the holiday break. In an effort to highlight positive behavior, we created special Winter Wonderland tickets that could be earned for showing positive behavior char-

acteristics between Thanksgiving and Christmas break. Each day was an opportunity to earn a "blue" winter ticket.

On Wednesday, December 21, students entered the school hallway in total amazement to see a Winter Wonderland Village, complete with twinkling lights and village shops. The teachers and staff transformed the upper grade hallway into a holiday village, where each of the 12 classrooms became one shop in the village. The village included a bakery, toy store, "sELFie" Shop, bookstore, candy shop, lumber mill and

cocoa café. Students went from shop to shop spending their blue winter tickets on special items from each shop. Students then entered any extra tickets they had earned into a drawing for a Kindle Fire.

The event was quite the team effort. All fourth- through sixth-grade students were included in manning the shops for the younger grades. Fourth-grade students created and solved word problems to calculate the amount of cocoa and water needed to serve all students. Our show choir, "Chieftacular," performed

Christmas carols for the students as they walked through the Winter Wonderland.

This seasonal reinforcement was just the thing to encourage students to make good choices during a hectic and busy time of year. Students were eager to earn the special Winter Wonderland tickets. Students also gained the experience of placing value on different items and saved up tickets in order to participate in all of the events. The excitement and joy on the faces of the students that day was proof that the event was a huge success!



Special to Pelahatchie News



Special to Pelahatchie News

Yogi gets high marks 10 years in a row



Special to Pelahatchie News

Yogi on the Lake managers Rhonda and David Sparkman hold the awards the Jellystone Park received at the LSI meeting last November.

By Susie A. Wolfe

Yogi on the Lake received the Pinnacle Club Award from Leisure System Inc. (LSI) for getting high marks, 95% or better, on inspections for its tenth year in a row. This year, the Pelahatchie park's score was 102%. LSI operates 82 parks across the United States.

For the second year in a row, this Jellystone Park received an Outstand-

ing Customer Service award based on customer questionnaires after a stay.

"This is the most important feedback, because we want customers to come back," said David Sparkman, Yogi on the Lake manager. "We were audited on everything from the cleanliness of the cabins to the café food and staff friendliness."

The park is open year-round, but the main season is Memorial Day to Labor Day.

4-H champions attend National Roundup



Special to Pelahatchie News

Four Rankin County 4-H champions attended the 2018 National Western 4-H Roundup in Livestock Judging in January after they were crowned champions at the Mississippi 4-H Livestock Judging Contest in May 2017. They judged goats, sheep, hogs and cattle and gave oral reasons on those classes. Pictured (l to r) are: Sarah Freeny, Brandon; Carmen Hamilton, Pelahatchie; Coach Heather Jennings, Rankin County 4-H extension agent; Holly Banes, Puckett; and John Mark Huff, Puckett.

Minett named All-Star



Special to Pelahatchie News

Makayla Minett was selected to play in the Mississippi North/South all-star game for the top juniors in the state. She will be on the South team. The game will be played in March.



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Banker's Note: Eight ways to stop an identity theft



By Guest Columnist
Harvey Lott, Vice President,
PriorityOne Bank

Special to
Pelahatchie News

PriorityOne Bank wants to help you avoid becoming a victim of identity fraud. Below are eight tips from the American Bankers Association to help consumers protect their information.

ABA suggests following these eight tips:

- **Don't share your secrets.** Don't provide your Social Security number or account information to anyone who contacts you online or over the phone. Protect your PINs and passwords and do not share them with anyone. Use a combination of letters and numbers for your passwords and change them periodically. Do not reveal sensitive or personal information on social networking sites.



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- **Shred sensitive papers.** Shred receipts, banks statements and unused credit card offers before throwing them away.
- **Keep an eye out for missing mail.** Fraudsters look for monthly bank or credit card statements and other mail containing your financial information. Consider enrolling in online banking to reduce the likelihood of paper statements being stolen.

- **Use online banking to protect yourself.** Monitor your financial accounts regularly for fraudulent transactions. Sign up for text or email alerts from your bank for certain types of transactions, such as online purchases or transactions of more than \$500.

- **Monitor your credit report.** Order a free copy of your credit report every four months from one of the three credit reporting agencies at annual-creditreport.com.

- **Protect your computer.** Make sure the virus protection software on your computer is active and up to date. When conducting business online, make sure your browser's padlock or key icon is active. Also, look for an "s" after the "http" to be sure the website is secure.

- **Protect your mobile device.** Use the passcode lock on your smartphone and other devices. This will make it more difficult for thieves to access

your information if your device is lost or stolen. Before you donate, sell or trade your mobile device, be sure to wipe it using specialized software. Some software allows you to wipe your device remotely if it is lost or stolen. Use caution when downloading apps, as they may contain malware and avoid opening links and attachments – especially for senders you don't know.

- **Report any suspected fraud to your bank immediately.**

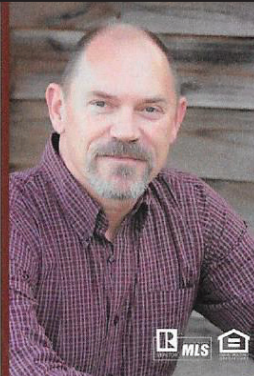
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EDITOR'S NOTE: Harvey Lott is a vice president at PriorityOne Bank and is the Branch Manager of the Collins Branch. He is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi the Mississippi School of Banking at Ole Miss. He is currently attending the Graduate School of Banking at Louisiana State University.

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Craig named Outstanding New Teacher of the Year



Special to Pelahatchie News

Katy Craig, sixth grade teacher at Pelahatchie Elementary, was recently named Rankin County School District's New Teacher of the Year. Pictured (l to r) are, front row: Dr. Sue Townsend, Rankin County School District superintendent; Craig; Dr. Tanya Crain, RCSD assistant superintendent; Shane Sanders, RCSD assistant superintendent; and back row: Buddy Bailey, RCSD assistant superintendent; Dr. Undray Scott, RCSD assistant superintendent; and Lisa Attkisson, Pelahatchie Elementary School principal.

Students place second in poster contest



Special to Pelahatchie News

Pelahatchie Elementary first grade student, Bethany Tucker, and sixth grade student, Payton Sanders, were recognized recently at the January RCSD School Board Meeting. Both students won second place in the RCSD Bullying Awareness Contest in their age division.

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South gets second snow



Special to Pelahatchie News



Photos by Pelahatchie News

Pelahatchie and the South got an extended holiday the second week in January with more snow and cold weather blanketing the area. They added Tuesday and Wednesday to their Monday holiday.

PHS' Multicraft Academy is coming together

By Susie A. Wolfe

John Gandy spent 19 years working at Eaton and Gulf Oil before teaching for eight. As Pelahatchie High School (PHS)'s industrial maintenance instructor, he said he "strives to make class interesting so the students want to learn" while the school is building its industrial maintenance facility by the band hall. The new Academy Lab is expected to hold its groundbreaking next March.

The Multicraft Academy, started in August 2017, is funded by the Rankin County School District. It provides a two-year manufacturing course curriculum which will lead to a Basic Manufacturing Certification, OSHA Certification, and a Silver Level Career Readiness Certificate. The program, free to students, also counts as college credit for students who want to pursue a two- or four-year degree or Career Technical Education Certificate.

Gandy is following the state's core curriculum in teaching his nine sophomore and junior students. He is also using Mississippi Construction and Education Foundation's materials. In addition to learning about safety and quality requirements and basic electrical and maintenance skills, the class used their wood working skills to build bird houses at the end of last semester.

"Things are coming together," said Gandy of this new class offering at Pelahatchie. Only a couple of other high schools in the state are seeking to develop partnerships with local industry to help train students who may or may not choose to go to college. This class will also concentrate on blueprint reading, gage measurement, precision machining, software simulations and understanding CAD software.

Multicraft International is partnering with PHS to enhance the education and training. They provide hands-on training with equipment like materials

handling and fork lift operation. Through the two-year course study, Multicraft will sponsor paid internships during the student's senior year, along with a work-study program during the summer before their senior year.

Along with teaching the students the skills in manufacturing, the program will also work with Multicraft Ventures to create an innovation project which will give students a team setting to brainstorm product ideas for Ventures as well as creating a budget for the products, and potentially taking a product to market.

During the fall, PHS students attended two class days at the Multicraft facility, where they were allowed to actively engage in conversations with direct labor employees, broaching subjects from employability to operating production equipment. Students observed all employees develop the "culture of safety" and how they operated machinery, followed reading on print drawings and performed mathematical calculations in making a part. Multicraft Engineering also met with the students to talk about the operations on the shop floor, and answer questions.

There are 43 additional students in junior high and ninth grade that are interested in joining the Multicraft Academy curriculum. These students are currently taking the class Career Explorations taught by Gandy.



Photo by Pelahatchie News



Photo by Pelahatchie News



Photo by Pelahatchie News



Photo by Pelahatchie News

ERA Robotics teams qualify for state competition

By Susie A. Wolfe

The two East Rankin Academy (ERA) Robotics teams qualified for the state competition in their first competition, the First Tech Challenge Jackson Qualifier Tournament, at Hinds Community College on January 6.

The ERA Robotics Team II won the "Think Award" for best reflecting the journey the team took as they experienced the design process, with documentation in their engineering notebook, and the second place "Inspire Award." Team I won the third place "Inspire Award." The Inspire Awards are presented to teams that best embody the goals of the First Tech Challenge Program.

The two ERA teams have 21 members in the ninth through twelfth grade. High School Principal Robyn Winstead and her son, Ward Winstead, are the team coaches. Ward graduated from ERA last year, and is studying Mechanical Engineering at the University of Mississippi, where the state robotics competition will be held February 17.

ERA has participated in robotics competition for seven years, but this is the first year that the school has had two teams. It is also the first year that they qualified for the state competition in the first tournament, according to Principal Winstead.

"Robotics competition engages students in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)," said Principal Winstead. "Our students spend an estimated 10 hours a week in

designing, computer coding and driving the robots. They also are scored on having completed an engineering notebook where everything is documented, and they also must get sponsors."

According to Team Captain Cody Batte, a fourth-year member, he likes being able to discuss unique ways to find solutions to the challenges that are given to the teams each year. He said that one part of each robotic competition round is a pre-programmed thirty-second segment, while the remainder of the two-minute round is remote control.

She said that participating in robotics competition also teaches the students gracious professionalism because they cooperate with other teams, often practicing and sharing parts with competitors. She estimated that there are around 50 teams that compete in Mississippi tournaments.

ERA is hosting a scrimmage for 10-12 teams that have already qualified for state on their campus on Saturday, February 3, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

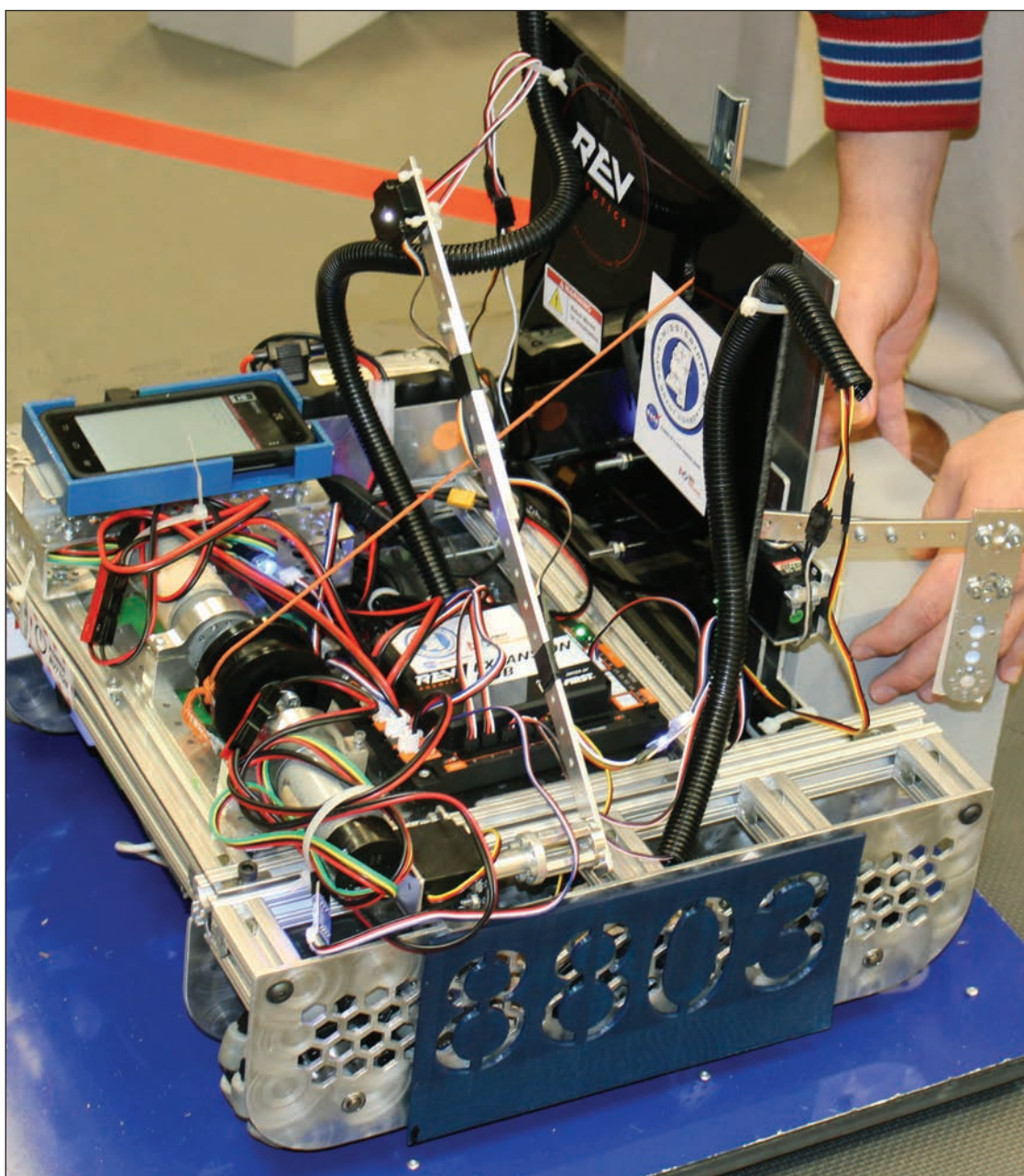


Photo by Pelahatchie News



Special to Pelahatchie News

East Rankin has two robotics teams. Team members include (l to r) front row, are: Taylor Irby, Cole Jones, Daniel Jones, Knox Ross, Blaine Martin, Andrew Harrell, Maddie Morgan, and Dana Watkins; and back row: Tyler Betts, Cody Batte, Jacob Gardner, Ethan Crain, Thad Webb, Andrew Stewart, Emily Myers, Jackson Harper, and Garrett Duckworth. (Team members not pictured: Will Blossom, Elijah Rowell, Brennan Rials, and Brandyn Luke.)

Pastor's perspective: Live by the rules



By Guest Columnist
John Vaughn, Pastor,
Cross Roads Baptist
Church

At our church, Upward Basketball is in full swing! This is the sixteenth year that Cross Roads has offered Upward, and this year has proven to be one of the biggest years ever. We have more kids participating, more teams and more games each week. We are grateful to have our gym built in 1929 to offer Upward and also grateful for the participation of each player and the support of each family.

I have the privilege of being a referee for the K-5 and first- and second-grade games. Some of the kids have never been on a basketball court, and others have obviously had the opportunity to play before. But following the motto of Upward Sports, we try to make every child feel like a winner. And every child gets the same amount of playing time.

Before every game, I call all of the players together and go over with them some of the basic rules. For example, you can't walk with the ball in your hands; if you stop dribbling, you can't start again; and you should never slap at or tackle an opposing player! I tell them that if they break the rules, I will blow my whistle to stop the game and tell them what they were doing wrong.

During the course of the game, a lot of patience is needed! And as a referee at this level, a lot of restraint must be used! The little guys are all excited to



The 2018 Upward Basketball season started November 27 and ends February 9. Cross Roads has 181 kids playing in 28 teams, K5 through sixth grade, and 20 cheerleaders.

be in the game, and based on their play, they didn't listen very well to the rules as they were explained. Those that have played before do a little better. But those that have never played will run around with the ball, start and stop dribbling, and totally disregard the out of bounds line!

Obviously, if the whistle was blown at every violation, the game would not progress. But they have to learn too, so at some point, the whistle blows and everybody stops. Sometimes, as I approach the offending player, he or she will look up at me and tell me what they were doing wrong! Maybe they heard the rules after all! Because they often know what they were doing wrong. Most of the time, I will confirm what their foul was and give them another chance with the ball.

That is pretty much the way we live our lives, too. We know the basic rules that God has established, and we know that when we violate them, we are sinning. When the Holy Spirit blows the whistle by causing us to feel conviction over sin, we already know what we were doing wrong. He doesn't even need to tell us.

But God is good to us. When we confess our sin to Him by agreeing with Him that our sin is as bad as He says it is, then He forgives our sin and gives us another chance. Just like in Upward, we all need to live by the rules. In life, they are outlined in the Bible, God's Word to us. When you find yourself breaking one of God's rules, confess and ask Him to forgive you. He will.

Be sure to take your family to church on Sunday!

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Obituaries

NAME	AGE	CITY	DOD	Arrangements
Burshel Boatrite	74	Cullman, AL	1/4/17	Wolf Funeral Serv.
Thelma Ledlow	81	Morton, MS	1/2/17	Wolf Funeral Serv.
Kimberly Miles	52	Forest, MS	1/2/17	Wolf Funeral Serv.
Dorothy Sanders	76	Morton, MS	1/13/17	Wolf Funeral Serv.
Twyla Sykes	63	Madison, MS	1/5/17	Wolf Funeral Serv.

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Position Available

Health officials encourage flu control measures during unusually active flu season

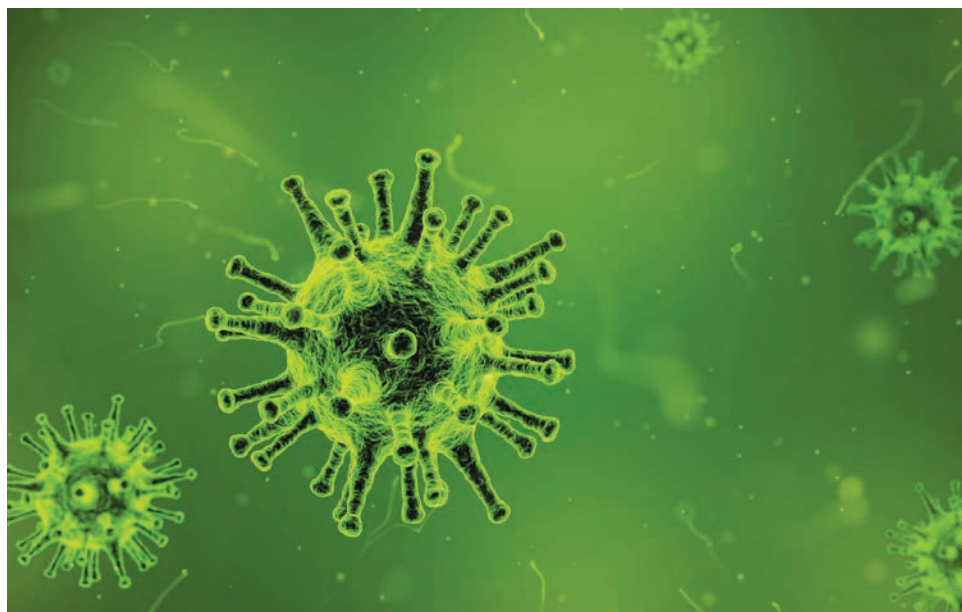
Special to Pelahatchie News

This year's flu activity is unusually high, and Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) officials encourage all Mississippians to continue to protect themselves against the flu and to practice basic prevention measures to help prevent the spread of flu. While flu season typically peaks in January through March in Mississippi, the state has already been at a widespread activity level for several weeks.

"Mississippi is seeing the impact of high levels of influenza this season with more than 100 reported flu outbreaks in nursing homes and other long-term care settings," said MSDH State Epidemiologist Dr. Paul Byers. "Additionally, MSDH has received reports from hospitals across the state that are experiencing increased admissions to ICUs and increased visits to Emergency Departments which have hospitals operating at full capacity."

Byers said that some hospitals, nursing homes, and other long-term care facilities may be restricting visitors and limiting access to public waiting areas. The public can assist hospitals and other facilities in their efforts to reduce the spread of flu:

- If you are ill, do not visit family



Special to Pelahatchie News

or friends—ill visitors should wait at least 48 hours after symptoms resolve before considering a visit;

- Do not take groups to visit, or accompany family or friends to the hospital/healthcare facility or emergency department;

- Limit or don't take children to visit at the facility;

- All visitors should cover coughs and sneezes and practice hand hygiene;

- Visitors should only visit their family or friends; they should not visit or have contact with other patients or residents;

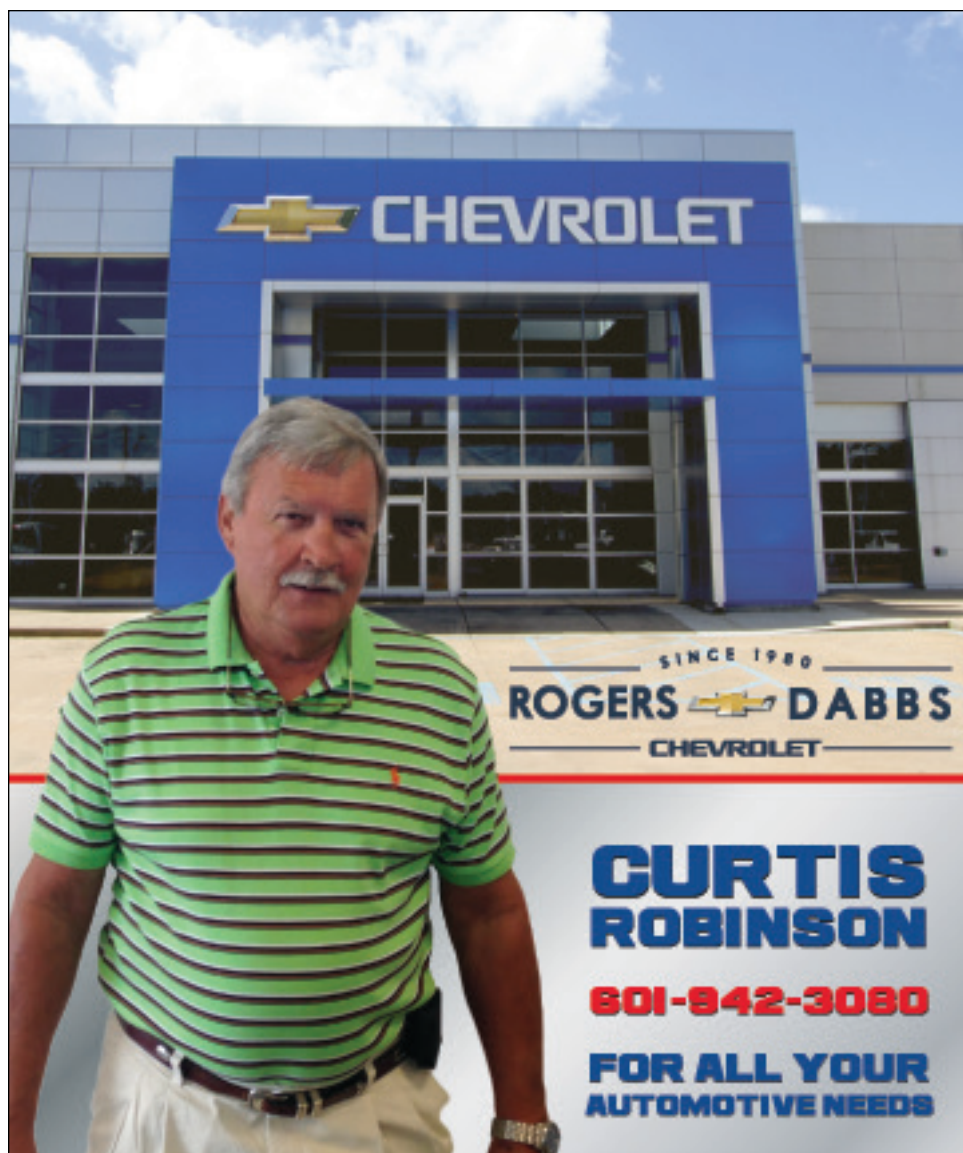
- Patients, families and visitors should follow any additional recommendations/restrictions set forth by the healthcare facility.

Dr. Byers said the flu shot is still the best protection against flu-related complications, and while it may not

prevent infection, it can drastically reduce the severity and length of illness and prevent serious complications such as hospitalization and even death. Flu shots are recommended for all those six months and older. The type of flu virus that is primarily causing illness in Mississippi and nationwide is the H3N2 flu strain, which especially affects individuals over 65 years of age and young children, increasing their risk of complications and hospitalization.

Basic infection control measures can also reduce the spread of flu and should be taken whether or not individuals are vaccinated. These measures include covering your mouth when coughing and sneezing, staying at home when you or your children are sick for at least 24 hours after fever is gone, and washing your hands frequently.

Those 18 and under who are eligible for the Vaccines for Children program can receive flu vaccination at county health department clinics for \$10. Insurance, Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) is accepted for children's flu shots. To locate a county health department clinic in your area or for more information on flu, visit the MSDH website at www.HealthyMS.com/flu.




Cross Roads Baptist Church

Sunday Schedule

8:30 - Contemporary Worship Service
10:00 - Bible Study for all ages
11:00 - Blended Worship Service
6:00 - Evening Worship

Wednesday Schedule

6:00 Family Dinner
7:00 - Children's Mission Activities • Student Worship
Ladies Bible Study • Couples Support Group
Prayer Meeting and Bible Study

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Pelahatchie in LEAD



Special to Pelahatchie News

Mrs. Voncille Anderson, Pelahatchie High School, left, and Mrs. Mijia Ward, Pelahatchie Elementary School, right, were recognized in January's school board meeting for being a part of the LEAD program.

Woodson named Secondary Teacher of the Year for RCSD



Special to Pelahatchie News

Althea Woodson, ninth grade through twelfth grade teacher at Pelahatchie High School, was recently named the Rankin County School District's Secondary Teacher of the Year. Pictured (l to r) are, front row: Dr. Tanya Crain, RCSD assistant superintendent; Woodson; and Dr. Sue Townsend, RCSD Superintendent; and back row: Shane Sanders, RCSD assistant superintendent; Dr. Undray Scott, RCSD assistant superintendent; and Buddy Bailey, RCSD assistant superintendent.

AT THE LIBRARY IN PELAHATCHIE

Adult Book Club

Wednesday, February 14, 9:30 a.m.

Discussing Charles Martin's novel, Long Way Gone

Crafting Corner

Wednesday, February 28, 1:00 p.m.

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- 1) Selecting songs and leading worship on Sundays.
- 2) Utilizing ProPresenter and an Apple iMac to produce worship sets.
- 3) Providing recommendations and suggestions to the church to meet current and future worship needs.

For more information, please contact Cynthia Graham at (601) 594-1979. Resumes may also be sent to eastsidebcpel@gmail.com. The church is located at 1143 Noblin Bridge Road.



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Lady Chiefs hold Senior Night Feb. 2



Special to Pelahatchie News

The Lady Chiefs basketball team had a record of 16-7 and 3-1 in district play as of January 26. They have a district home game for Senior Night on February 2 vs Pisgah. Closing out regular season, they will be on the road February 6 at St. Joe and February 9 at Mize. The District Tournament will be held at St. Joe the week of February 12-16. Pictured (l to r) front row, are: Bailey Johnson, Morghan Hobson, Kanosha Holifield, and Andrianna Macklin; and top row: Grace Alman, Jacey Cooper, Doneshia Johnson, Makayla Minett, Makayla McClure, Jayla Macklin, and Reagan Sanders. Not pictured is Chrystianna Beeman and Sheretha Hobbs.

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