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NEWS Pelahatchie

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Pelahatchie Attendance Center named *US News and World Report* national bronze level school

By: Susie A. Wolfe

Pelahatchie Attendance Center was named a National Bronze Level School by *US News & World Report* in its 2015 Best High Schools ranking. A total of 93 high schools in Mississippi received the bronze honor and only one, Pass Christian, was awarded silver.

US News & World Report looked at thousands of public schools to identify the top performers. One of the key criteria for this award is that the school is performing better than statistically expected for students in their state.

Pelahatchie scored above the Mississippi average in college readiness, which measured the best college-level achievement for the highest percentages of their students. The school also scored above the Mississippi average

in Algebra and near the Mississippi average in English.

Two other Rankin County schools were also recognized nationally, but Pisgah High and Richland High were not rated in college readiness according to the Best High Schools ranking. Pelahatchie students have the opportunity to take Advanced Placement® course work and exams and the participation rate is 45 percent. The student body makeup is 54 percent male to 46 percent female.

US News calculates these values based on student performance on state exit exams and internationally available exams on college-level course work (AP®/IB exams). Pelahatchie test scores were 68 percent proficient in English, 95 percent proficient in Algebra, and 11.4 on the college readiness index.



Photo by Susie A. Wolfe

Pastor's Perspective: the other wise man



By: John Vaughn, Pastor,
Cross Roads Baptist
Church in Pelahatchie

Have you ever heard the story of the "Other Wise Man?"

It was a short novel written by Henry van Dyke and was originally published in 1895.

The story is based on the account of the Magi who came searching for the baby Jesus. Matthew 2:1-2 says, "After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, 'Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.'" While the Bible does not tell us how many Magi there were, we assume there were three, based on the gifts they brought to Jesus.

Matthew 2:9-12 tells us, "After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route."

The story written by van Dyke tells about a "fourth" wise man; a priest of the Magi named Artaban. Like the other Magi, he sees signs in the heavens proclaiming that a King had been born among the Jews. Like them, he sets out to see the newborn ruler, carrying

continued on page 11

Christmas parade December 5



The 2015 Pelahatchie Christmas Parade is Saturday, Dec. 5, at 10 a.m. in downtown Pelahatchie. The theme of this year's parade is "Christmas In Our Town." Pictured here, Yogi Bear and friends wave to the crowd in 2014. (Photo by Katie White)



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"Thank You" letter prompts soldier's visit



Students at Pelahatchie Elementary wrote "Thank You" letters to give to veterans at a local restaurant. One of those local soldiers was so touched she brought a teddy bear and balloon to the student who wrote to her, and Haley Mills is the student who wrote the letter. (Photo special to The Pelahatchie News)

Shiloh United Methodist Church presents Journey through Bethlehem

By: Rebecca Buffington

Shiloh United Methodist Church will host a Journey through Bethlehem on Saturday and Sunday, December 12 and 13, at 5:30 pm. This is a drive-through event open to the community. Church members will transform the Shiloh campus into the streets of Bethlehem so that visitors can experience the sights and sounds as they were thousands of years ago at the time of Jesus' birth.

Attendees will be able to travel back in time and get lost in the midst of the scenes and feel the emotions the characters felt. One scene is of the young Mary and Joseph asking the innkeeper for a room. Another is the shepherds or kings as they joyously travel to celebrate the Savior's birth.

Other scenes from the Bible include Mary and Joseph traveling to Bethlehem and angels appearing to the shepherds. Visitors will pass the Magi and their caravans following the star to the place where the Christ child had been born. There will also be a great host of angels praising God, Roman soldiers at the gates to the city and census takers talking to people in the city. There will also be carpenters, pottery



2013 live nativity at Shiloh United Methodist Church. (Photo special to The Pelahatchie News)

makers, basket weavers, bakers and others working at their trade.

The main attraction is the newborn baby Jesus. Upon leaving Bethlehem, visitors have the opportunity to see the sacrifice Jesus made on the cross.

Visit www.shilohunitedmethodist.org for more information and directions. To contact church personnel, call 601-854-8158 or email umc.shiloh@gmail.com.

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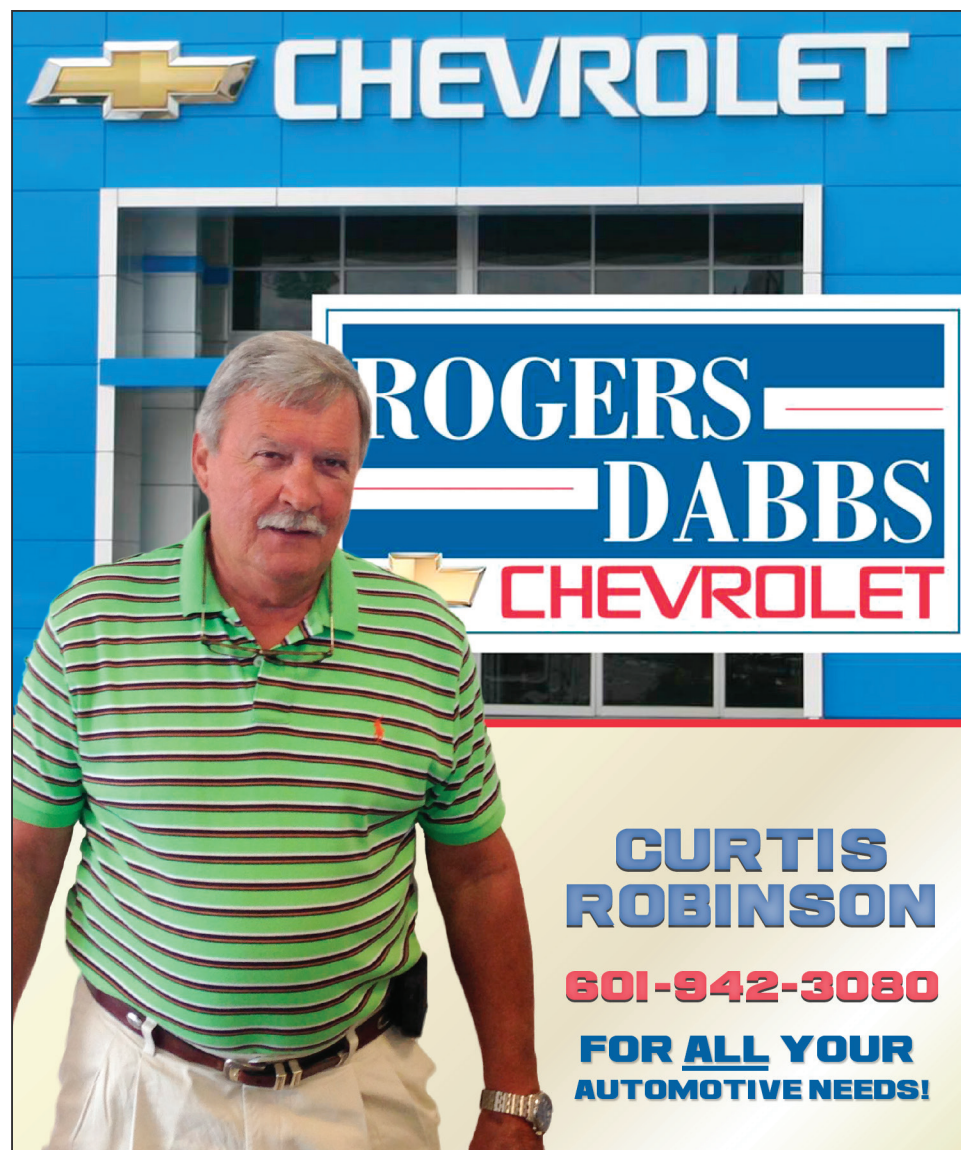
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Community Calendar

PELAHATCHIE CHRISTMAS PARADE
Saturday, Dec. 5, 10 am in downtown Pelahatchie

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA FOR MILLTOWN PARK
Saturday, Dec. 5, 6 a.m. - 10:30 a.m., Community Center
Children's Tickets - \$8 (Age 1 Free), Adult Tickets and To-Go Plates- \$5
Write a letter to Santa • Crafts • Bag of reindeer food

CHRISTMAS AT CROSSROADS
Dec. 6, 6 p.m.
Children's Ministry of Cross Roads Baptist Church will present "Star Trip: Our Faith Awakens" - Cross Roads Baptist Church

Saturday, Dec. 12 and Sunday, Dec. 13, 6 p.m.
The sanctuary choir and drama team will present "A Crossroads Christmas."

CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE AT THE LIBRARY
Thursday, Dec. 10, 12 p.m. - 7 p.m., Pelahatchie Library

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA FOR WALTERS FD
Dec. 12, 8 a.m. - 10 a.m., Walters Fire Department - \$5 a plate
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Thanksgiving: a time to reflect

By: Dr. Bryan Marshall, Pelahatchie High School Principal

Thanksgiving brings me to a time that I reflect on the first semester of the school year. Once the Thanksgiving break gets here, we know that Christmas is just around the corner, and the first semester of the school year is nearing completion.

How time flies! This seems to be a recurring theme in these letters. Time seems to be the enemy of us all, and there are never enough hours in the day. Nevertheless, there is no use in trying to stop time but to take advantage of the time we have.

During this holiday season, take a moment to cherish your children, and tell them how proud you are of them. No matter how small or how big their accomplishments are, they are special; and they deserve to hear how much we all love them.

Often times, our families suffer for the fact that we must keep up in order to make a living. Let's think about the stress that our kids face today versus the stresses we faced years ago. Today, our children live in an age where social media and technology take front stage. From she said this about you, and he said that about her, to generally keeping up their self-image and confidence through the many different apps on the cell phone.

There was a time in our youth that cell phones were only seen on Star Trek; and, if you needed to talk to someone, you waited until you saw them the next time. If you really needed someone, you visited his or her home or used your rotary phone once you got home. Life was much slower, and there was much more emphasis

on family and general family life. So, this reflection is more about how special each and every child is and needs to feel as much as it is about education.



Dr. Bryan Marshall (Photo by Susie A. Wolfe)

Schools need emotionally fit students as well as competent readers and writers. Confidence has been studied for years in children, and many of the findings indicate that students cannot perform academically at their best unless they are highly confident about who they are. Therefore, confidence breeds success. The world of social media and technology, as well as the world in general, do not provide confidence for students.

So, during this holiday season, take just a few minutes to reflect on what we are all truly thankful for, which should be those closest to us. Our children mean the world to us, and they need to know how much they mean to us. Take some time, even if it is a short period of time, and explore some options to spend time as a family, and build the confidence and love that children need.

Honestly, we all need some confidence and love, no matter how old we are. Some days, we just need someone to say "thank you" or "you are doing a great job." So, from Pelahatchie High School, "thank you for sending us such special kids, and thank each of you for the support that you have shown them during their lives." Remember to tell them how special they really are, and HAPPY HOLIDAYS! GO CHIEFS!



PELAHATCHIE ATTENDANCE CENTER - 2015 BASKETBALL CALENDAR

www.rcsd.ms/Page/26571

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

Dec. 3-4	Rural Rankin County	McLaurin	4:00
Dec. 8	Durant	Home	6:00
Dec. 18	McLaurin	Home	6:00
Dec. 22,23,26	McAdams Tournament	McAdams	TBA
Dec. 28,29	Taylorville Tournament	Taylorville	TBA
Jan. 5	Mendenhall	Away	6:00

JR. HIGH BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

Dec. 10	Puckett	Home	5:00
Dec. 14	McLaurin	Away	5:00
Dec. 17	Puckett	Away	5:00

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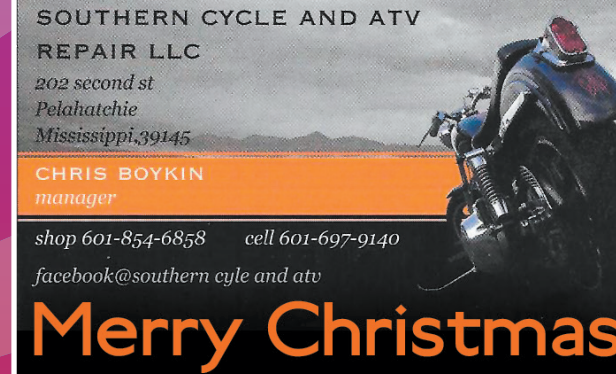
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It's okay to say Merry Christmas

By: Susie A. Wolfe

Christmas, meaning "Christ's Mass," is an annual festival commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ, observed most commonly on December 25 as a religious and cultural celebration among billions of people around the world.

Because gift-giving and many other aspects of the Christmas festival involve heightened economic activity, the holiday has become a significant event and a key sales period for retailers and businesses. The economic impact of Christmas is a factor that has grown steadily over the past few centuries in many regions of the world.

Whereas retailers and others are trying to appeal to everyone, Christian and non-Christian, saying "Merry Christmas" is often being replaced with "Happy Holidays" or "Season's Greetings." But, in the United States, Mississippi and Rankin County, where Christian values are still observed, it is okay to say and mean Merry Christmas.

Pelahatchie Elementary School September Students of the Month



September Students of the Month were recently named at Pelahatchie Elementary School. They included: Cross Poarch, Jenna Slocum, Jukia Lewis, Sam Shoemaker, Roshea McCoy, Verrone Christon, Tyler Myers, Skylyar Ousby, Jalyn Magee, Toby Wood, Savannah Massey, Benjamin Burnham, Naghee Hawkins, Tyler Johns, Daniel Flores, Lucas King, Hart Adams, Jalyne Waters, Arrianna Beeman, Avery Demuth, McKinley Goodin, Kaitlyn White and Ryan Lee. (Photo special to The Pelahatchie News)

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Pelahatchie

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Good readers are good writers, and good writers are good readers

By: Lisa Attkisson, Pelahatchie Elementary School Principal

Writing is an important part of the literacy process. As children discover writing as a form of communication, they will begin to express themselves to the best of their ability. At first, this may be scribbles, which then become letters, which eventually resemble more and more the accurate symbols for the sounds represented. This process allows children to explore the spelling system of our language.

Reading and writing have a reciprocal relationship — one is used to learn and enrich the other and vice versa. As a writer, the reader has a more intimate knowledge of the writing process, allowing the student to have a greater connection to another author's text. Writing also supports reading comprehension and recall. When a student writes about something that has been read, the child must take time to reflect and organize his thoughts. The literature children read influences their writing. A child will use his writing as a place to try out styles, language, new words and even spellings found in reading. At Pelahatchie Elementary



Photo special to The Pelahatchie News

School, students write on a daily basis in most subjects. The teachers model the different kinds of writing for students. Writing assignments range from writing one or two words to one or two sentences to paragraphs to essays. The complexity of the required writing assignments increases at each grade level.

Please take a few minutes and ask your child what he/she wrote about during the school day. Discuss the assignments together. Ask your student if they think they could have added any details to make the writing better. These discussions will help improve your child's writing. To be literate requires proficiency in both reading and writing.



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8:30 - Contemporary Worship Service
10:00 - Bible Study for all ages
11:00 - Blended Worship Service
5:00 - Cross Clubs for Children & Students
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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J & M Outdoors opens custom log furniture store



(Photos by Susie A. Wolfe)

By: Susie A. Wolfe

J & M Outdoors, LLC makes custom cedar and log furniture. It is owned by Joe Jenkins, whose family works with him to create unique pieces like the custom log bed on his card. This post oak bed is eight feet wide, nine feet long, with seven foot tall posts and weighs 700 pounds.

His work starts with a tree that is milled on-site with a Woodmizer saw, then the piece is rough built after it is dried. Next, the piece is sanded, sealed and lacquered.

Everything is custom-made, from business card holders to log cabins. He just finished a stump sink and makes other unique pieces like European deer skull mounts.

Jenkins grew up in the woods; and he said that, if he couldn't build it or fix it, he didn't need it. He started with building log end tables; and, as the word got out, he got more jobs, and eventually outgrew his shop at home.

With a full time job in law enforcement, Jenkins worked nights and weekends to build his business after starting it in 2000. His wife, Melissa, still holds a full time job, but his

mother, Judy, works with Jenkins at J & M. After he builds a piece, he turns it over to the ladies to finish, paint and shellac. Judy can freehand paint a deer scene, or they burn designs into the wood.

The Jenkins have three sons, ages 3, 4 and 10, who he wants to teach how to build, too. He works to get the best piece out of a log, along the "live edge" or the natural curvature. He said that every piece is a unique creation. J & M just delivered a log sign that was nine feet long, 39 inches in diameter, weighing 5,000 pounds. It was built for Sonny's Bar-B-Que owner Don Wynne's ranch.

Jenkins said he can't keep inventory. They sell mostly rustic pieces, but he has done a few which are more modern. He also sells online at jmountdoorllc.com, and is on Facebook and Instagram. J & M also had booths at the last two Canton Flea Markets to get the word out.

The showroom is open at his new location next to The Service Station and across from Fred's on Highway 80. Hours will be 8-5, M-F and 9-4 on Saturdays. There will be a grand opening in January or February.

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Business Spotlight: Hall brothers operate H & H Electrical

By: Susie A. Wolfe

Brian and Kevin Hall have operated H & H Electrical, LLC since 2000. Based in Pelahatchie, H & H works primarily in the Jackson metro area, but handle projects in other parts of the state; for example, they are currently working on a hotel in the Mississippi Delta.

H & H is a privately-held company opened when their dad, Drew, retired from a heating and cooling company.

Soon the sons joined, and later their mother, Martha, became office manager. The company handles any kind of residential and commercial electrical work, from changing light



Photo by Susie A. Wolfe

bulbs to wiring installation.

The electrical contractor has completed projects for The Pointe Church, Crossgates Baptist Church, Amerigo in Flowood and even Stennis Space Cen-

ter. They have also wired a four-building MDOT complex in Yazoo City. The company repaired HVAC when they first started, but no longer offers that service.

H & H has thirteen employees working with Kevin to service residential customers, and with Brian in commercial design-build. They also offer bucket truck service.

For more information on H & H Electrical services or to get a job estimate, call 601-854-7887.

continued from page 1

Pastor's Perspective: the other wise man

treasures to give as gifts to the child. His gifts were a sapphire, a ruby and a pearl of great price.

Artaban had planned on making the trip with the other Magi, but he stops along the way to help a dying man, which makes him late to meet with the caravan of the other three wise men. Since he missed the caravan, he realizes he can't cross the desert with only a horse, so he is forced to sell one of his treasures in order to buy the camels and supplies necessary for the trip. He then commences his journey but

arrives in Bethlehem too late to see the child, whose parents have fled to Egypt.

While there, he saves the life of a child at the price of another of his treasures. He then travels to Egypt and to many other countries, searching for Jesus for many years and performing acts of charity along the way.

After thirty-three years, Artaban is still a pilgrim, searching for Jesus. He arrives in Jerusalem just in time for the crucifixion of Jesus. He spends his last treasure, the pearl, to ransom a young

woman from being sold into slavery. He is then struck by a falling roof tile and is mortally wounded. As he lay dying, he is saddened by his failure to find Jesus, although through the years he had done much good through charitable works.

Before he dies, a voice tells him "Truly I say to you, because you have done much for the least of these, my brothers, you have done it for me." (Matthew 25:40) Artaban dies in a calm radiance of wonder and joy. His treasures were accepted, and while he

never actually saw Jesus, the "Other Wise Man" found his King.

It has been said that "Wise men still seek Jesus." And I trust that during this Christmas season, you will do exactly that; seek Jesus. And in your quest, when you see others who have needs that you can meet, stop and do what you can for them. By doing so, you might just find Jesus!

My prayer for you is that you have a wonderful celebration of the Birth of Christ. Be sure to take your family to Church on Sunday!

~~Wish List~~
done

1. Finish my degree
2. Get a better job



Register early – Classes start Jan. 11

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THANK YOU!

My family and I want to again thank you for your support and confidence you showed me in my re-election campaign. We will not forget everyone that worked so unselfishly and supported me over the past few months. We appreciate all our family and many friends that put in countless hours helping us throughout this re-election campaign.

I look forward to representing all the people of Scott and Rankin counties in the Mississippi House of Representatives for the next four years. If I can be of assistance to you or your family in any way, please feel free to contact me:



Representative

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